



THE FUTURE OF PAKISTAN AT CROSSROADS: AN ANALYTICAL PERSPECTIVE

Abdul Samad Khan

Post-Graduation in English Literature and Linguistics

National University of Modern Languages

Islamabad–Pakistan

abdulsamadkhanbannu22@gmail.com

Dr. Nadia Fazal

Teaching Associate

Department of Social Work

University of Karachi

Karachi – Pakistan

nadia20dec@yahoo.com

Mohammad Noman

Teaching Associate

Department of Social Work

University of Karachi

Karachi – Pakistan

nauman.trainer@gmail.com

Abstract

Foreseeing the future of a nation is not a foolish thing to do as it helps the thinking and analytical capacities of the foreseers in getting broadened and assists both policy makers and formulators at the top brass of the country's administration in devising and implementing their policies effectively. The prosperous nature of the coming days of Pakistan is totally dependent upon the way of treatment the recent problems of Pakistan get. Pakistan is pretty sure to have a rank among the leading nations of the world once it gets well with its today's problematic posture. This very literature makes an attempt to draw the picture of the future of Pakistan which seems colorful but is totally conditional to the resolution of the deleterious elements--Pakistan's current problems-- disrupting the mesmerizing color of that very portrayal.

Key Words: Economic Challenges, patronage politics, parochial politics, elitist economy, EVMs, dividend, apartheid education system, mediocre.



Introduction

When a country goes through serious challenges, its future becomes debatable via analyzing its past and present. While narrowing down the scope of the debate to Pakistan, this particular account aims at foreseeing the future of Pakistan in the shadow of challenges it is facing today. These deleterious problems are ranging from economic, social, political to both traditional and non-traditional security threats, e.g., the tensed Eastern and Western borders, climate change, water and food insecurity, the radicalization of society and the question of TTP and other militant terrorist organizations among others which are impeding its growth and development thereby putting its would-be prosperous future at stake. Predicating a better and prosperous future of Pakistan is totally dependent on the resolution of the mentioned challenges along with the exploitation of its huge youth bulge, its geographical location of phenomenal importance and the tapping of its abundant, largely untapped, natural resources among others.

Zooming in the today's Pakistan: A Portrayal of its Recent Challenges

1. The Struggling Economy of Pakistan

It has been seven decades since Pakistan has come into being, still it is facing a plethora of serious problems which is paralyzing its progress and prosperity. The struggling economy of Pakistan has always gained a debatable and prominent position in national discourse. Historically, it gained a back seat in country's list of priorities as it usually kept leaving its place for geostrategic approach to be prioritized. Islamabad devised and adopted a geostrategic approach in lieu of a geo-economic one while keeping the regional and global power dynamics in view. As in past, the recent status of Pakistan's economy is dismal and facing a handful of grave issues. The poor economic regime of Pakistan is facing serious macroeconomic challenges engendered by some of the grave structural loopholes. Mason Ahmad analyses the two main structural problems painted as macroeconomic challenges of Pakistan in a well-known treatise of Shahid Javed Burki and others, *Pakistan at Seventy* (Shahid, 2019). These are the fiscal deficit-- due to the flawed taxation system being unable to raise the targeted revenue by virtue of its dependency on indirect taxes more than the direct ones, corruption, exemption to the elites, informal economy and a mounting trust deficit regarding the unfair spending of the tax-money among others-- which stands at 6.3% of GDP for FY21 and trade deficit-- due to the mediocre means of exports being poor in quality and low in quantity for instance, the traditional cotton and cotton products, rice and lather unlike its regional counterparts like China and Asian Tigers(Malaysia, Thailand, Vietnam) and India which have revolutionized their exports-- recorded at



\$30.796bn for FY21. The latter--trade deficit-- disturbs the balance of payment regime; increases the current account deficit and depletes the foreign exchange reserves of Pakistan which result into the devaluation of its currency and thus impede its economic growth and development.

The increasing inflation, 10% to 10.5% recently reported by the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics, is bombing the hand-to-mouth section of society putting the current government's political future in danger. The ongoing budget for FY22 has allocated Rs3,059 billion to be spent on interest payments on internal and external debts which, the issue of internal and external debts, is also deemed to be a serious dilemma. Pakistan is also performing poor at ease of doing business as it stands at 108 among 190 countries in World Bank's Ease of Doing Business Index 2020 report. A report shows that there are approximately 1500 regulations to come across before installing and starting a business activity at least at a higher level. The devaluation of currency in Pakistan is another serious dilemma caused by the mounting trade deficit and diluting foreign exchange reserves. Massod Ahmad in *Pakistan at Seventy* (Shahid, 2019) seems Pakistan poor at forming a widely held and mutually agreed upon national economic policy as there is a want of consensus on a number of key issues of national interests including the economy. Furthermore, the good governance crisis has further aggravated the decline of Pakistan's economy as Ishrat Husain opines so in his *Economic Governance* (Shahid, 2019). Thus, these poor economic conditions are diverting Pakistan from growth and prosperity to backwardness.

2. Pakistan's Political Conundrum

The political culture of Pakistan evolved over decades has been problematic. The departure of Jinnah followed by Liaqat Ali Khan gave birth to the political culture, engendered by the then political hordes, which, largely, kept supporting and promoting parochial politics while introducing the elements of feudalism and regionalism in politics. Christina Fair in the *Future of Pakistan* (Stephen, 2011) frames the Pakistani version of politics being localized, parochial and power-centric which has weeded out the likelihood of the national-cause-based politics. Such type of politics has handicapped the politicians-turned ruling elites from sincerity and strong political will. Similarly, the political culture of Pakistan remains exclusive while closing the door for consensus over leading issues of national interests. The parliaments are usually bypassed while making laws or debating key issues as ordinances are mostly preferred for legal purposes. It shows the polarized nature of politics and democracy in Pakistan ushering into internal contradictions which languish the growth of mature and responsible political culture and democracy of Pakistan as Tariq Ali opines in his magnum opus *Can Pakistan Survive* (Tariq, 1983)? Likewise, the



manipulation of elections in a larger sense-- the allegations of rigging in elections, the reported misbehavior with the polling-station personnel and the vote-trading among others - is deemed to be a serious problem which has made the credibility of democratic process doubtful. These are the reasons due to which Pakistan has scored poor and, thus, ranked 37th out of 100 at Freedom in the World report 2021 by Freedom House, at ensuring political rights and civil liberties. Thus, the infected political limb of Pakistan seems to be one of the contributors to its good governance crisis which are diluting its capability of moving ahead progressively.

3. The loopholes in Pakistan's Judicial System

As judiciary is considered to be one of the main organs of government having the constitutional status, its constructive role in the progress and development of the country is not expected rather required. Constitutionally, it is assigned with the authority of Original Jurisdiction under Article 184 and Appellate Jurisdiction under Article 185 of the constitution. It has also the power to nullify an Act of Parliament or an Ordinance(s) in case it is violating the constitution under the power of Judicial Review granted by the constitution under its article 189. The judiciary is needed to perform its constitutional mandate, a few of which have been mentioned above, without being pressurized by the both the internal and external forces. However, much unfortunate is this to say that it has not remained unaffected by the blow of challenges facing it. It has badly affected by the external interference as has been shown by the ongoing comedy of allegations put against the alleged role of the judges played for their, inter alia, political Masters. This has been quite obvious in the appearances of the audio-tape-records associated with different judges where the conversations are taken for the alleged dealings of political nature behind the scene. The Rana Shamim case has further ignited the debate.

Internally, the institution is facing a number of administrative problems. An estimate shows that nearly 1.3 million cases registered by courts are yet to be decided. Ishrat Husain clearly points out in his magnum opus *Governing the Ungovernable* (Ishrat, 2018) the disparity in deciding the cases where the poor fall shorter of getting their cases decided in time than their rich counterparts. Moreover, the other two wings of the Criminal Justice System of Pakistan are also coming across a lot of problems ranging from external interference to the lack of inter-departmental coordination among others. The physical and financial insecurity of judges usually halt the free and fair judicial process. The departmental corruption is adding salt to the problematic judicial regime of Pakistan. Thus, such a languished nature of judiciary is unequivocally hampering the growth of Pakistan as Hazrat Ali (RA) says that a society of non-believers may tend to exist, but a society of injustice will surely cease to exist.



4. Pakistan's Security Threats (Traditional and Non-Traditional)

a) The Tensed Eastern Border of Pakistan (Traditional Security Threat)

Pakistan is also coming across a bundle of traditional and non-traditional security threats. The maintenance of security both at its Eastern and Western borders as usual are of serious concerns. The belligerent India under Modi-led BJP's rule which is usually referred to be the preacher and promoter of Hindutva-- a fascist ideology echoing for the dominance of Hindu nationalism on narrow basis and is propagated, protected, emboldened and preached by RSS--is paining Islamabad viz-a-viz its security. The Modi-led Indian government has brought, inter alia, a unilateral alteration to the special status of Kashmir via repelling the Article 370 and Article 35A of the Indian constitution with two-pronged strategy to bring the disputed territory directly under its rule and change the region demographically where the Hindus would turn into majority thereby debasing and manipulating the popular cry for free and fair plebiscite in Kashmir. Similarly, the same BJP's rule has adopted harsh and prejudicial policies against minorities in India especially the Muslims in the shape of getting biased Acts passed like, inter alia, Citizen Amendment Act. The cruel and barbaric act of lynching also prevails over there. All these as well as the India's support for cross-border terrorism are putting the Kashmir issue, and other bilateral disputes in limbo thereby creating panic conditions for Islamabad which has adopted a geostrategic approach since long at the cost of a geo-economic one as opined by Farah Jan while writing about the 'adversarial peace' documented in *Pakistan at Seventy* by Shahid Javed Burki and others. Maleeha Lodhi argues in her recent write-up to *Dawn, Foreign Policy Challenges Ahead*, that the Kashmir imbroglio is impeding the progress of cordial bilateralism between New Delhi and Islamabad. This is all about the Eastern border of Pakistan whose proper management does not seem to be a child's play.

b) Pakistan's Problematic Western Border

Pakistan is also feeling disturbed on its western border where the recent developments and alterations in the power corridors of Kabul have aggravated the disturbances as today's Afghanistan, under the Taliban's rule, is destined to face serious humanitarian crisis: the UNDP reports nearly 97% of the total population are likely to fall below the poverty line; only 5% of the population have an access to food; approximately 23 million people will face food shortage in the coming days as per the report issued by the World Food Program and 3.2 million children will come across malnutrition, due to the intransigent USA which has forbidden everyone from aiding Afghanistan financially. It has frozen Afghanistan's assets worth 9bn US dollars and warned international donors and monetary regulatory



giants like IMF and WB among others against serious consequences for helping out Afghanistan financially. In case it allows some financial aid for humanitarian purpose, it would hardly reach out the needy sections of Afghan society due to the absence of centralized banking system. The USA is using the tool of economic sanctions to compel the Taliban-led Afghan Government to ensure and form an inclusive government. The Afghanistan of the days to come is odd to be expected of performing well if the childish stiffness continues to be shown by Washington. Thus, the catastrophic and chaotic Afghanistan would put Pakistan into serious, inter alia, administrative and security problems especially by the would-be cross-border movement of refugees.

c) The perplexed Islamabad between Beijing and Washington

Similarly, Pakistan is also facing it difficult to maintain its balanced posture in US-China rivalry. Pakistan makes it clear that it would never be a part of blocism instead would like to have equal relations with all. Despite the abovementioned clear stance made by Pakistan, it seems quite baffling for Islamabad to stand neutral in today's multi-polar world on account of its multidimensional needs attached with many as Maleeha Lodhi thinks so shown in her write-up to Dawn, *Foreign Policy Challenges Ahead* (Maleeha, 2022).

d) The disturbed contours of Pakistan's Internal Security

Internally, the resurgence of TTP and its sister terrorist outfits shown in the ongoing terrorist activities in parts of the country has severely puzzled Islamabad. Similarly, the radicalization of Pakistani society mostly using the religion for political and personal purposes as shown by the Sialkot incident is also as clear as the day. 'The Sialkot tragedy demonstrates the radicalization of a society which nods violence in the name of faith', Zahid Husain (Zahid,2021) writes, which seems to be of serious concern for those who are worried about the peaceful contours of Pakistani society in present days and the days to come. Hassan Askari Rizvi considers in his *At the Brink* documented in *Pakistan at Seventy* (Shahid, 2019), religious extremism, terrorism, fragile economy and bad governance responsible for the societal rift and break-down. Likewise, the problematic Criminal Justice System of Pakistan is crystal clear as each of its three components: Police, Prison and Court, is stiffing under the mounting and burdening problems which have equivocally been documented by Ishrat Husain in his magnum opus *Governing the Ungovernable* and Christina Fair in *Pakistan at Seventy* where the latter, C. Fair, largely highlights the external pressure put on the law enforcement agencies to restrain from fulfilling their duties to a larger extent.

e) The Menace of Climate Change



While moving towards the non-traditional security threats, Pakistan is facing the deleterious Climate Change dilemma. Pakistan is the fifth most affected nation in the world by the impacts of Climate Change notwithstanding the fact that it contributes barely one percent to the greenhouse gasses emission. Climate Change has aggravated water scarcity due to the prolonged absence of rainfall or intense rainfall causing flood which further causes water wastage due to the lack of water reservoirs and dams. The looming water shortage and the extreme weather events in addition to the accelerating glaciers' melting mostly caused by the climate change have affected the agriculture sector which in turn has aggravated food insecurity and economic downsizing-- which are deemed to be serious issues and need to be addressed.

f) The Education Conundrum of Pakistan

The educational sector of Pakistan is struggling with a plethora of problems. Pakistan is performing poor at imparting quality education which is why it falls short of achieving its educational and learning outcomes. It is usually reported and referred to have failed in achieving its goals of promoting morality, good character and intellectual minds. Faisal Bari, a well-known educationist-cum- economist, while analyzing the failure of Pakistan's education system in inculcating a sense of morality in students especially in the wake of the shameful Sialkot incident, states that Pakistan must revamp not only the contents taught to the students; but also the ones by whom they are taught in order to help them in building their good characters and achieving their sense of morality. He perceives a teacher to be a leader who knows how to lead his students; how to teach them while keeping the prevailing context in mind and who knows how to engage them.

Similarly, the education system of Pakistan is lagging behind the production of intellectual and skilled minds to a large extent by virtue of its mediocre and typical methods of teaching and learning usually the ready-made materials and rote memorization. This has been shown in QS University Ranking across the world where not even a single university of Pakistan has succeeded in securing its place among the top 300 universities across the globe ranked mostly on the basis of maximum quality research quantity. It shows the poor quality of education system of Pakistan. Similarly, the poor educational budget, mostly 2% , is not sufficient to meet the educational requirements and most interesting is the fact that nearly 90% of this 2% budget is allocated to salaries and allowances. Approximately, five percent of the remaining ten percent budget is usurped at the departmental level and the rest of five percent is spent on the physical infrastructure of education. In accordance with UNICEF, 22.8m children between 5 and 16 are out of school. A report by Alif Ailaan, estimates this figure around 25.02 million -- the second highest number in the world after



Nigeria. Thus, the problematic educational sector is harbingering an alarming day to come for Pakistan if it fails to ameliorate it.

g) The infected health sector of Pakistan

The health sector of Pakistan does not remain unaffected by the issues it is facing. The Economic Survey of Pakistan 2020-21 uncovers a number of loopholes found in the health sector of Pakistan. It is granted with a deplorable public-sector expenditure on health nearly 1.2% of the total GDP of Pakistan. Similarly, the National Nutrition Survey 2018, shows that 42% of Women at the Reproductive Age are anemic; forty percent of children under five-year are stunted and 29% are underweight. Pakistan Economic Survey 2020-21 ranks Pakistan second worst from the bottom at life expectancy table with just 67 years only leaving Afghanistan behind where one can expect his life around 64 years. Pakistan has the second highest population growth rate in the region due to which it would have nearly 400m people by 2050, who will either be proved as a dividend, if they are managed properly, or an atomic bomb especially the huge youth bulge--nearly 59% of the current population of Pakistan age between 15 and 59-- if they are not put on a positive track. Likewise, Pakistan observes the highest infant mortality rate in the region-- 55 per 1000 infants. It is struggling with a pathetic physical infrastructure of health. The hospitals and other health caring centers are falling short of basic health equipments as shown by the scarcity of Personal Protection Equipments (PPEs) during the fight against Covid-19. There also prevails the ghost- doctor dilemma. All these are paralyzing the health of people which in turn affect the growth of a nation.

h) The Mounting Population of Pakistan: A Dividend or an Atomic Bomb

The population of Pakistan is leaping by bounds and is less likely to be stopped in near future. The national Population Survey 2017 reports the country's population nearly 215 million and will reach nearly 400m by 2050 . The Pakistan Economic Survey 2020-21 unveils the rapid growth of Pakistan's population estimating its growth rate approximately 2%__ one of the highest and fastest population growth rates recorded in this region. Moreover, Pakistan is a home to a huge youth population comprising nearly 60% to 64% of the total population. The Economic Survey of Pakistan 2020-21 reports 27% of the total population of Pakistan aging between 15 and 29 and nearly 59% between 25 and 59. Furthermore, the country is hosting the second largest youth population in South Asia after Afghanistan. Moreover, it has one of the highest fertility rates in South Asia. Now, such a growing population especially the huge youth bulge needs to be properly managed especially the youth to be well trained and skilled. Therefore, Pakistan needs, as per an estimate, to ensure its 5% to 7% GDP growth rate to deal with such a mounting population



as its mismanagement will bomb and explode the country. Thus, it is also not less than a challenge for Pakistan to decide its future.

Where does the future of Pakistan stand, then?

Foreseeing the future Pakistan through the prism of its growing population: A Bliss

While going through the above challenges, it seems imperative to predict where Pakistan is heading towards in times to come. Pakistan may have a better and prosperous future if it overcomes the aforementioned problems. It has a huge youth bulge comprising nearly 60% of the country's total population-- second highest in South Asia and one of the youngest nations in the world-- which proves to be a dividend for the country's growth and development. Pakistan is the sixth largest populated country in the world granting it with a huge manpower only if it succeeds in providing them with skills and training as Germany, Japan, Singapore and China have trained and skilled their youth thereby contributing to their much faster growing economies. If Pakistan succeeds in managing this huge youth bulge via putting them in positive and constructive activities, it will make sure its rapid growth and development. The youth must be provided with quality education and equal economic opportunities as Moeed W. Yousaf argues in his *Youth and the Future* (Stephen, 2011). But, the same youth horde can turn into an atomic bomb if it is mismanaged. Pakistan must improvise its Technical and Vocational Education and Training to not only accommodate the increasing number of students, but also train them well. For this, it needs to build more TVET institutions as recently it hosts just 3500, TVET institutions across the country which accommodate hardly 0.5m workforce out of the three million who enter each year in its job's market mostly remain untrained and less skilled thereby aggravating the unemployment conundrum and hampering the socioeconomic growth of the country. Therefore, the ball is now in the court of the government of Pakistan to decide the treatment with such a huge and mounting population especially the youth while keeping its future in view.

Forecasting the future of Pakistan through the Spectacles of Economic Reforms

Pakistan will have a bright future if it does away with its downtrodden economy. It can assuage its economic pain through addressing its macroeconomic challenges, i.e., balancing its trade deficit through increasing its exports and downsizing its unnecessary imports which in turn will ease burden on its current account and balance of payment regimes as suggested by Mr. Cameron Munter, a former US ambassador to Pakistan, while answering a question where he sees Pakistan from thirty years now, and shrinking its fiscal deficit via increasing its revenue generation. It must revolutionize its flawed taxation system via



documenting its informal economy and encouraging direct taxation more than the indirect ones. It must follow a strict and fair accountability to hold the corrupt ones accountable for their irregularities as China did under Xi Jinping rule where nearly 278,000 people including ministers and officers and armed forces were persecuted for their alleged involvement in corruption.

Similarly, prosperous and glamorous is the future of Pakistan if it installs and promotes equity based distribution of economic resources as the market inequality under the patronage politics impedes the economic growth as argued by Ishrat Husain in his well-known book, *Pakistan: The Economy of an Elitist State* (Ishrat, 1999). Moreover, the equity-based economic resources' distribution arises middle class in a society which has an awareness about its rights for the fulfillment of which it reaches out to the streets thereby keeping the rulers on the right track as opined by Ishrat Husain in his milestone *Governing the Ungovernable*. Similarly, an inclusive economic regime is pretty much sure to save a nation from an economic downfall as argued by Daron Acemaglau and Robinson in their magnum opus *Why Nations Fail* (Daron et al, 2012), which is why Pakistan must make its economy pluralistic. Therefore, the prosperous and brighter future of Pakistan is as clear as the day only if it revamps its economy on emergency basis.

The would-be Positive Role of Political Reforms in Portraying a bright future of Pakistan

The grim picture of Pakistan today might have a brighter replica in future once it mends its political fabric. It must have a responsible and national-cause-based politics. There must be a mature politics. People must be vigilant and educated. The right to Information under Article 19(A) of the constitution of Pakistan 1973, must be ensured. Local Government under Article 140(A) must not only be established, but also be, fully, authorized in its powers and functions granted upon it by the same Article of the constitution of Pakistan 1973. The politics at local level must not be incentivized and fanned by such elements as baradri, bribery and bargaining of vote among others rather must be emboldened by meritocracy and mature politics because the local government is deemed to be the nursery for the future of politics as it provides future leaders to the nation mostly. The new trends in politics like slang language, mud-slinging and blame-gaming must be shunned. Political tolerance must be spread. There must be constructive opposition. Pakistan needs to promote an inclusive rule. It must ensure the free and fair conduct of elections to address the concerns over the fairness of elections. The introduction of EVMs is a good initiative but it must be moved forward for popular consensus. Finally, Pakistan will surely have a booming future dependent upon the sincerity and strong political will of its leaders who will think about the prosperity and development of Pakistan as argued by the Rahamtul al



Alamin Authority chairman Dr. Ejaz while perceiving Pakistan in years to come. Thus, the better days for Pakistan are knocking at its door, but are conditional to the installation and promotion of responsible, mature and nation-cause-based political culture.

Overhauling the education system and the future of Pakistan

Similarly, a booming and well-functioning education sector of Pakistan can ensure a developed future for Pakistan as opined by Mr. Cameron Munter while foreseeing the future of Pakistan. As it is a well-known saying that classroom builds a nation, the classroom must be the one which is required in a real sense. The education system in Pakistan must, in my view, weed out its traditional and typical methods of learning like rote memorization and crammed materials among others which paralyze the thinking capacity of students which is why Pakistan's universities are mostly unable to compete their external counterparts in quality research and education. Pakistan needs to promote quality education and research and discourage the traditional and mediocre ways of teaching and learning via introducing the practices and activities which embolden intellectuality and thinking process. This shows that the provision of quality education and research is vital for healing the wounds of the injured education system of Pakistan which might be made possible through investing and allocating adequate funds for universities, freeing them from external influence, revamping their physical infrastructure, reforming and revisiting their syllabus, modernizing the ways of teaching and filling their staff -vacancies with talented and eligible teachers, lecturers and professors.

The Economic Survey of Pakistan 2020-21 unveils the education budget of Pakistan 2.9% which is less than even that of Afghanistan's which allocates nearly 4.5% of its total expenditure to education. Therefore, it must increase its public expenditure on education in order to ameliorate the physical infrastructure of its education system, facilitate the families to send their children back to school and address the teachers' concern over minimum salaries. Moreover, it should also adopt strict accountability at the department level. Although the initiation of a Single National Curriculum to provide a level playing field for all students aiming at terminating the apartheid system in education is a good one, it must address the concerns leveled against it. The education system of Pakistan must impart skill and train the students in various fields. Pakistan must bring its 25.5 million out of school children back into the schools as the constitution of Pakistan 1973, makes it compulsory upon the government under its Article 25(A) to give free education to all from 5 to 16 -year. It can do so via diminishing the child labor, granting allowances or financial aid to the families and spreading awareness among the people about the importance and significance of education among others. Therefore, it is a widely held opinion that Pakistan will surely have a shining future if it improvises its education system.



The post-climate and energy crisis Pakistan

Likewise, Pakistan would possibly place per se in the rank of rapidly developing countries if it goes through the menace of climate change successfully. The multi-pronged effects of climate change ranging from water scarcity to food insecurity are really bringing the country's growth to its knees. The massive economic and human losses caused by climate change are hampering the country's growth which is why it is essential to address this serious and alarming issue. Though Pakistan has taken a plethora of steps to cut down or phase down its contribution to greenhouse gasses emission causing climate change via transforming 30% of its energy sector to eco-friendly-- generated by renewable energy sources-- by 2030 under its energy policy 2019, through installing the electrical vehicles to replace the traditional ones, implanting billions of trees under Billion-Tree Tsunami Project and phasing down its coal's use among others, it needs to adopt serious policy measures to avert the severest effects of climate change as Pakistan is the fifth most affected country by climate change in the world.

Likewise, Pakistan must tap its abundant renewable energy sources for energy generation like solar, wind and hydropower which are not only eco-friendly, but are also economical. India set a target in 2009, to install 20 gigawatt from renewable energy sources by 2022, and achieved it four years before the targeted time. Today, India has fourth global position in wind power and fifth in solar power, Ali Tauqeer Sheikh (Tauqir,2021), a well-known climate change expert, writes. Contrary to this, the 1,000MW Quaid-i- Azam Solar Power Park at Bahawalpur is yet to be completed. Pakistan must tap its renewable energy sources as it has a long -spread coastal strip and various open plains in Sindh and Baluchistan which are deemed to be suitable for power generation from wind. It has an abundant amount of solar and hydel capacity. The energy generation from renewable energy sources will ease the burden on the bill of payment of Pakistan and will help in decreasing the import of oil and gas thereby diluting the mounting trade deficit which in turn will preserve the foreign exchange reserves. Therefore, Pakistan is going to be prosperous in future once it overcomes its climate and energy menaces.

The Dividend of Geographical Location for Pakistan

Pakistan has a glamorous future by virtue of its geographical location of phenomenal importance. It has always been one of the main actors in shaping the regional-cum-international geopolitics and geo-economics. Its geographical position is very much attractive to the world major powers like China— for CPEC which is the flagship of BRI and regional security especially in Afghanistan for its geo-economic and soft- power-growing purposes—and US which looks towards Pakistan when it comes upon China and



Afghanistan. Pakistan is also tapping the natural beauty of its land via promoting tourism thereby boosting up its economic growth.

Conclusion

Finally, the future of Pakistan seems to be bright enough which is, however, conditional to the solution of the problems it is facing for quite some times. Its huge youth bulge, only if they are put on the right track, will accelerate its growth as was seen in the case of China and Singapore which grew faster only after making their population skilled, trained and educated. If it achieves its targeted 4.8% for FY22 and required 5% to 7% GDP growth to deal with its growing population, it would be able to stand among the ranks of the progressed nations. The Pakistan of the coming days will be a prosperous one if it succeeds in overcoming its recent challenges ranging from socioeconomic, political, judicial to traditional and non- traditional security threats to its growth and development. Its huge youth bulge, 27% of the total population fall between 15 and 29 and 59% between 15 and 59, its vital geographical location and its abundant natural resources among others will put Pakistan on a track to prosperity and development if the said blessings are taped successfully. Similarly, a sincere leadership followed by a strong political-will would be required for taking Pakistan to its destined prosperous destiny. Therefore, the future of Pakistan seems to be immensely well, but is, as said earlier, well dependent on the fair treatment of the diseases it is coming across now. This is Pakistan which I am foreseeing in future. Where do you see Pakistan in future?



References

- Acemoglu, D et al. (2012) *"Why Nations Fail."* Profile Books,
- Ali, T., (1983) *"Can Pakistan Survive? The Death of a State."* New York: Penguin Books,.
- Bari, F., (2021) *"Quest for Quality Education."* Dawn, 26 November, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1660345>
- Bari, F. (2021) *"Unpacking Education."* Dawn, 10 December, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1662965>
- Burki, S. J. (2019) et al. *"Pakistan at Seventy."* Routledge,.
- Burki, S. J. et al. (2021) *"Pakistan at Seventy."* Routledge. 2019, pp.175-86.
- Cohen, S. et al. (2011) *"The Future of Pakistan."* Brooking Institution Press,.
- Doing Business. (2020) *"Economy Profile of Pakistan."* World Bank Group.
- "Freedom in The World 2021: The Annual Survey of Political, Rights and Civil Liberties"*. Freedom House.
- Husain, Ishrat. *"Governing the Ungovernable."* Oxford University Press, 2018.
- Husain, I. (1999) *"Pakistan: The Economy of an Elitist State."* Oxford University Press, 1999.
- Husain, Z. (2021) *"Lessons from the Sialkot Tragedy"*. Dawn, 8 December, . <https://www.dawn.com/news/1662547/lessons-from-the-sialkot-tragedy>
- Husain, I. (2019) *"Economic Governance"*. *Pakistan at Seventy*, Routledge, 203-213.
- Ludhi, M. (2021) *"Foreign Policy Challenges Ahead."* Dawn, Jan 10, <https://www.dawn.com/news/1668572>
- Sheikh, A. T. (2021) *'Cheap and Clean energy'*. Dawn, December 23,.