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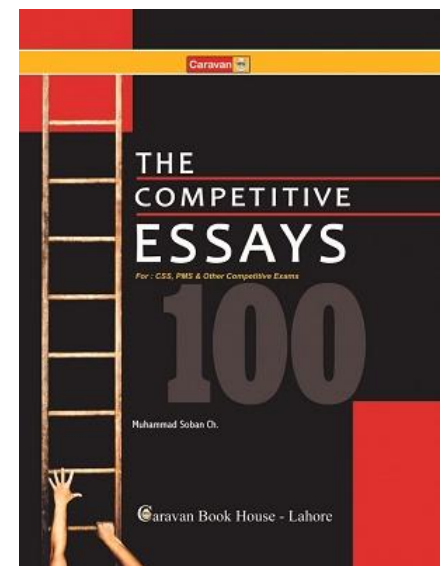
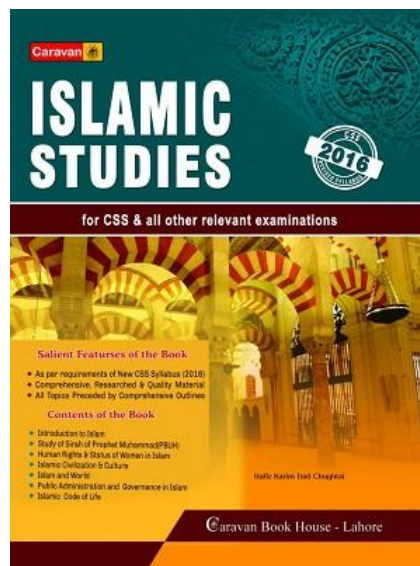
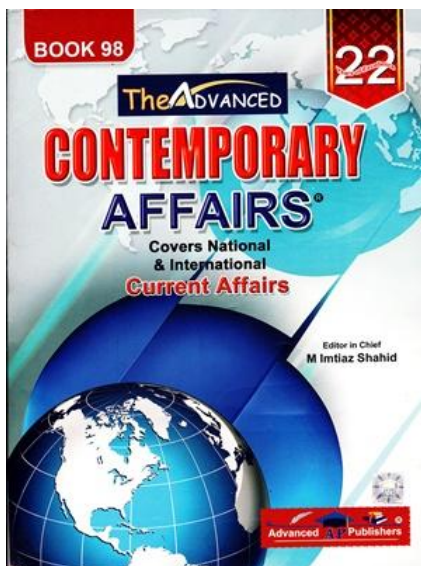
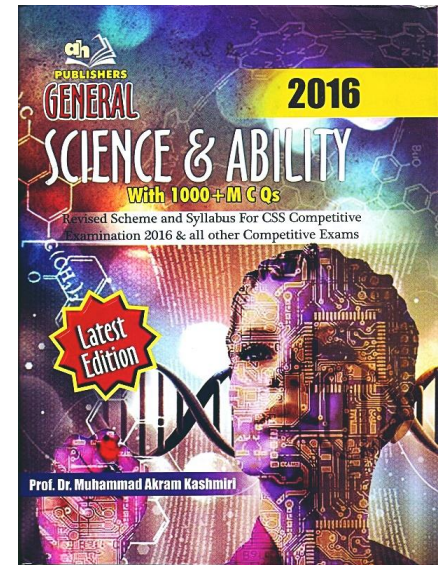
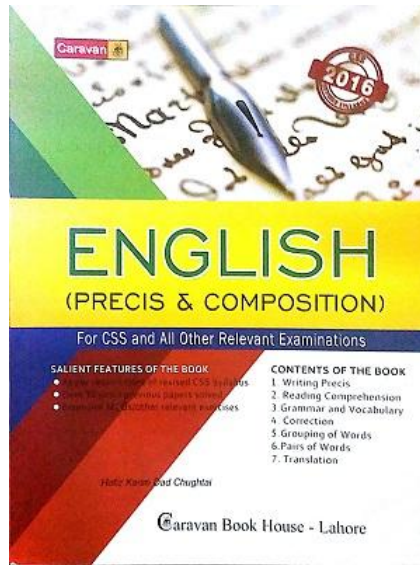
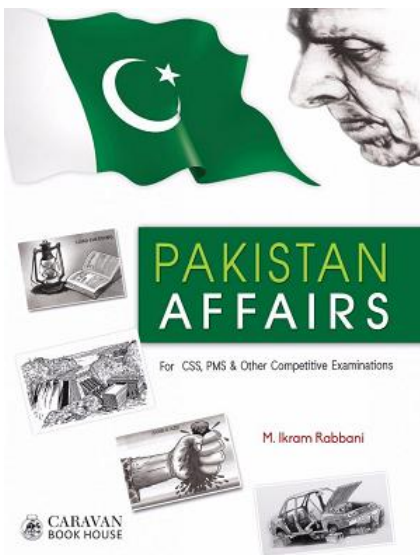
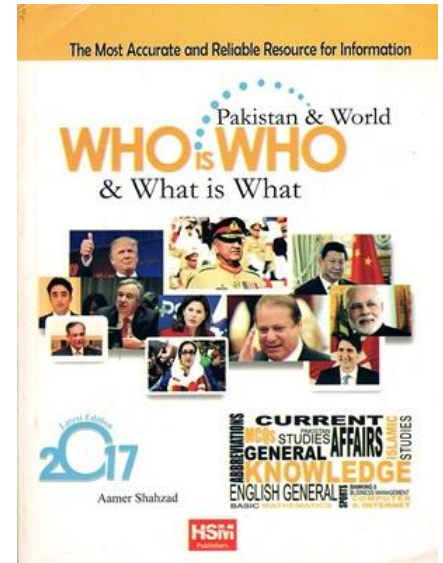
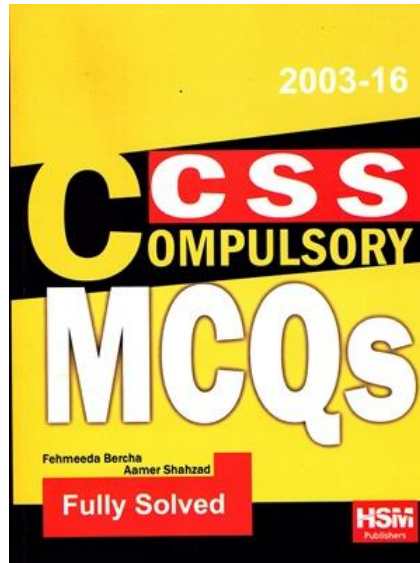
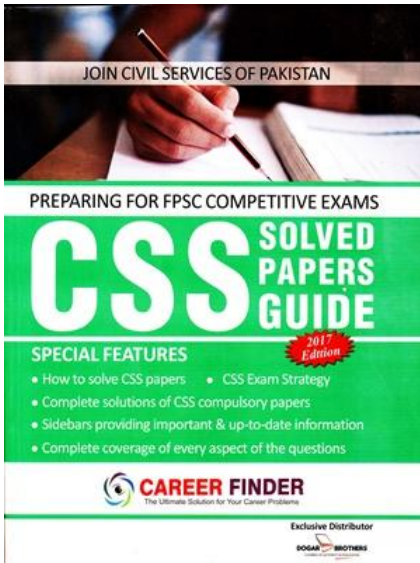
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Table of Contents

PAKISTAN

‘PAKISTAN, INDIA, CHINA, US PART OF SOUTH ASIA’S N-PUZZLE’ BY ANWAR IQBAL.....	6
A SENSIBLE STEP BY INDIA EDITORIAL.....	9
PAK-CHINA-RUSSIA NEXUS ‘SCENARIO-CHANGER’ FOR S ASIA	10
AFGHAN REFUGEES AND PAKISTAN’S PROBLEMS BY MOHAMMAD JAMIL	11
GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN’S EMPOWERMENT BY DR SHAMSHAD AKHTAR.....	14
NEED FOR PAK-AFGHAN CORDIALITY EDITORIAL	17
AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PAK-INDIA TIES EDITORIAL	18
FIXING PAK-US RELATIONS EDITORIAL.....	20
POWER SECTOR PROBLEMS BY DR HAFIZ A PASHA.....	21
THE CENSUS, FINALLY EDITORIAL.....	24
OPERATION RAAD-UL-FASAD BY TEHMINA MAQBOOL KHATTAK.....	26
FOREIGN POLICY OF PAKISTAN: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE BY TEHMINA MAQBOOL	28
HISTORY OF FATA REFORMS BY SARTAJ AZIZ	33
WATER SECURITY BY IGNACIO ARTAZA	37
IMPLEMENTATION OF FATA REFORMS AND CHALLENGES BY ADNAN AZIZ	39
CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS BY JAHANZEB AWAN.....	42

ECONOMY

THE 13TH ECO SUMMIT EDITORIAL	45
CPEC – GEOSTRATEGIC CONNOTATIONS BY IMRAN MALIK	46
WHAT TRUMP GETS WRONG ABOUT THE WTO BY JEFFREY KUCIK AND RAJAN MENON	49
TRADING WITH THE NEIGHBOURS BY MUHAMMAD ASHRAF	52
GWADAR: AT THE CENTRE OF SUCCESS EDITORIAL.....	55
PAKISTAN’S ECONOMY BY ABDUL-LATIF HALIMI.....	56
MONETARY POLICY EDITORIAL	60

EDUCATION

REFORMING EDUCATION SECTOR EDITORIAL	61
A FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO EDUCATION BY ALASTAIR HUTT.....	63
OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM BY DR A Q KHAN	65
LHC SUSPENDS DECISION TO HOLD CSS EXAM IN URDU.....	68

WHY ENGLISH AGAIN? BY ZUBEIDA MUSTAFA.....	69
PAKISTAN EDUCATION STATISTICS 2015-16 BY KHALID KHATTAK	71
WORLD	
RUSSIA, CHINA VETO UN RESOLUTION ON SYRIA SANCTIONS.....	73
N. KOREAN BALLISTIC MISSILE TEST: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS BY BEENISH ALTAF.....	76
‘PAKISTAN, INDIA, CHINA, US PART OF SOUTH ASIA’S N-PUZZLE’ BY ANWAR IQBAL.....	79
GOOD FOREIGN POLICY IS INVISIBLE BY JAMES GOLDGEIER AND ELIZABETH N. SAUNDERS	82
HOW CLEVER IS VLADIMIR PUTIN? BY HARLAN ULLMAN	87
REASONS FOR REJECTING GLOBALISATION: BEYOND INEQUALITY AND XENOPHOBIA – ANALYSIS BY MIGUEL OTERO-IGLESIAS AND FEDERICO STEINBERG.....	90
GLOBAL NUCLEAR BAN EDITORIAL.....	100
EU VOWS UNITY AS BRITAIN BRACES FOR BREXIT.....	101
POST-IMPERIAL NOSTALGIA: BREXIT AND THE EMPIRE BY JEREMY WHITE-STANLEY	103
RUSSIA, TRUMP, AND A NEW DÉTENTE BY ROBERT DAVID ENGLISH	106

PAKISTAN

'PAKISTAN, INDIA, CHINA, US PART OF SOUTH ASIA'S N-PUZZLE' BY ANWAR IQBAL

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's security threat comes from India, which has moved to a new strategy of conducting surgical strikes inside Pakistan, says a new study which also warns that despite nuclearisation, the possibility of another war in the region cannot be ruled out.

The 15-month study project by a Washington think-tank, the Brookings Institution, focuses on the "strategic chain" linking Pakistan, India, China and the US.

It argues that the strategic dynamics among these four nuclear powers cannot be understood or effectively addressed on a strictly bilateral basis.

"While Pakistan responds strategically to India, India responds both to Pakistan and China, which in turn responds both to India and the United States," says a report released on the completion of the project.

The 76-page document is the first Brookings publication articulating the Pakistani perspective on its nuclear doctrine.

"Without Indian restraint, Pakistan is unlikely to constrain its programmes unilaterally. Without Chinese restraint, India will be very reluctant to limit its programmes unilaterally or engage in bilateral controls with Pakistan that, according to India, would limit its options vis-a-vis China. And without US constraints on capabilities of concern to China, Beijing may continue to resist curbing its strategic modernisation efforts," it argues.

The study notes how India and the US have expressed concern about longstanding Pakistan-China cooperation in important areas, and Pakistan has expressed concern about India-US cooperation in important areas, especially in the wake of the US-India civil nuclear deal.

Although not included in the study, the report also explores the influence of other major powers on South Asia's strategic dynamics, arguing th

at Russia too is an additional link in the chain. The report warns that as the nuclear gap between China and India narrows, China may increase its interest in the India-Pakistan nuclear competition. This is because China “fears that the widening nuclear and conventional military gaps between India and Pakistan may threaten regional stability,” the study adds.

It includes a paper on Pakistan’s strategic environment and doctrine authored by Syed Muhammad Ali of the Centre for International Strategic Studies, Islamabad.

The paper summarises Pakistan’s threat perceptions and the steps it is taking to deal with those perceptions.

It argues that “Pakistan’s security threat comes from India” and the longstanding unresolved Kashmir dispute lies at the heart of tensions between the two neighbours.

The author notes that India’s political elite, with its growing economy, is pursuing an ambitious and destabilising military build-up, to become a global power and regional hegemon.

New Delhi, emboldened by a Western-supported military build-up, is less willing to pursue a negotiated and peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, while the Kashmiri people continue to struggle for their UN-recognised right to self-determination.

“The absence of a meaningful, sustainable and result-driven dialogue and the growing strategic partnership between India and the United States are matters of grave concern for Pakistan,” the author warns.

He notes that 42 years after its first nuclear test, New Delhi spends almost seven times more on its military than Islamabad. The author believes that India’s growing conventional and strategic capabilities are overwhelmingly poised against Pakistan.

He also examines the Indian “Cold Start” doctrine, which “aims to rapidly launch shallow thrusts inside Pakistani territory to capture and use it for coercing Pakistan”.

The author points out that the large-scale Indian development of highly-mobile and armoured mechanised formations, artillery, rapid airlift capabilities, forward displacement of troops and garrisons, supporting communication infrastructure and massive spending provide compelling evidence of operationalisation of the “Cold Start” doctrine, despite Indian official reluctance to formally accept it.

He notes that India has the oldest, largest and fastest-growing unsafeguarded nuclear programme of all non-Non-Proliferation Treaty states and the entire developing world.

Rejecting India's argument that its missiles are meant to tackle a perceived threat from China, the author argues: "The most advanced, accurate, and operationally-ready Indian missiles can be employed against Pakistan more effectively than against China."

Published in Dawn, March 4th, 2017

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1318345/pakistan-india-china-us-part-of-south-asias-n-puzzle>

A SENSIBLE STEP BY INDIA | EDITORIAL

INDIA'S decision to attend the Indus Waters Commission meeting, scheduled to be held in this country later this month, is a wise step. The nearly six-decade-old Indus Waters Treaty has proved to be a remarkably durable document, having survived fully fledged wars, bilateral exchanges of verbal vitriol and periods of uneasy peace between Pakistan and India. While both sides — more recently the Indians — have played politics with water, with hawks in Delhi threatening to block the waters flowing into Pakistan, on the ground it has thankfully been the measured approach of the IWT that has governed the way the rivers of this region are to be shared. Though Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has threatened to unilaterally scrap the treaty, especially in light of recent tensions over India-held Kashmir, the fact that the Indians have decided to attend parleys in Pakistan related to the water accord prove that beyond the public sabre-rattling, a more sensible approach is being applied.

It would be premature to hail this move as a return to 'business as usual' in the subcontinent; it should be seen within its limited context. The atmosphere in South Asia is still very much one of suspicion and distrust, and many of the outstanding bilateral issues between Pakistan and India remain frozen. Having said that, the upcoming meeting does at least prove that even in these difficult times, Pakistan and India do recognise the need to discuss their issues in a civil, frank and practical manner. The water issue is an incredibly sensitive one, both within nations and in the bilateral context. Hence, it cannot be left to the demagogues to use as a plank to forward their antagonistic agendas. The upcoming talks must focus on protecting this country's legitimate water rights, while India's concerns must also be addressed within the framework of the IWT. The treaty is one of the few bright spots in the mostly morbid Pakistan-India relationship; it must, therefore, be built on and taken forward.

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1318439/a-sensible-step-by-india>

PAK-CHINA-RUSSIA NEXUS 'SCENARIO-CHANGER' FOR S ASIA

ISLAMABAD - Terming CPEC a 'scenario-changer' for South Asia rather than being just a 'game-changer', Chinese experts on the region inferred emerging nexus between Pakistan, China and Russia to be a defining development for the region's flourishing future.

They were deliberating at a session on 'Trump's South Asia Policy: Quadrilateral interaction between Pakistan, China, India and USA and Challenges to CPEC', held at Institute of Policy Studies (IPS).

The session was partaken by a three-member delegation from China Institutes of Contemporary International Relations (CICIR) – China's largest, oldest and most influential research institutes for international studies, overseen by the Central Committee of the Communist Party of China – which was led by Hu Shisheng, director, CICIR's Institute of South, Southeast Asian and Oceanic Studies, China.

The research faculty of IPS was represented by Lead Coordinator Irfan Shahzad and researchers Fareeha Sarwar and Waqar-un-Nisa as key discussants.

Shisheng said that while he had no doubts that the Chinese dream of CPEC was fast becoming a reality which had immense potential for all its stakeholders. Transparency as well as expectation management must be induced as an integral part of all CPEC projects to ensure their smooth progress, he added.

Another Chinese delegate Lin Yiming, in his presentation, referred to decades of close and cordial relations between China and Pakistan stating that the relationship, which was always built around deep-rooted trust and mutual respect, was only expected to get stronger with time, especially with the advent of CPEC.

He believed that China's stance and policy over Pakistan was certain to remain equally amiable in distant future as well.

Du Yanjun, the special assistant to CICIR President, viewed that the emerging nexus of Pakistan, China and Russia will be yet another important outcome of CPEC along with many others. She maintained that the Chinese were eagerly looking ahead for this trilateral collaboration and its possible outgrowths.

Source: <http://nation.com.pk/national/06-Mar-2017/pak-china-russia-nexus-scenario-changer-for-s-asia>

AFGHAN REFUGEES AND PAKISTAN'S PROBLEMS BY MOHAMMAD JAMIL

Before dwelling on the subject, it would be pertinent to identify the causes and genesis of the refugee crisis especially during the last seven decades. After the World War-II, the US approach was to involve all major regions and countries that were vital to its global strategy in military pacts such as CENTO, SEATO and NATO, and bilateral military relationships. With a view to controlling their national resources, it toppled the democratic governments of Prime Minister Mossadagh of Iran, and President Allende of Chile through military coups, whose only crime was that they had nationalized essential industries like oil and copper respectively, so as to keep control over their natural resources. The US continued with its policy imposing its version of democracy in Afghanistan, Iraq, Libya and other developing countries in the Middle East on one pretext or another.

The crisis of Afghan refugees in Pakistan and Iran also owed its origin to US interference in Afghanistan, firstly in 1979 when it started a proxy war after Soviet Union's invasion in Afghanistan. After 9/11 events the US and NATO forces invaded Afghanistan. In both of the above cases, millions of Afghan nationals crossed over to Iran and Pakistan and elsewhere. International community should realize that for more than 37 years, the government and the people of Pakistan accommodated these refugees who are settled in Tribal area and throughout Pakistan. According to the United Nations Refugee Agency (UNHCR), hundreds of thousands refugees returned to Afghanistan, and some 1.6 million Afghans are legally residing in Pakistan, having been granted proof of registration (PoR) by the UN body. Having that said, UNHCR should make arrangements to repatriate Afghan refugees by the end of 2017 to address Pakistan's security concerns.

Last month, the federal cabinet at a meeting presided over by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif approved an extension in Afghan refugees' stay till December 31, 2017. Pakistan has been continuously extending their stay since 2007; however, the government has this time round decided to strictly implement immigration laws along the border with Afghanistan. It requires registered refugees to provide their Proof of Registration (POR) cards before going to their country, and obtain visas to enter Pakistan again. A few post-terrorist attack investigations have found the involvement of Afghan refugees in housing or helping the terrorists; and refugees' camps also have been used by the criminals as well as the terrorists. It was in this backdrop that the state decided to take measures vis-à-vis management of the borders, verification of the identity documents of refugees, their mobile phone SIM cards as well as implementation of visa regime.

These steps have caused inconvenience to the Afghan refugees, yet they cooperated

with the government for the security of the host nation. Their difficulties have been highlighted by the world Human Rights Watch report 2017 stating that the Afghan refugees have been occasionally harassed and subjected to other abuses. But there is no denying that Pakistan's own security has been adversely impacted. After 9/11 events and ensuing war, Pakistan faced spectre of terrorism and the country had over 60,000 casualties as a result of the terror-related activities. Confirmed intelligence reports have indicated the involvement of some of the refugees hosted in the camps as well as from those settled outside the camps. Pakistan has the right to take necessary measures if some criminals in the guise of refugees become a source of instability. International institutions must understand the threat to Pakistan's economy and security.

Proper documentation and Proof of Registration (PoR) implementation together with better border management will help UNCHR as well as Government of Pakistan to better manage and regulate the Afghan refugees' issue. However, most Afghan refugees avoid documentation due to cultural egalitarianism and consider it as their insult. Process of the repatriation, which is going on snail's pace, has also not been very transparent and fool proof. Most refugees going back to Afghanistan have a revolving door approach to come back to Pakistan amid security and economic concerns. Growing influence of India in Afghanistan is also causing strains on Pak-Afghan relations. Pakistan has proved its sincerity as a brotherly neighboring country by hosting record number of refugees. Pakistan, however, expects of the Afghan government to take action against TTP elements and Daesh and not to blame Pakistan for all the wrongs in Afghanistan at the behest of India.

At his confirmation hearing at the Senate Armed Forces Committee on 17th January 2017, US Defence Secretary James Mattis stated that 50 per cent of Afghanistan is controlled by the Taliban. In fact, the Taliban control more area than that. Afghan Government, dominated by Northern Alliance elements, does not wish to see peace in Afghanistan, because they will have to share power with the Taliban. Anyhow, the UN and its subsidiary organizations like UNHCR must come forward to take up the matter with the US, NATO and EU member countries to arrange repatriation of Afghan Refugees to their homeland. In the overview of 2015 UNHCR country operations profile Afghanistan, it was expected that the newly-formed national unity Government would create an enabling environment for sustainable return of Afghan refugees. The Solutions Strategy for Afghan Refugees (SSAR) remains the main policy framework for sustainable reintegration of those returning to Afghanistan.

Officially, the year 2015 was said to mark the end of the agreement that Pakistan had with Afghanistan and the United Nations High Commission for Refugees (UNHCR) allowed Afghan refugees to stay in Pakistan. Many a time, Pakistan Foreign Office has

said that it would like the UNHCR and international community to help the Afghan government to create necessary environment inside Afghanistan so that these people can return. But instead of taking action, Brussels-based International Crisis Group (ICG) had advised Pakistan to ease the uncertain and insecure lives of the millions of Afghan refugees on its territory. In the wake of Syrian crisis of the US and West's own making, the refugees are facing hardships and many European countries are not willing to accommodate them. Yet they continue to accuse Pakistan of not looking after Afghan refugees, and are not willing to address the problems faced by Pakistan.

The writer is a freelance columnist. He can be reached at mjamil1938@hotmail.com

Source: <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/07-Mar-17/afghan-refugees-and-pakistans-problems>

GENDER EQUALITY AND WOMEN'S EMPOWERMENT BY DR SHAMSHAD AKHTAR

Addressing gender inequality and ensuring equal participation and opportunities for women and girls in Asia-Pacific is central to achieving progress on the 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development. Tackling gender-based inequalities in economic opportunities as well as in access to land, financial instruments and ICT tools would both improve economic growth and support the broader 2030 Agenda for Sustainable Development, especially in the developing countries of the region. For instance, annual global output could be boosted by \$28.4 trillion by 2025 through increasing women's participation in the economy.¹ Similarly, closing gender gaps in hours worked, participation and productivity could result in GDP gains of up to 48 percent in South Asia and 30 percent in East and Southeast Asia (excluding China) by 2025.² As this year's celebration of International Women's Day shines the spotlight on women in the world of work, it is worthwhile to take stock of developments in this context in the Asia-Pacific region.

Since adopting the Beijing Declaration and Platform for Action in 1995, some progress in gender equality and women's empowerment has been made in Asia and the Pacific on several fronts. Gender parity has been achieved in primary education and maternal mortality rates have dropped by 64 percent in the region. At the same time, the number of women-owned businesses has steadily increased, with 54 million enterprises now owned and operated by women in Asia-Pacific.

Yet despite enormous gains in closing education and health gaps, progress has been slow and uneven in advancing women's economic empowerment in the region. The labour force participation rate of women has actually worsened, with the female-to-male ratio declining to 61 women for every 100 men in 2016 from 67 to 100 in 1990. Compared to their male counterparts, women are systematically paid less and are more likely to find themselves in vulnerable employment with low wages, no formal contracts or labour rights and minimal social protection. In 2015, the gender pay gap in the region as a whole reached an astounding 20 percent. Furthermore, the percentage of women trapped in vulnerable employment remains worryingly high across the sub-regions of Asia-Pacific - 68 percent in South Asia, 47 percent in North and Central Asia, 42 percent in East Asia, 31 percent in South-East Asia and 21 percent in the Pacific.

Gender-based inequalities in the ownership of productive assets and access to productive technologies also continue to be pervasive in the region. Significantly, fewer women than men are agricultural landholders, with less than 10 percent of women

holding land in Bangladesh, Fiji, the Islamic Republic of Iran and Nepal. Women are 14 percent less likely to own a mobile phone than men in Asia-Pacific, with the gap most pronounced in South Asia. There is also a marked gender divide in internet usage across the region with internet penetration rates averaging at only 39.5 percent for females compared to 47.5 percent for males.

Strategic action and transformative measures will be critical to advancing gender equality and women's economic empowerment in the Asia-Pacific region. Such measures include fostering enabling macroeconomic environments for job creation and access to decent work for all as well as harnessing technological innovations to accelerate progress towards greater financial and digital inclusion of women and girls. Effective laws and frameworks are also essential to integrating gender equality perspectives in national institutions, policies and programmes, including in the provision of women workers with social protection and income security; and in the recognition, reduction and redistribution of unpaid care work. Beyond political commitment, the mobilisation of sustained financing, including through gender-responsive budgeting, is imperative for the full implementation of initiatives to empower women economically. Improved disaggregated data will also be invaluable in informing decision-making and monitoring the impact of policies and programmes.

ESCAP has consistently advocated and will continue to make the case to governments that it is in our collective best interest to create meaningful opportunities and decent work for all, regardless of gender. For instance, ESCAP has been working with governments and other stakeholders to encourage the adoption of legal and regulatory measures that remove barriers to women's entrepreneurship and foster the creation of more SMEs by women. We also actively engage financial institutions to increase women's access to credit and financial services, assist in developing standards for fair and equal treatment of women job applicants and enhance women's access to market information, social networks and services.

Several countries in the region are now well-placed to make innovative uses of technological advances to accelerate progress towards greater financial and digital inclusion of women and girls. Beyond the political commitment, mobilisation of sustained financing, including through gender-responsive budgeting, is imperative for the full implementation of women's economic empowerment initiatives.

It is appropriate for us to reflect on these opportunities and to recommit ourselves to the goal of achieving gender equality so that all women and girls in Asia and the Pacific will be able to reach their full potential.

(The writer is a United Nations Under-Secretary-General and the Executive Secretary of the Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific)

1. Woetzel et al. (2015) The Power of Parity: How Advancing Women's Equality can Add \$12 Trillion to Global Growth. McKinsey Global Institute.

<http://www.mckinsey.com/global-themes/employment-and-growth/how-advancing-womens-equality-can-add-12-trillion-to-global-growth>.

Source: <http://fp.brecorder.com/2017/03/20170309152116/>

NEED FOR PAK-AFGHAN CORDIALITY | EDITORIAL

Goodwill and soft borders are the way out

Back to back terrorist attacks of a most horrendous kind in Pakistan and Afghanistan should make the two countries realise the need to act together to deal with the menace. The biggest military power in the world fought the longest war in its history in Afghanistan but failed to end insurgency and eradicate the virus of terrorism. Pakistan army led by a most determined general managed to clear North Waziristan and Fata agencies from the terrorists but audacious attacks by terrorists still continue to rock the country. Bad relations between the two neighbouring countries have helped the terrorists set up sanctuaries on both sides. There is no hope of the elimination of terrorism unless the two countries decide to conduct coordinated operations.

The attack in Sehwan killing about 100 and the one in a military hospital in Kabul taking toll of about 40 should end the mutual blame game. That 55,000 Afghans and Pakistanis crossed the border in the two-day long respite indicates both the gravity of the crisis and the level of dependence between the two countries. That President Ashraf Ghani has congratulated the PSL final's winning team and invited it to Kabul indicates that despite the prevailing bitterness not all the goodwill is lost.

Pakistan needs to reciprocate by opening the closed borders to allow the trade between the two countries. Being the larger country it needs to go an extra mile to remove Afghan grievances in a bid to restart mutual dialogue to bring peace in the region. For this Afghanistan has to be treated as an equal sovereign country. There is a need to realise that unless the two develop mutual confidence and work jointly to ensure peace militaries alone cannot suppress the highly motivated and resourceful lot of terrorists who are creating havoc on both sides of the Pak-Afghan border. In a world wary of border restrictions, both countries can resolve issues like that of Durand Line through soft borders that allow free movement once the issue of terrorism is dealt with.

Source: <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/03/10/need-for-pak-afghan-cordiality/>

AN OPPORTUNITY FOR PAK-INDIA TIES | EDITORIAL

Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has led the BJP to an unexpected sweep of state elections in Uttar Pradesh, a vast, bellwether electoral battleground.

Having defeated regional rivals and now set up the party for consolidation in the upper house of the Indian parliament, Mr Modi has reaffirmed his general election victory of 2014 and established the BJP as India's pre-eminent political party. What does this mean for Pakistan?

First, Mr Modi and his ultranationalist party resorted to familiar Pakistan-bashing in the run-up to the election. That must stop. Time and again, when faced with tough electoral battles, Mr Modi and his allies have sought an edge by deploying harsh rhetoric against Pakistan.

In the UP campaign, Mr Modi went so far as to suggest that Pakistan was responsible for a deadly train crash in the state last November that killed 148 people. It may just be a domestic campaign tactic, but it causes ripples across the border and further complicates the bilateral relationship.

ADVERTISEMENT Second, with a resounding electoral victory, Mr Modi now has an opportunity to pivot and put behind him the recent anti-Pakistan acrimony. Indeed, the leaderships in both India and Pakistan have an opportunity in the months ahead that may not appear again for several years.

In Pakistan, the civilian and military leadership has renewed their commitment to combating terrorism and extremism in all their manifestations, and the extension of Operation Raddul Fasaad to Punjab takes the country one step closer to fulfilling that pledge. Moreover, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and his government have consistently offered talks without preconditions to India. Most recently, during his visit to Turkey last month, Mr Sharif once again emphasised that Pakistan wants good neighbourly relations with India.

Last year, bookended by the Pathankot and Uri attacks, Mr Modi turned his back on his own recognition that dialogue with Pakistan is the only way ahead. It is time Mr Modi and his government returned to the path of dialogue that had so publicly been embraced in late 2015.

Finally, there is an age-old reality that both countries must confront: political will is needed if a meaningful breakthrough is to be achieved. Neither side has demonstrated the necessary will.

When Mr Modi re-engaged Pakistan, the possibility of spoilers attempting to prevent or disrupt bilateral dialogue was real. But political will crumpled in India after the Pathankot attack. And while Mr Sharif has manoeuvred a crackdown against the LeT/JuD leadership, he has been unable to deliver any meaningful progress on the Mumbai attacks-related trials or the Pathankot investigation.

Pakistan and India have a shared past and a common destiny. But to realise that destiny, the leaderships in both countries will need to demonstrate sustained statesmanship.

Published in Dawn, March 13th, 2017

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1320109/an-opportunity-for-pak-india-ties>

FIXING PAK-US RELATIONS | EDITORIAL

One year into the job and Gen Joseph Votel may yet be the man to influence a positive shift in the US engagement with Pakistan. That Gen Votel used last week's congressional hearing to become the first American general to publicly acknowledge Pakistan's actions against both the Haqqani network and the Afghan Taliban operating from inside its borders underscores this. This shift in rhetoric ought to be welcomed.

Testifying before the Senate Armed Services Committee, the CENTCOM chief opted to view Indian posturing through the Afghan prism, going as far to include subsequent security realities for Pakistan. While his assertions fell short of what Islamabad has long been calling for on this front, the state apparatus ought to think twice before dismissing them entirely out of hand. Step-by-step pragmatism is needed.

Fears of an Indo-Pak war going nuclear are pure hyperbole. Nothing more than a timely reminder that Delhi would do well not to overplay its designation as Washington's strategic partner for the 21st century. The immediate US priority remains securing Afghanistan. Pakistan is the strategic partner needed to achieve this. If Islamabad is sufficiently smart it will regard this as a small step towards rebuilding the relationship. This can only happen if Washington's apparent goodwill continues. If not, we return to the drawing board of mutual recriminations and distrust. And assertions that seven of the 20 US-designated terrorist outfits in the Af-Pak region are Pakistan-based will prompt the usual if not invalid knee-jerk response that goes something like this.

It is the US that unleashed instability within Pakistan's borders when it chose military intervention in Afghanistan over having the Taliban hand over Bin Laden to a third country, most likely Pakistan itself. This misstep saw much of the Al Qaeda leadership flee to Pakistan, resulting in its superficial decimation in Afghanistan, as underscored by then CIA director, Leon Panetta, back in 2010: "I think at most, we're looking at maybe 50 to 100, maybe less. It's in that vicinity. There's no question that the main location of Al Qaeda is in tribal areas of Pakistan." Meaning that to all outward appearances the US simply stood by and watched while members of Bin Laden's network sought refuge in the very country whose nuclear blueprints the Al Qaeda chief had been actively seeking since 1998, resulting in him unsuccessfully approaching at least thrice the AQ Khan network. And which, in post-9/11 terms, translated into US manoeuvring against the so-called Talibanisation of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. Let's hope this is the start of a new strategic relationship.

Foregoing in endless rounds of the blame game renders everyone a loser. In all senses of the word.

POWER SECTOR PROBLEMS BY DR HAFIZ A PASHA

The Secretary, Ministry of Water and Power, had provided the reassurance in his newspaper article of the 14th of December 2016 that the power sector has come out of its worst financial crisis. This was apparently due to a fall in distribution losses, increase in billing recovery and reduction in energy subsidies. The biggest breakthrough was the transition by the power sector from adding about Rs 200 billion to new arrears every year to just Rs 8 billion in 2016. Consequently, the level of circular debt was, more or less, capped at Rs 348 billion.

The last few days have witnessed contrary statements from different sources that the power sector remains beleaguered with serious problems. The German state-owned development bank, KfW, has questioned the power ministry's claim of turning around the power sector through effective generation and management.

According to KfW, the improvement in generation of over 25% since 2012-13 is due primarily to new plants initiated before the present government came into power in 2013. Conversely, major public sector power plants have cumulatively underperformed since 2013.

The reality is that the big jump in electricity generation of over 13% came in 2013-14 after the large retirement of circular debt in the sector of Rs 480 billion. Thereafter, the rate of increase has slowed down. In fact, in 2015-16, the total generation declined by 0.4%.

Another major stakeholder in the sector has also entered the scene. This is the Independent Power Producers Advisory Council (IPPAC). In a notice, published in newspapers, the Council has headlined that circular debt is soaring again. This is contrary to the statement earlier by the Secretary, Ministry of Water and Power, that the level of circular debt had effectively been capped.

According to IPPAC, the circular debt had reached Rs 414 billion as of February 15, 2017. The verified, audited and undisputed overdue portion of the IPPs is Rs 254 billion. Most of the members of IPPAC have called the GOP Guarantees for a portion of these due amounts. In addition, there is a build-up rapidly of GST refunds. Repeated requests by IPPAC to the GoP to discuss these issues have gone unanswered.

Another SOS has come from the Pakistan State Oil (PSO), which is the major importer of petroleum products. Almost 91% of the furnace oil used by power plants is supplied

by PSO. Receivables of this state-owned company have risen to Rs 280 billion. As such, it has asked for immediate payment of Rs 30 billion.

The roots of the current problem are that the National Transmission and Distribution Company (NTDC) is not getting sufficient subsidy from the Government of Pakistan to reduce the build-up of receivables along the value chain of the power sector. The worst hit is PSO, which is at the beginning of this chain, and cannot build up payables with suppliers, as bulk of the supply is imported.

PSO had a similar problem in late 2014, when receivables had risen to Rs 222 billion. Consequently, many L/Cs for import were dishonoured. This led to the shortage of petrol, especially in Punjab. Such a crisis must not happen again and PSO needs to be injected urgently with liquidity.

Under pressure from the IMF and following levy of surcharges, there has been a big decline in the tariff differential subsidy to the power sector from Rs 349 billion in 2012-13 to Rs 171 billion in 2015-16. The amount budgeted for this purpose is even less at Rs 118 billion in 2016-17. Almost two-thirds of the reduction in the fiscal deficit since 2013-14 is due to cuts in the power subsidy. It appears that there has been major under provisioning of the subsidy to meet the fiscal deficit target. This has contributed to the buildup of circular debt.

What is the case of the IPPs? The basic question relates to the quality of services provided and whether they are able to generate reasonable profits. Today, there are 31 IPPs, with share in installed capacity in the sector of 37%. However, the share in electricity generated is higher at over 43%. In an earlier State of Industry report, Nepra had said that 'the performance of IPPs is relatively better than the public sector Gencos'.

What is the level of profitability of IPPs? The two largest IPPs, Hubco and Kapco, are publicly quoted companies and detailed financial information on them is available. In 2015, HUBCO's profits increased by as much as 53%. The rate of return on equity was over 33%. Similarly, KAPCO's net profits rose by 27% in 2015, providing for the return on equity of almost 35%. Smaller IPPs have return on equity generally in excess of 20%.

Therefore, IPPs are making large profits. Their return on equity is substantially higher than the average of all companies. The extremely liberal 1994 Power Policy gave lifetime income tax exemption to all IPP projects. Therefore, the post-tax rate of return is relatively high and over twice the national average.

The lifetime income tax exemption is unprecedented and no other industry enjoys such special treatment. According to FBR, the annual revenue foregone from IPPs was Rs 50 billion in 2015-16. Cumulatively, since 2009-10, this exemption has cost the exchequer almost Rs 250 billion.

How have such large profits been generated in the presence of structural problems in the power sector like the circular debt? The answer lies, first, in the significant margin between the tariff for supply to NTDC and cost of generation per kwh. For example, in the case of HUBCO the margin has increased from 8% in 2010 to 16% in 2015..

Second, IPPs have managed their liquidity problem of large receivables by building up large payables with fuel suppliers like PSO and the gas companies. For example, at the end of 2015, payables of HUBCO were equivalent to 80% of receivables. Therefore, the circular debt problem has primarily affected much more entities like PSO and much less the IPPs.

The IPPAC has, therefore, tended to somewhat exaggerate the problems faced by IPPs. Nevertheless, a situation must be avoided where sovereign guarantees are invoked. This could worsen the perception of foreign investors about Pakistan.

There is one message from IPPAC which needs to be understood clearly. While commending the GoP for its efforts to add 7000MW of capacity by 2018, the Council has expressed concern that this will further increase the circular debt, unless GOP takes corrective measures today.

Finally, we await the State of Industry Report for 2015-16 by the regulating agency, Nepra. This has been a report of exceptionally high quality with a clear and objective assessment of developments in the power sector. Hopefully, Nepra will have sufficient autonomy in the finalisation of this report for 2015-16 to be able to present the true picture.

(The writer is Professor Emeritus and former Federal Minister)

Source: <http://fp.brecorder.com/2017/03/20170314153844/>

THE CENSUS, FINALLY | EDITORIAL

The start of a new census exercise is a welcome development, and now more than ever before the authorities must do everything to ensure that the results are credible and not marred by allegations of being manipulated.

Critically, the requirement to present a CNIC needs to be reconsidered because it will result in a large number of people either not being counted at all, or being counted as foreigners. Trying to count foreigners is itself a tricky task if it relies on self-designation as the criterion.

Even though internal migration is not being targeted for data collection, an assessment of migration patterns will still be possible using the reported figures for mother tongues. In previous census exercises in the country, this had been a particularly strong sticking point since both Sindh and Punjab have difficulty in acknowledging the number of migrants settled in their respective areas of jurisdiction.

This time it is crucial that the census reflect a realistic picture of how the demographic balance has changed in each province since the last count was held in 1998.

The data gathered by the enumerators will be used for a wide variety of purposes that go far beyond seat shares in parliament and the NFC award. This is our chance to get a clearer picture of the demographic balance, as well as of urbanisation trends in the country. The data can be used by law enforcement as well as local governments — for example when deciding shares in district finance commission awards.

For so many reasons that have little to do with politics, the quality of the data must stand above reproach and suspicion, and with the start of the exercise, the burden of ensuring that rests more than ever on the shoulders of those tasked with overseeing the operation.

Transparency is the biggest support they will have in ensuring a credible outcome. In the past, suspicions have been raised as a result of the quality of analyses done on the census information, so it would be an idea for the authorities to release the data quickly and make it accessible to multiple research communities simultaneously.

The speed of the turnaround will go a long way towards dispelling any suspicions of possible tinkering. Hopefully, the process to collate the data into a spreadsheet format is well thought through since simply making the entries in a useful format will be an

enormously time-consuming exercise and should not be required to be performed more than once.

The results are eagerly awaited because this is the first time we will be getting data on a number of fronts, such as the transgender community or the number of households with a functioning toilet.

Part of the burden of ensuring credibility also rests with provincial governments now that they have a voice at the table, and spurious allegations of wrongdoing must be avoided.

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OPERATION RAAD-UL-FASAD BY TEHMINA MAQBOOL KHATTAK

Fasad, most commonly translated “disorder in the land”. It appears in Quran 5:32-33. In verse 32, it states that those who foment fasad may be killed without incurring the condemnation which God stipulated to the Israelites , namely, that “if you kill one person it is as though you have killed all mankind”. In the next verse, it specifies further that those who foment fasad should be “killed or crucified” as a suitable punishment.

Pakistan is one of the conspicuous nation of the world which is seriously affected by terrorism. Pakistan confronted such a variety of issues amid psychological oppressor attack. Not just financially yet different fields like education, tourism, industries and numerous different fields are particularly affected by fear mongering.

After the achievement of Operation Zarb-e-Azb which was begun in 2014 in the wake of restored wave of psychological oppression by the fear based oppressor outfits, there was a relative decrease in dread exercises. In any case, late days have seen upsurge in fear exercises, for example two most dangerous assaults one at the Mall in Lahore and the other at the Mazar of Lal Shahbaz Qalandar it has turned out to be important to stem psychological warfare. With this foundation the Army Chief met the corps authorities and heads of security organizations at the Army Headquarters in Lahore. He pronounced to launch another exhaustive Operation named "Raad-ul-Fasad" to wipe out each sort of fear mongering from its foundations. Armed force, Air Force, Navy and all other security and insight organizations would take an interest in this hard and fast operation. Its fundamental target is to solidify the additions of operation Zarb-e-Azb. It would likewise give security on the outskirts. Punjab Rangers will be the basic piece of this operation. The proceeding with exercises of the psychological oppressors would fall inside its ambit. This operation is a piece of the National Action Plan.

The military of Pakistan propelled a nation-wide crackdown code named 'Raad-ul Fasad' against psychological militants and fanatics. The operation, started in the background of most recent rush of fear mongering, visualizes inclusion of all wings of military, paramilitary associations, non military personnel law requirement organizations and knowledge offices. It has four fundamental components operation in Punjab by Rangers continuation of operations in different parts of the nation; fringe administration and de-weaponisation and unbalanced control.

As the operation is being driven by military, which have track record of conveying, there are motivations to trust that it would turn out to be an amazing achievement and prompt to finish disposal of fear mongers and bad-to-the-bone offenders. There ought to be no benevolence against those related, in any capacity, with psychological oppression and

genuine violations as both our religion and traditions that must be adhered to imagine no mercy for such components.

The general population of Pakistan have no sensitivities for such components and consistently request that naughtiness mongers whether they are inside the nation or abroad ought to be managed an iron hand. Yet, it must be borne at the top of the priority list this is, maybe, going to be the last shot and chance to wipe out fear mongering with full compel and at the same time take important measures to manage the increases on long haul premise; generally individuals would lose confidence in the capacity of their authority to convey on this record. It is good that the latest phase of operation includes use of land, air and naval forces to take care of threats from all directions.

Pak-Afghan fringe is as of now shut and an extraordinary operation is going on, while Navy would, ideally, guarantee that there are no breaks or interruption from seaside belts of the nation. So also, contribution of Rangers in Punjab and Pakistan Army and different organizations in the length and broadness of the nation could mean psychological oppressors and lawbreakers would have no place to cover up or look for shelter. In any case, we would suggest that the operation ought to be quick and those caught on charges of fear based oppression and offensive wrongdoings ought to meet their foe without loss of time. We should likewise remember that delayed contribution of the three administrations in an inside operation would not be to our greatest advantage. It ought to likewise be guaranteed that organization of military work force for operation doesn't influence their accessibility for the fundamental practice of Population Census.

Author Tehmina Maqbool Khattak is Research Analyst on Special Field International Relations.

FOREIGN POLICY OF PAKISTAN: PAST, PRESENT AND FUTURE BY TEHMINA MAQBOOL

Pakistan's Foreign Policy in Light of Quaid-e-Azam's Words:

“Our Foreign Policy is one of friendliness and good-will towards all the nations of the world. We do not cherish aggressive designs against any country or nation. We believe in the policy of honesty and fair play in national and international dealings and are prepared to make our utmost contribution to the promotion of peace and prosperity among the nations of the world. Pakistan will never be found lacking in extending its material and moral support to the oppressed and suppressed peoples of the world and in upholding the principles of the United Nations Charter”.

No country today can think of a life independent of other nations. Each nation needs to create relations with different nations to meet its necessities in efficient, modern and innovative fields. It is accordingly important for each nation to figure a sound remote approach. Pakistan is an important third world country, in its formative stage. It also has formulated her foreign policy keeping in mind its geography, politics and economics.

The foreign policy of a country is in a sense a protrusion of its internal, social, political and economic policies. Pakistan was born under ominous circumstances. As with all other countries, Pakistan's Foreign Policy is dictated by the inevitable actualities of history and of geology and by exceptional impacts which might be of fleeting nature. In sagacity, foreign policy is the plan of moves made by differing areas of the legislature of a state in its relations with different bodies comparatively following up on the universal stage, keeping in mind the end goal to propel the national interests. Foreign Policy consists of the external actions taken by decision makers with the purpose of achieving long-range goals and short-term objectives. Action is repressed by the apparent conditions of the state, which incorporates its geology, its economy, its demography its political structure, culture, custom and its military-vital circumstance. In any case, move is made with reference to other (states) comparably following up on the global stage, and is in like manner protected by their activity. This might be known as the international environment of leaders.

There are some determinants of Pakistan's foreign policy; Security, Ideology, National Interests, Diplomacy, Public Opinion and Decision making. As a matter of fact, like any other country, the rationally chief influence on foreign policy of Pakistan lies in the goals that policy seeks to accomplish. These are generally security, welfare, and preservation or promotion of ethics. The hunt for security is perennial. All foreign policies of all states

are basically influenced by it. One of the basic goals is the aspiration to maintain or promote values. Since Pakistan had come into existence in the name of Islam hence promotion of genial and close relationships with the Muslim states has shaped the cardinal principle of Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan's membership of OIC and unshakable support for the just cause of Palestinians speak volumes about our efforts in this connection. A country must deal with other states not on the basis of religion or language but for peace, prosperity and harmony in the world.

Our nation's history inclines us to harp on the strains of the common and military relationship and the resultant effect on our legislative issues. Understood in the fitfully yet persistently advertised affair of Dawn "Leakes" is the endorsing of the prospect that the military and the common government are/may/will be experiencing some miscommunication; or that either of these ramparts of the state may have clashing streams inside them: An all the more hazardously befuddling state locally and universally than the straight to the point mistake of common government being subservient to military diktat; or the military conspicuously mocking or acting autonomously of regular citizen arrangement's course and mandates.

Military waywardness is currently being most often cited or perceived in regard to the portfolios of home and foreign affairs. Civil failure is drummed home in terms of government orientation and performance. There is a notion that each segment tries to use the distressingly powerful propaganda tools of information and disinformation to vindicate itself and vilify the other.

On the off chance that this is true, it reflects a flightiness and immaturity that is shockingly impulsive of the effect on national issues. Be that as it may, it is similarly genuine that any thoughtlessly rash "introduction" of the disorder in the quest for investigative reporting and the privilege to free remark demonstrates a stunning nonchalance of a worldwide lessening of the national character and the state's organizations. Gratefully, we have not achieved the outlook where we can coolly credit the chose common government and foundations that are imperative to national presence and cherished of the general population, of such fecklessness.

That leaves conspiracy theorists' saboteurs as prime instigators and purveyors of 'alternative fact' and spine-tingling disclosures.

A perception endures among their Pakistani audiences that media houses or hand-picked media work force are just excessively prepared, making it impossible to suit, encourage, or let pass incognito plans, making utilization of the intense instruments of the press, and now the online networking too, in customized as opposed to open duty.

Correspondingly, trick speculating in Pakistan has been fenced in by the criticism and disdain connected to the without a doubt beat up banalities of the concealed hands proffered by the clumsier hands of the service of data and the ISPR.

While recognizing that our own biases and policies have provided fertile soil for self-furthering external intrigue, it would be foolish to carelessly acquit or ignore external hostile elements in evaluating national events and happenstance. Also, in recognizing that the media tends to carelessness and sensationalism, we are not focusing keenly enough on the accompanying loss of the credibility of the media and the consequences of the subsequent vacuum of verified information. If you are not in the loop what are the facts when they are not self-evident?

In the past be it with a civilian PM like Mr Bhutto or a military dictator like Ayubthe Press, precisely because of the lack of freedom, was clearly identifiable as government propagandist or maverick declared champion of some form of determined, even if ineffectual, critique. Not so today. The platform is wide open; but working familiarity with press freedom is breeding an unhealthy contempt in the gluttoned yet addicted consumer of the junk food menu.

Where it is not politically charged and laden, Pakistan's atmosphere is one of troubled instability. Are the common and the military in agreement, individuals are given to contemplate, without knowing how the page or pages may read. Subsequently, around two years prior Parliament consensually moved against sending in troops for Yemen to strengthen a Saudi military join, with partisan undercurrents and also interventionist suggestions. Were the civil and military in agreement? The then COAS has now resigned; and there is irregular media boosts keeping the question alive concerning whether he may consent to lead a more up to date rather vague coalition against IS. Disregard pages here, is it another section or another book?

The media and lawmakers sermonize over the gravity of the PM's not having a "fulltime" Foreign Minister. Just what is the approach they see or don't see, and what change and bearings do they consider? Before spoon-feeding us natives the counter-narrative, clear up the narrative.

The foreign policy of Pakistan looks to advance the universally perceived standards of interstate relations, i.e. regard for sway and regional uprightness of all States, non-obstruction in the inward issues of other State; non-hostility and serene settlement of question. Pakistan has along these lines constantly tried to grow neighborly and friendly relations with all nations of the world.

It can be said that the world is oblivious of the principles of Pakistan's foreign policy. The West appears to be questionable about Pakistan. It must read and comprehend the history and foundation of Pakistan. Pakistan has dependably been reasonable in all circles. It has solid relations with every one of the nations of the world to keep up peace on the planet. Pakistan has been guarding all the unreasonable and youthful demonstrations of viciousness the nation over yet it didn't give the brutal components a chance to try and to shake its structure in view of Pakistan's solid pillars.

The year 2012-2013 saw continuous difficulties for our quick neighborhood and past. The circumstance in Afghanistan stayed uneven having a negative overflow on Pakistan's household security condition. The nation additionally supported to think about some boundless difficulties including the proceeding with dangers of fear based oppression and fanaticism. In any case, we stayed conferred in our resolve and yielded a dynamic outside strategy that looked for engagement and collaboration with the universal group so as to satisfy our goals for advancement, peace and security.

Pakistan is looking for commonly valuable relations with Iran showed by the various assertions that have been marked between the two sides, the high point being the finish of the Iran-Pakistan Gas Pipeline deal. Our conventional goodwill and noteworthy relations with Turkey are additionally being converted into an unmistakable political and financial association. The previous year saw assist combination of our key organization with China. It touched another stature of agreeableness and collaboration, encapsulated by the trading of various abnormal state visits and ending up of respective understandings. With the United States, our relations are being redesigned from value-based to joint effort. The US stays a standout amongst the most imperative improvement and speculation accomplices of Pakistan. The aggravations in the relationship were additionally overseen in a tactful and valid approach.

Regarding strategic issues, Pakistan kept on acting with balance and duty and fortified its fare control design aligning it with the best worldwide models and practices. While looking for territorial key soundness and a level playing field in South Asia, we were strong of all non-discriminatory measures for non-proliferation of Weapons of Mass Destruction and their methods for delivery.

We are in reality innocuous to the world and wish to make a tranquil world where there must not slaughter, plundering, savageness, radicalism, contempt, and so forth but rather shockingly close to every one of these affirmations the world doesn't know about our spirit status. Pakistan will soon thrive in the variety of the prosperous and developed nations.

Pakistan today is a confident, capable and very much incorporated member from the worldwide group. We don't harbor any forceful or hegemonic outline and wish to live in peace and concordance with all countries of the world. Financial advancement in a tranquil and secure neighborhood remains our top generally need. The direct of our outside approach in the years to come will keep on being founded on these goals to make Pakistan an embodiment of world's serene and prosperous nation.

HISTORY OF FATA REFORMS BY SARTAJ AZIZ

In November 2015, the Prime Minister set up a six member FATA Reforms Committee “to propose a concrete way forward for the political mainstreaming of FATA areas.” At its very first meeting on 21 November 2015, the Committee decided to carry out an in-depth study of all previous attempts for FATA Reforms to determine why successive governments had failed in the past six decades to introduce meaningful reforms or undertake substantial development efforts.

It soon became clear that political mainstreaming of FATA would be a very complex process because it would also involve legal, administrative and security mainstreaming. Equally important would be the sequencing of these reforms and their complementarity in terms of timing and scale. Different attempts at reforms in the past 40 years, though useful, did not bring about a fundamental mainstreaming of FATA because these elements were missing.

A brief history of FATA Reforms has been included in Chapter 2 of the Committee report. The first serious attempt was made when Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto formed a Committee under General (Retd.) Naseerullah Babar which included Hafeez Pirzada, Rafi Raza and Dr Mubashar Hassan. The aim of the committee was to create a framework so that FATA could become a part of NWFP for general elections in March 1977. But it was decided to take up the issue after the elections. That did not happen because of a military coup in July 1977.

The second attempt came twenty years later when, in 1996, the government extended the adult franchise system to FATA, so that representatives from FATA could be elected to the National Assembly by the people directly and not through selected tribal maliks. This important step did not, however, increase self-governance, partly because of Article 247 of the Constitution and partly because FATA was not a province or part of another province and could not, therefore, elect its representatives to a provincial assembly, which actually elects ministers to govern the province.

Efforts to introduce the system of local bodies in FATA have totally failed. In 2002, the Government extended Local Government Regulation to FATA and in 2004 some Agency Councillors were nominated by the Political Agents. However, the system did not take off because general public had no confidence in the nominated office bearers who had no powers. In 2012, FATA Local Government Regulation 2012 was prepared to establish local bodies in FATA. However, the Regulation was never promulgated.

Another serious attempt at FATA Reforms was made in 2006, through a special committee, chaired by Sahibzada Imtiaz Ahmad. The focus of this report, submitted in 2006, was on administrative reforms and resulted in the increased independence of FATA Secretariat under a separate Additional Chief Secretary and a substantial increase in development funding for FATA. But in the absence of major legal reforms and concentration of all powers in the hands of political agents, there was no visible improvement in governance or development indicators. The security situation in FATA was also very fragile at that time and the resultant destruction of infrastructure and related facilities could not be restored by a few development projects undertaken by the government during that period.

A Committee on legal reforms, chaired by Justice (R) Mian Mohammad Ajmal, was constituted in 2005 “to recommend modifications in FCR after public consultation across FATA.” The Committee recommended many important amendments in the FCR. Many of these were accepted and implemented in 2011. The amended FCR removed some of its shortcomings but more fundamental changes were needed to bring the judicial system in line with the rest of Pakistan and restore the fundamental rights of the people of FATA, as equal citizens of Pakistan.

Following the introduction of Adult Franchise Act, 1996, the Political Parties Order 2002 was also extended to FATA in 2011, to allow political parties to campaign freely in FATA. This was an important step, but in the absence of provincial elections, its impact was limited. This step did, however, generate greater political awareness in FATA and also intensified the demand for fundamental reforms.

In addition to these partially successful attempts at FATA Reforms, there have been many other studies, conferences and seminars on different aspects of FATA Reforms during the past 10 years, which provided useful inputs for the Committee’s work.

The Way Forward During its visit to all the seven FATA Agencies, the Committee met not only jirgas of tribal elders and maliks but also representatives of political parties, civil society, traders and journalists. The Committee concluded fairly early in these deliberations that FATA could no longer be retained as a “buffer against foreign aggression.” It must be fully integrated with Pakistan and basic legal reforms introduced to restore peoples’ fundamental rights. At the same time, extraordinary efforts would be required to accelerate development of FATA to bring it at par with the rest of Pakistan. That led to the key recommendation that 3% of gross divisible pool i.e. Rs. 90-100 billion should be allocated every year for the next 10 years, to finance a comprehensive socio-economic development plan for FATA.

The Committee also carefully examined the option of a separate province for FATA but concluded that it was not a feasible option. The Agencies are closely connected with the adjoining districts but not with each other. Similarly, the economic and cultural links between the Agencies and districts are fully strong but not among the FATA agencies. In addition, FATA does not have the financial resources or the administrative capacity to manage a separate province. The merger of FATA with KPK, the Committee concluded, was the only viable option for mainstreaming FATA.

The next important issue was the timing of the merger option. FATA had to be prepared for the merger. As a minimum, the rehabilitation and reconstruction in North Waziristan, South Waziristan and Orakzai had to be completed.

Moreover, the task of extending the provincial boundary right up to the international border with Afghanistan would be a major strategic undertaking and would require a careful realignment of the security infrastructure and recruitment and training of additional FC personnel for the Frontier Corps and the levies.

In addition, an inter-provincial consensus will be required to allocate 3% of the divisible pool to finance the proposed 10-year development plan for FATA.

Considering all these factors, the Committee recommended that the merger of FATA with KPK will require a transition period of about 5 years. Meanwhile, local bodies elections can be held in FATA and the possibility of enabling the people of FATA to elect their representatives to the KPK Assembly in 2018 could be examined.

The demand for abolishing the FCR, a legacy of the colonial era, was widespread and virtually unanimous. But many tribal elders wanted their traditional Rewaj system of justice through jirgas to continue because of the court system in Pakistan, they said, was “time-consuming, expensive and corrupt.” The Committee tried to balance these viewpoints by proposing a blended judicial system. The FCR will be abolished and the jurisdiction of Supreme Court and High Court extended to FATA. But the traditional Rewaj System retained as a local dispute resolution mechanism. The criticism that the proposed Rewaj Act would continue the FCR in another forum is not correct because FCR would be abolished and the jurisdiction of courts will be extended. Within this system, this Act will allow parties, if they so wish, to ask the Agency Judge (not the political agent) to appoint a jirga, whose decision will be appealable. In addition, the new law will also ensure that the Rewaj System is consistent with fundamental rights laid down in the Constitution.

Under Article 247(vi) of the Constitution, “the President may at any time direct that the whole or any part of the Tribal Area shall cease to be tribal area, provided that before making any order under the clause, the President shall ascertain the views of the people of the Tribal Areas concerned, as represented in Tribal Jirga”. The Committee has fulfilled this requirement by holding jirgas in all the 7 Agencies and consulted about 3000 tribal maliks and elders. In addition, the Committee received over 29,000 comments on the hotline of Ministry of SAFRON and most of them supported the merger of FATA with KPK and abolition of FCR.

Despite this extensive process of consultations, there are demands from certain quarters for a referendum on the future of FATA. Given Pakistan’s unpleasant experience with referendums in the past, this option was not considered politically advisable.

The jubilation, with which the news of the Government’s decision of 2nd March has been received in FATA, further reinforces the Committee’s conclusion that these reforms would be widely welcomed by the majority of the people of FATA. After all, the main objective of these reforms is a much-needed improvement in the lives of the people of FATA.

If the recommendations of the Committee chaired by Gen (R) Naseerullah Babar to merge FATA with KPK (then called NWFP) had been implemented in 1976, FATA would not have become “the most dangerous area in the world”, as former US President George Bush called it. Similar views were expressed by General David Patraeus, US Commander of ISAF.

In conclusion, it must be emphasised that the implementation of these reforms may not be smooth or easy because, apart from the inherent complexity of this multi-dimensional process, there are strong vested interests, which would like the status quo in FATA to continue. But history will not forgive us if we lose this historic opportunity to mainstream FATA.

Source: <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/03/08/history-of-fata-reforms/>

WATER SECURITY BY IGNACIO ARTAZA

“WATER is not only for life ... water is life.” This quote by the UN secretary general “reflects the critical importance of water as a need that connects all aspects of human life. People’s well-being and their economic development are profoundly linked to” water availability and usability. Too little water at a time when it is needed most can result in droughts and food insecurity. Conversely, too much water — in the form of floods or storms — can devastate an entire population. Contaminated water, whether from human or industrial sources, claims the lives of children and adults alike, affects the health of communities worldwide and has far-reaching consequences.

The SDGs place emphasis on ensuring sustainable water availability and management. This includes achieving universal and equitable access to safe and affordable drinking water, sanitation and hygiene for all, and ending open defecation with a particular emphasis on women and girls. But while that is crucial, especially in Pakistan, water’s place in the SDGs goes well beyond access. It must also account for critical issues such as integrated water resources management, the efficiency of use, water quality, trans-boundary cooperation, and issues related to water ecosystems and water disasters. A holistic water policy is needed.

Problems associated with water are perhaps amongst the most important in Pakistan. The country’s water profile has changed drastically in that it went from being a water-abundant country to a water-stressed country. Per capita water availability during the period 1990–2015 fell from 2,172 to 1,306 cubic metres per inhabitant. Pakistan extracts almost 75 per cent of its “freshwater annually, thereby exerting tremendous pressure on renewable water resources. Despite remarkable improvements in the proportion of the population using improved water sources and improved sanitation facilities”, over 27 million Pakistanis still do not have access to safe water and almost 53m do not have access to adequate sanitation facilities. Approximately 39,000 children under the age of five die every year from diarrhoea caused by unsafe water and poor sanitation.

The increasing demand for and erratic supply of water in Pakistan is resulting in severe shortages. Factors such as population growth, rapid urbanisation, water-intensive farming practices and industrialisation are all playing a role in increasing the country’s demand for water. The supply side is simultaneously affected by climate change, which, in turn, has made rainfall more erratic and led to both floods and droughts. Excessive groundwater pumping has raised major sustainability concerns. Poor water infrastructure, including limited storage capacity and inadequate canal lining, compounds water availability issues. Another factor of concern is contaminated

agricultural run-off, untreated industrial effluent, and household waste that makes its way into water bodies and canals.

There were several attempts at the federal and provincial level to delineate the government's commitment to combating water issues. The national climate change policy, for example, listed appropriate action plans for enhancing water storage and infrastructure. It spoke in detail of better water-resource management, enhancing institutional capacities and creating awareness about water issues. However, more is needed in terms of implementation. Pakistan has not implemented any major water storage infrastructure projects since the commissioning of the Mangla and Tarbela dams in the 1960s and 1970s, and water storage capacity has often receded to less than 30 days whereas the minimum requirement is 120 days. Successful initiatives do exist, such as the Clean Drinking Water for All project launched in Punjab, which provided clean drinking water through new water filtration plants. However, major initiatives are still limited.

Addressing issues of demand and supply requires interventions at both the individual and state level. Households and industries alike need to use water more efficiently. It is imperative that this apply to the agricultural sector as well. Examples would include strict regulations on the plantation of water-intensive crops and on flood irrigation.

Here public education campaigns focusing on enhancing water usage awareness will help. At the broader level, an integrated water management system that promises efficient water distribution to all sub-sectors, is needed. Such an initiative must be formally entrenched and supported by an effective institutional and legal system.

While water issues have been discussed at the policy level, for example, in the national climate change policy and national drinking water policy, a more holistic national water policy is required. This would include measures to promote efficient use through water pricing, increasing water storage infrastructure, enforcing strict water quality management systems to curb water pollution, controlling population growth and adopting sustainable urbanisation patterns. Immediate attention to these proposals will help ensure that Pakistanis have adequate water.

The writer is country director, UNDP Pakistan.

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Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1319986/water-security>

IMPLEMENTATION OF FATA REFORMS AND CHALLENGES BY ADNAN AZIZ

It is considered that institutional reforms, and especially those that involve in their design the shift of power between the federation and a province and that change the very nature of the regional dynamics in the post 9/11 intervention of the US in Afghanistan and Pakistan, is no ordinary task. Secondly, FATA Reforms are a belated step to come to grips with our imperial inheritance that led to the creation of Pakistan, by constituting it from the weakly administered, tribally dominated periphery of the Indian sub-continent.

At the same time, Pakistan inherited a double liability when by evasion of responsibility by Britain, led to a violation of the agreed principle of division of the sub-continent, by allowing the Muslim majority region of Kashmir, to be occupied by India, while Britain retained defence responsibilities in 1947-48. It may also be noted that as decided by the Defence Committee of the Indian Cabinet Pakistan did not receive its share of military and financial assets. Furthermore, Pakistan was mired into another set of issues, when the irrigation headworks of Pakistani Punjab, were at the last minute given by Lord Mountbatten to India by amending the Radcliffe award.

If in 1947, Pakistan had abolished all the Princely states and special areas it would have reduced the nascent state's subsequent security problems that followed in later years. Despite these indemnities, it is indeed miraculous that we have survived into our 77th year. Viewed in this context, the mainstreaming of FATA is thus one of the final national consolidatory steps (the other is mainstreaming of Malakand Division) and for that reason remarkable; if the current government takes credit for it, it is richly deserved indeed.

However, now comes the difficult part of implementing the 26 decisions approved by the cabinet. It is expected that the Fata Reform Committee led by Mr. Sartaj Aziz, is meeting shortly, to reconfigure itself into the cabinet level implementation committee by expanding its membership by inviting the CM and CS of KP and the Corp Commander XI Corp as its new members. All three represent some critical aspects of the Reform agenda and their inclusion is essential.

One of the cabinet decisions is that FATA will participate in the 2018 provincial elections. As a result, about 23 new members are expected to be included into the provincial assembly and many will get ministerial and other powers as a result; CM KP is of the opinion, that since it is his province that has to accommodate new members

into its assembly and also assume new responsibilities in FATA and thus the federal government should not be in the driving seat. On the other hand Article 247 is needed to come out with the enabling regulations for at least the 5 year interim period envisaged for the execution of the reforms. It is an issue that both Mr. Nawaz Sharif, the Prime Minister and Mr. Imran Khan, Chairman of the PTI, would need to be resolved. If these reforms are transformed into a zero-sum game then both the tribesmen and consolidation of Pakistan would suffer. An ideal solution will be an agreement between the center and the province to share the responsibilities and the advantages that come out of this reform.

The involvement of the Corp Commander is very important because after the clear, hold and build phase the military has to return the region to the legitimate local authorities and return to the military's peace-time role. The shift to this phase of military control will require a planned approach, where its assistance if its assistance is needed in any future recrudescence; this will require planning and enunciation of security policy so that under no circumstance any opportunity is given to terrorism and chaos to re-emerge.

The transition period is also required to carry out the set of constitutional and other reforms needed for the mainstreaming of FATA. Perhaps the most important bill that is needed to be passed will be the presentation of a bill in the KP Provincial Assembly authorizing the change in provincial boundary because of the implementation of FATA Reforms. This is the requirement in Article 239 (4) of the Constitution. Furthermore, it is the constitutional requirement that the provincial assembly must pass this bill by a 2/3rd majority of the total membership of its members. Without the passage of such a bill with the requisite majority, FATA Reforms cannot be initiated!

The following are the other Constitutional amendments that will be needed. Art 1, would need to be amended by excluding tribal areas (FATA), from the definition of being a part of Pakistan since after their incorporation into KP they will not remain. Art 106, will need to be amended as the strength of the KP assembly will increase. Art 246 will require to be amended as the tribal areas will no longer be governed under it (the timing of this and other amendments will need to be synchronized. Similarly, there are consequential amendments needed in Art 51, 59, 74, 160, 240 and 242 for share in federal services.

Clearly, there is a dire need for cross-party agreement and support for this mammoth reform agenda to succeed. This appears to be the most crucial task facing the new Implementation Committee for FATA Reforms and it will require Oceans of good-will and hard work to make it happen. Without it FATA Reforms will remain a dream only. Its non-implementation could threaten national solidarity, that will be the price of failure.

The writer is a freelance, based in Islamabad

Source: <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/26-Mar-17/implementation-of-fata-reforms-and-challenges>

CIVIL SERVICE REFORMS BY JAHANZEB AWAN

'With every passing year of our career, we increasingly feel a steep decline in our morale and motivation. There is a disjunction between what we idealised to do for society and what the real life has offered'. This is what you will hear from most of the civil servants in any candid and informal discussion. But this is just one side of the story. On the other side, citizens, ideally the tax paying clients of public services, blame civil servants for inefficiency, callousness, corruption and arrogance. What it implies is that something has been pathologically wrong with the civil service in Pakistan.

In the books of rules, the definition of a civil servant is very broad and all-encompassing but I am referring only those who represent a widely-known misnomer i.e. 'Central Superior Services' because the members of these services and occupational groups run the entire state machinery.

The issue of civil service reforms has practically remained an unfinished agenda in Pakistan during different regimes as either it could never make a headway beyond the stage of policy drafts or if on a couple of occasions past governments took practical steps, they failed because of their lackluster motives. In future, prior to any reforms initiative, it will be important to understand the underlying causes of the decay of civil service before anything else. Without proper diagnosis, even the most well-trained physician would do more harm than curing an illness. The diagnostic framework for civil service reforms will require seeing the problem from the perspectives of civil service, politics and global political economy.

Like all other major institutions of state, Pakistan inherited the institution of civil service which was created by the British Indian Empire. During the heydays of the empire, the civil service as an institution was acknowledged and glorified as 'the steel frame of the Raj' due to institutional ability to maintain law and order and collect taxes. The structure of civil services was based on Weberian notions of political neutrality, merit based recruitment, guaranteed tenure and a decent salary. After independence, however, a gradual decay started and with changing circumstances the survival-instinct of civil servants ushered into a culture of Faustian bargains which promised immediate gains. The result was a new trend of collusive partnerships both with dictatorial regimes and political governments.

The temptation of dividends accruing from a culture of patronage is too strong to resist, like cardinal sins, both for political parties and civil servants. This is detrimental to the collective public interest as it robs the civil servants of their required ability to speak truth to power when it is required in matters of public policy importance. However, in

Pakistan's political culture; the political-bureaucratic relationship has become quite deep rooted due to nature of social power relations which manifest themselves in terms of power and patronage based politics at constituency level. In this perspective, it would be naive to expect a total detachment of civil service from politics. This implies that in future if governments want to reform the civil service the process must begin with a dialogue to determine the contours of rules of engagement between politicians and civil servants.

For the prevailing state of affairs of civil service it would be unfair to place entire blame on politicians. Corruption, inertia, rent-seeking and turf wars between civil service cadres speak volumes about the contribution of civil servants themselves. Astonishingly, none of the civil service cadres have ever proposed any structural reforms themselves apart from tug of wars for vested interests. Quite recently, they have demonstrated a determination to go even to the extent of blackmailing a government by threats of collective resignations or strikes. Even the upright among the civil servants often lose moral ground when they readily extend the favours on the requests of close aides, which they otherwise may refuse to politicians in the name of merit or rules.

The ascendance of neoliberal philosophy, since Thatcher and Reagan eras, to create favorable investment conditions for global capital requires deregulation, privatisation and minimalist states. This was relatively easier to be implemented in debt-ridden countries such as Pakistan by coercively imposing the IMF sponsored 'Structural Adjustment Programs' demanding withdrawal of subsidies and implementation of global 'good governance' agenda. Under such pressures, the reforms in tax structure or administrative decentralisation during Musharraf era could not prove successful as imposition of such structural transformation under external pressure lacked basic ingredients of will and determination which ensure positive outcomes.

The French philosopher Michael Foucault says that the most sophisticated form of power is an ability to control thoughts and ideas. This is what the IFIs and donors have successfully done by making our elites believe in what they want them to believe. For example, the idea that private sector always epitomise efficiency and therefore companies should do the work of government. But private businesses too often collapse. Likewise, a belief that for every domestic problem there exist some one-size-fits-all type 'international best practices' which if simply copied can solve all domestic policy riddles. For example, the notion of 'Public Private Partnership' is widely believed as a magic wand while ignoring that private sector enters any partnership only for secure profit maximization.

The imported ideas like exotic seeds can often fail to bear fruits unless tested and improved for local soil. Our peculiar history, culture, values and evolution of society demands home grown policies and practices. If some foreign ideas seem indispensable, their adoption should precede an exhaustive evaluation of adaptability to indigenous circumstances. The genuine grievances of civil servants such as poor correlation between their qualifications and responsibilities vis-à-vis their meagre salaries or issues like absence of tenure protection too merit substantial consideration. Similarly, a renegotiation of balance between exigencies of politics and requirements of meritocracy is important to ensure a fair and just social order while catering to the requirements of political system. The ability to critically analyse the prescriptions of donor institutions and to suggest indigenous solutions embedded in domestic realities can pave the way for effective civil service reforms. If the maladies of civil service are not properly identified any future reforms initiative would be meaningless.

The writer is public sector social and development policy analyst

Source: <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/16-Mar-17/civil-service-reforms>

ECONOMY

THE 13TH ECO SUMMIT | EDITORIAL

ECO minus Afghanistan is incomplete

The CPEC has infused a new life in the Economic Cooperation Organisation (ECO), a project which most member countries had given up as dead as a dodo which explains why ECO's last summit was held way back in 2012, with lesser highest level representation. Eight heads of state or government out of ten member countries have confirmed their participation in today's Islamabad summit. Uzbekistan would be represented by its deputy prime minister. Afghanistan however has directed its ambassador in Pakistan to attend the moot. This could add to the already considerable stock of mutual doubts and suspicions between the two neighbours.

There are no doubt differences between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Both will suffer however if they fail to resolve these through talks at the earliest. Afghanistan would deprive itself of the benefits of the CPEC by remaining aloof. Pakistan needs to realise that its neighbour offers it the shortest route for trade with Central Asia and onward. What is more the only economic and sustainable way to get gas and power supplies from Central Asia are through Afghanistan. The safety of the CPEC and other trade routes depends on peace and security in the region which requires good relations between Islamabad and Kabul.

Afghanistan is a smaller country compared to Pakistan but rightly expects to be treated as an equal sovereign state. Pakistan being a bigger country can afford to go an extra mile in pursuit of peace and amity. Afghanistan has a history of defiance of hegemony and diktat and needs to be handled with sensitivity and care. What is required is to avoid recourse to non-conciliatory measures that can be interpreted as arm twisting. There is a need to reopen the borders between the two countries at the earliest as this is likely to be seen as an economic blockade of a landlocked country and is counterproductive as it is injurious for Pakistani traders as well. The ECO which can play an important role in the uplift of the region would be incomplete without Afghanistan

Source: <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/02/28/the-13th-eco-summit/>

CPEC – GEOSTRATEGIC CONNOTATIONS BY IMRAN MALIK

The CPEC, a project pregnant and brimming with immense geopolitical and geo-economic dimensions has even deeper geostrategic connotations. It has already set forth a massive upheaval in the dynamics of the Af-Pak (APR) and South Central Asian (SCAR) regions and portends even starker ramifications for the Indian Ocean/Arabian Sea region (IOR) as well.

The US, under President Donald Trump, is still dithering over its policy towards the APR. Whether it prolongs its stay or egresses, either way it will have a profound impact on the region. However, newer players like China, Russia, Iran, Daesh/IS etc have since become perceptibly more proactive and assertive there. In addition, the CPEC too will have far reaching implications for the entire region and beyond.

China is investing scores of billions of dollars in Pakistan and Iran; it is thus inevitable that it will undertake all the measures (including military) necessary, in collaboration with both countries, to secure its interests in this region. Russia has proactively engaged Iran, Pakistan and other regional players including reportedly the Afghan Taliban to counter and defeat the evolving Daesh/IS threat in Afghanistan. Russia has also shown a desire to connect its Eurasian Economic Union project to the CPEC thus confirming its ingress into the region and its drive to the Makran Coast/Arabian Sea. With China and Russia already proactive in the region how far behind can an enlarged and further energised SCO be?

This sets the scene then for a titanic clash of national interests between the US and India on the one hand and the China- Russia-Iran-Pakistan (CRIP) combine on the other. Multi polarity in the region seems to be crystallizing at a frenetic pace; economic and political compulsions along with the need to secure this evolving sphere of influence makes the further militarization of the region a foregone conclusion!

Pakistan's coast line, stretching from Jiwani in the West to Keti Bandar and beyond in the East, provides any force that develops it for military purposes with overarching strategic advantages. It offers multiple natural sites for ports, naval (in particular submarine), air and missile bases, radar and intelligence gathering stations, communication centres et al. It is a natural springboard to dominate the IOR/Arabian Sea complex. It provides an exceptional strategic reach to cover the SLOCs to and from the Persian Gulf, including the Hormuz Straits and also the Greater Middle East Region (GMER) at large. In addition, forces foraying forth from the Makran Coast can venture even deeper into the Indian Ocean for a critical oversight on the Bab el Mandab choke point as well as SLOCs to and from the east Coast of Africa, Europe, the Mediterranean

Sea-Suez Canal- Red Sea to the Far East and the Pacific Ocean. China has acquired a strategically sited “logistics” base in Djibouti as well. It seems to be securing the western extremities of the IOR/Arabian Sea complex. In fact, it will eventually have a crucial oversight on all East-West trade in the IOR! On the other hand the US too has acquired a “military logistics” base on the western coast of India. It has also outsourced the maintenance of the ships of the US 7th Fleet to Reliance Defense, in Pipavav, Gujerat, India.

By moving on to Pakistan’s coast line, a deep strategic master stroke in its own right, China has manoeuvred itself into a position of immense strategic advantages. In one fell swoop it has outflanked India through Pakistan and largely neutralized US’ potentially debilitating stranglehold over the Malacca Straits choke point- much to their combined chagrin!

For the US this Chinese manoeuvre has multiple strategic connotations. First, it brings China (and Russia) into an advantageous position in the APR. Were it to egress from the region it would end up ceding critical space and influence to them. Second, if China were to develop military capabilities (and trade corridors northwards) along the Makran Coast it would not only greatly neutralize the impact of the Malacca Straits bottleneck but would also act as a pull on the US military in the Asia Pacific by threatening its SLOCs to the Middle East and Europe. This would somewhat limit US engagement in the East & South China Seas and thereabouts. Third, it will put a lot of pressure on the US to ensure its ability to fight more than one Major Regional Conflict simultaneously – that is if it has to confront the Chinese in the East & South China Seas/Pacific Ocean as well as in the IOR/Arabian Sea theatres of war at the same time. At the least the US military effort will be divided between the two theatres of war. Fourth, the US will require the services of its allies like Japan, South Korea, Australia, India etc to counter China on the seas – (off shore balancing again?). Whereas South Korea, Japan and Australia could be assisting the US in the East & South China Seas/Pacific Ocean region, India could possibly be given the major responsibility of the Indian Ocean. (But will the Indians be willing to die for Uncle Sam though historically speaking they have done so for HM the King of Great Britain?) Fifth, the Chinese could possibly block the Hormuz Straits (from the Makran Coast) and Bab el Mandab (from Djibouti) thus sealing off both theatres of war from the ME, Europe and the Mediterranean, if and when required.

The IOR is now likely to get further nuclearised too at an increasingly hectic pace. It already has the Indian and US navies with their phenomenal arsenals (nuclear including) present in the region. Pakistan has recently demonstrated its nuclear TRIAD capability. China will eventually show its presence in the IOR/Arabian Sea with

competing military prowess. All this promises to make the overall strategic mix in the region even more potent, ominous and complex.

Thus the battle lines continue to be relentlessly drawn in the choppy waters of the Pacific Ocean and IOR/Arabian Sea complex- in what could possibly be the next two most likely theatres of war.

The CPEC appears to portend, albeit unintentionally, colossal strategic ramifications at the regional and global levels!

Source: <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/03/09/cpec-geostrategic-connnotations/>

WHAT TRUMP GETS WRONG ABOUT THE WTO BY JEFFREY KUCIK AND RAJAN MENON

During his presidential campaign, Donald Trump had a consistent message for American workers: You have been betrayed by elites mesmerized by globalization and multilateralism. The North American Free Trade Agreement (NAFTA), the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP), and the World Trade Organization (WTO) are the problems, he said, not the solutions to stagnant wages and unemployment. Trump promised to bring back jobs by adopting an “America First” economic nationalism. That fiery message helped get him elected. But now Trump faces a problem: His solutions won’t work, and his supporters will soon realize that they’ve been had.

Few would reject Trump’s goals. He wants to ensure that American firms remain competitive and that the country’s trade partners do not discriminate against U.S. producers. But no matter how fervently he and his supporters believe it, Trump’s trade policies won’t help reestablish America’s once-commanding positions in such industries as steel, textiles, coal, or automobiles. For starters, protectionist moves, such as slapping a 45 percent tariff on Chinese goods or penalizing China, Japan, and Germany for supposedly manipulating their currencies, will invite countermeasures. And that certainly won’t help American exports or create jobs.

Likewise, levying a border tax on the components that American firms import from their overseas subsidiaries will increase prices for consumers, effectively imposing a tax on consumers. That will not hurt the rich, who can better absorb the added costs, but rather the working-class people whose cause Trump claims to champion.

Then there’s Trump’s far-reaching attack on multilateral trade agreements. He insists that they are stacked against American firms, favor big exporters such as China, and encourage the flight of jobs to other countries. This diagnosis lacks nuance—unsurprising from a president who once crassly likened the Trans-Pacific Partnership (TPP) to “a continuing rape of our country.” Worse, it flies in the face of the facts.

For one, the United States largely wrote the international trade laws, beginning with the General Agreement on Tariffs and Trade (GATT) and culminating in the current WTO, that Trump savages. American negotiators made sure to include many provisions, such as the right to subsidize agriculture and to protect certain manufactured goods from “dumping.” These provisions offer targeted protection to American producers. Furthermore, the United States, along with the EU, sequenced negotiations on trade liberalization to benefit economic sectors in which it has enjoyed a comparative

advantage, such as high-end services and agriculture. The Doha Round of WTO negotiations has been stalled for more than a decade in part because the United States (and EU) refused to dismantle agricultural subsidies.

Thus contrary to Trump's claim that trade agreements amount to handcuffs, the United States remains the world's leading user of non-tariff barriers to protect domestic producers. It also spends vast sums on subsidies; the agricultural sector alone receives \$20 billion. So the United States isn't haplessly playing the global economic game by someone else's rules.

That doesn't mean the international trading system is perfect. Trump is certainly right that, in spite of America's role in designing the game, U.S. firms sometimes lose matches. Not only is the country sued more than any other is under the WTO's Dispute Settlement Understanding, but it also loses a great many cases.

But some caveats are in order. The United States gets sued a lot because it protects its interests aggressively, often using means that violate WTO rules, for instance through an aggressive application of the anti-dumping rules. It isn't that the WTO constrains Washington. It's that Washington has been willing to risk sanctions when shirking its commitments. And that's because the United States itself uses the system to sue trade partners it believes are violating the agreement. Moreover, Washington doesn't lose at a higher rate than other WTO members do; 95 percent of all complainants lose whether they are taking action against big or small countries, rich or poor. A case in point: the United States has sued China, Trump's favorite target on the trade front, more than 20 times since 2001, and the United States won most of those cases, including disputes over Chinese steel and raw materials.

Of course, the WTO's enforcement record is imperfect. Winning a case is different from inducing compliance. Still, the right to sue when the rules are breached pushes countries to cooperate more than one might expect. During the 22 years since its creation, the WTO has helped clarify and enforce international trade law for all the major market economies. Indeed, the Dispute Settlement Understanding is held up as an example from which other organizations can learn.

If Trump really wants to renegotiate the WTO, he might be surprised to learn about the number of countries that line up to redress their grievances against America. Just ask Southeast Asian fishers and textiles manufacturers, Indian drug and energy companies, or African raw materials exporters.

Ultimately, Trump misses the point on trade deals. They aren't just about liberalizing the marketplace. They are also about devising rules that lend stability to what would otherwise be a chaotic, volatile global economy. Moreover, the United States has a vested interest in shaping global regulations in crucial areas such as labor rights, environmental standards, and intellectual property laws. These and other rules serve the economic interests of American firms and workers by helping ensure that countries comply with standards that make doing business easier. One common criticism of the WTO has been that in areas such as intellectual property rights, its rules favor Big Pharma in advanced industrialized countries.

In Trump's world, abandoning or revamping multilateral trade agreements will benefit the American workers. But that's a naïve view. The plight of the Rust Belt and other economically distressed parts of the country can't be chalked up to unfair trade agreements or the machinations of foreign governments engaged in currency manipulation and other such shenanigans. There are larger forces at work on the home front: a zip code-shaped school system that fosters disparities in income and diminishes the prospects for social mobility; the decades-long stagnation of wages of much of the working class; widespread automation that has reduced, even eliminated, the need for human labor across significant portions of the manufacturing sector; and growing economic inequality, the magnitude of which cannot be accounted for by pointing to variation in productivity.

Making these problems part of the conversation would complicate Trump's tidy narrative. It would put on the table a host of issues about the distribution of power and wealth in the United States and the policies that underpin those asymmetries. In short, it would mean shifting the focus from the foreign to the domestic, something many politicians are loath to do. And that includes Trump. He presents himself as the consummate outsider who will fight for the country's workers. In fact, meaningful policy solutions to unemployment and economic inequality will require sacrifices by the economic class from which he hails and that dominates the President's Strategic and Policy Forum. Better, then, to continue bashing other countries for supposedly killing American jobs.

Source: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-03-08/what-trump-gets-wrong-about-wto>

TRADING WITH THE NEIGHBOURS BY MUHAMMAD ASHRAF

Pakistan exports around \$4 billion worth of merchandise to its immediate neighbours China, India, Iran and Afghanistan (CIIA) and imports goods worth \$13.3 billion from them. Pakistan's trade with neighbours constitutes 26% of its international trade — 18% of \$21 billion exports and 30% of \$45 billion imports.

The gravity model of international trade regards trade between two countries inversely proportional to their distance and directly proportional to the size of their economies. Thus, distance being zero, the trade naturally gravitates towards the neighbours. The cultural overlap and consequent similarity of consumption patterns, the natural integration of industrial production due to likeness of demand and factor endowments, low delivery costs and short lead times make the neighbouring markets a natural extension of domestic market.

Trading with the neighbours offers multiple advantages. Firstly, the proximity generates a bilateral monopoly between the neighbours which in turn facilitates an economic integration with deep reciprocation.

Secondly, the neighbours with varied economic development and income levels benefit from one another's comparative strengths — the richer economy provides wider variety of goods and the poorer one provides a cost-effective location for production.

Thirdly the cross-border market is more conveniently accessible, in many cases, than the distant inland markets. For instance, Jalalabad offers a more convenient market for Peshawar-based floor mills than Lahore; conversely, Peshawar offers a better market for Jalalabad's naranji (orange) than Kabul.

Fourthly, the marginalised border communities thrive from the proximity trade as the SMEs find it simpler to trade with the nearby cross-border markets than handling the complex procedures of exporting to the distant destinations.

Fifthly, the low transportation expense reduces transaction costs and creates distributional efficiencies whereas short lead time minimises post-production losses especially of perishables.

Lastly, the consumer benefits due to downward shift in price equilibrium and availability of more choices. For instance, despite troubled political environment, in the times of price escalation of a commodity, Pakistan and India open Wagah as the first step to stabilise the prices for consumer.

There is an increasing trend of the vibrant export-led economies trading more and more with their immediate neighbours. Though Chinese exports have nearly swayed the entire globe during the last decade, the share of neighbouring markets in China's global exports has increased from 5.4% in 2006 to 9.1% in 2015. During this period, a similar trend was evident in other emerging economies — Thailand from 7.4% to 11%, Turkey from 9.2% to 12.5% and Malaysia from 23.3% to 23.6%. Similarly, the share of CIIA in Pakistan's global exports also increased from 11.8% in 2006 to 18.1% in 2015. Exports to China have increased four times since the signing of much-criticised China-Pakistan Free Trade Agreement in 2006; exports to Afghanistan have nearly doubled during the same period.

Though the share of CIIA in Pakistan's global exports has been increasing, there still remains a huge untapped potential in the neighbouring markets. An import market of \$2.15 trillion is available on Pakistan's borders, of which we currently claim a meagre 0.19% share. A penetrating push in the high potential markets in the immediate neighbourhood is, however, thwarted by peculiar impediments in each neighbouring market.

Political environment with India frequently impedes trade relations. Pakistani exports face a virtual closing of border by Indian non-tariff barriers (NTBs), of which 'mind-set' is considered to be the most onerous NTB. So effective are these barriers that Pakistan, despite having MFN status, can barely manage a 0.08% share in \$391 billion Indian imports whereas India, without MFN, claims 4% share in \$44 billion Pakistani imports.

The exports to Afghanistan have been on a continuous downward slope since 2011 due to the security situation in Afghanistan and shrinking demand in the wake of reduction in international troops; the recent ebb in bilateral political relations has further complicated an already complex environment.

The international sanctions on Iran during the last decade have smothered Pak-Iran trade; the recent optimism kindled by the lifting of UN sanctions has been dampened by the re-escalation of rhetoric in US-Iran relations in the wake of Trump's presidency.

In the north, Himalayas have always made the uphill land route to China costlier than marine shipment around almost half of the Asian continent, thus eroding the proximity advantage; the improved infrastructure under CPEC, however, provides an optimism for enhanced exports to the Chinese market.

To conclude, Pakistan not only finds itself in a high economic growth zone but also has more than one-third of the entire global consumer base on its immediate borders. China and India jointly constitute one-sixth of the world GDP and have been posting a consistent high growth; the trading patterns in the oil-rich Iran, distorted during the sanctions era, are being redefined with Pakistan having the proximity advantage. Afghanistan, as a landlocked country, with strong cultural and ethnic ties with Pakistan is a natural extension of domestic market.

The immediate neighbourhood offers Pakistan huge growth potential for exports, reducing dependence on the distant EU and US markets. Unlocking of the potential, however, depends on (a) de-escalation of political tensions with India which have a history of defining trade relations, (b) improvement in security situation in and bilateral political environment with Afghanistan, (c) up-gradation of connectivity with China under CPEC and renegotiation of market access under China-Pakistan FTA, and (d) removal of economic sanctions on Iran and lowering of tariff and non-tariff barriers, frequently and arbitrarily erected by Iran.

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Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1352159/trading-with-the-neighbours/>

GWADAR: AT THE CENTRE OF SUCCESS | EDITORIAL

Pakistan's port city of Gwadar sits at the centre of CPEC — the multi-billion-dollar project which is hailed as Asia's Marshall Plan and is expected to transform Pakistan's economy. While the entire country is bound to reap benefits from this massive investment, Gwadar particularly has prosperous days ahead. This small town by the sea will soon be a significant player in the world of sea trade, connecting economic powers more quickly and in less expensive way. The city economy, which has largely been based on fishing, will undergo major transformation and will diversify to move from being a small fishing village to an important port city. The Gwadar Port is just one part of the story which is located near key oil shipping lanes from the Persian Gulf. The port also provides closest access to sea to Central Asian Republics as well as Afghanistan. Also, the arrival of foreign investors in Gwadar means the arrival of new technology and expertise. This will not only make Gwadar an advanced city but also an urban leader in the country with infrastructure on a par with international standards. Also, road constructions within Gwadar are connecting the once isolated city to the rest of country, making its access to other parts of Pakistan easier than ever imagined. This, as a result, will increase opportunities for the people of Gwadar manifold.

Despite all of these benefits, there is no denying that there are serious concerns that grip the residents of this beautiful town. Lack of civic amenities such as drinking water, electricity and hospitals as well as loss of traditional livelihoods are worrisome by-products of the ongoing 'economic revolution' and no stone must be left unturned to address these issues to the satisfaction of the people of Gwadar. Because, in the end, no development is worth having if it hurts the very people it is done for.

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Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1352071/gwadar-centre-success/>

PAKISTAN'S ECONOMY BY ABDUL-LATIF HALIMI

Time to be a destination

Pakistan's economic success is being told more frequently and widely. A spate of recent articles in the Western media has rightfully heralded the country's significant progress, finally giving Pakistan some good press.

This is a fortunate turn and may be the ascent towards a new 'normal'.

The megatrends of the international economy are in Pakistan's favour. Three of the world's four largest economies by 2050 will be in Asia—with China and India neighbouring Pakistan and the third Muslim-majority Indonesia, a geographic stone's throw away, marking a civilisational shift of economic activity, a return to the pre-colonial historical and natural economic order – right at Pakistan's doorstep.

As Beijing seeks to project its economic dominance towards the growing markets of Africa and the Arab world—in the form of a 'new silk road'—Pakistani geography is indispensable.

In shortening China's path westwards, providing it with a rapid overland route into the strategic Arabian Sea and towards the 400 million people living in East Africa, Pakistan will sit at the heart of international business for the foreseeable future.

However, any Pakistani prosperity is dependent on the favourable fates of geography being coupled by a domestic reform process.

So while Pakistan must seize Asia's geopolitical dividend and embrace it, this must not dilute a simple truth: Pakistan can only become prosperous if it changes from within.

After all, is steady 5% growth the objective, or is Pakistan in pursuit of an economic miracle, tripling its GDP in a decade and lifting tens of millions out of poverty in a single generation?

If the latter isn't the objective, it certainly should be; Pakistan must ultimately see itself as the destination of the next economic miracle, not just a conduit of others' prosperity.

So as growth slows in China, as India struggles with a lack of federal-state cohesion, and as Mexico wrestles with the Trump Administration, there is an opportunity for

Pakistan to seize the moment and grind its way into becoming a major industrial power – by tapping into its people.

Pakistan needs to have a genuine belief in its people and enable them to be the drivers of the nation's prosperity—not merely vassals of foreign companies planting sweatshops to fill the lowest rung of the global value chain. Awakened Pakistani industry ought to be the country's pathway into the future, providing goods for both a growing domestic market and tapping into the markets of Central Asia, the Middle East and a burgeoning Africa.

For example, the country's automotive and truck industries are growing, but nowhere near their potential, considering Pakistan's size and strategic location.

Protections for existing Japanese carmakers must be lifted. They must be willing to compete by innovating and ramping up quality if they are to survive the competition. The Auto Industry Development Policy's early fruits of bringing Hyundai, Kia, Renault and MAN SE are a sign that industry is responsive to bold Pakistani reform when it happens.

If supported by further competition and innovation, more efficient production lines and favourable policy conditions, Pakistan will have a productive ecosystem that can splinter off broader and deeper gains across the industrial economy.

Just as the Asian Tigers did in the 70s, Brazil did in the 80s, China did in the 90s, and Turkey did in the 2000s, such 'miracles' necessitate bold moves to align the country's standards with global expectations.

The first place where Pakistan needs to lift its game is skilled labour and education. Without them, the requisite know-how for innovation and development is limited and rapid industrialisation is impossible.

And due to decades of meagre budgets and abundant mismanagement, the results show: Pakistan lacks a single university in the world's top 500 (QS World University Rankings 2016-2017) and ranks 124th, out of 138 countries, for its higher education and training quality according to the World Economic Forum (WEF).

This weakness is systemic and starts from the earliest years: Pakistan has 46.5 pupils per teacher, the worst ratio of any country in Asia (UNESCAP, 2014). For comparison, Indonesia has 16.5 pupils per teacher while Sri Lanka is at 23.6.

With such poor outcomes and indicators, the upside is that low-hanging fruits abound.

Government investment in education and private sector solutions must be encouraged. A consortium recently formed to undertake applied research in China-Pakistan Economic Corridor's industrial zones, combined with a memorandum of understanding between edX and the Information Technology University, are small but promising moves.

If replicated on a larger level, space can be created for universities to spin off the IT, advanced electronic and manufacturing companies and champions of the future that can underpin an economic 'miracle'.

Beyond the human capital, Pakistan's current infrastructure 'obsession' also needs to be pushed even further. In tying the country together with CPEC and adding up to 12,000 megawatts towards rectifying Pakistan's energy woes—which has perhaps been the country's biggest drag on growth over the past decade—recent progress has been impressive.

But more is needed. In particular, the country's massive gaps in digital infrastructure need immediate prioritisation. With an internet penetration rate of just 18%, and an average internet speed of 2.5 Mbps, Pakistan lags a generation behind the rest of the world.

Facilitating e-commerce and online education would go a long way to dealing with Pakistan's legacy problems. If the country is to witness an industrial surge and nimble entrepreneurial business activity, quality internet access must be a top priority.

Finally, Pakistan must seek socio-political maturity. The country cannot afford reckless politics if it wants to put itself on the global economic map. If terrorism and security concerns were not enough of an economic obstacle, then shambolic political stunts and personalised dog-whistle politics only compound the challenge.

Voters and media need to prioritise national development as the primary issue and punish elected officials who show neither economic competence nor interest. Furthermore, instead of fostering a loyalty to a party and leader, the Pakistani electorate should develop a hawkish fixation with economic data and outcomes.

Much as China puts targets for its provinces and local governments; thus, setting a reference standard by which success and failure is measured, Pakistan must develop a culture of accountability and reward for economic performance.

Simply put, an obsessive culture of economic excellence and accountability must be revived right across the country if Pakistan is to unleash its full potential.

Pakistan, certainly, can seize the moment.

Source: <http://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2017/03/16/pakistans-economy-2/>

MONETARY POLICY | EDITORIAL

THE latest monetary policy statement released by the State Bank shows the economy in the midst of a very mixed trend, with demand and investment both rising, but the current account deficit ballooning. The State Bank says that the nascent growth in the economy has pushed imports higher, while growth in remittances and “lack of any sustained improvement in exports” has caused the deficit to rise to \$5.5bn. In the past, inflows under the financial account helped paper over current account deficits, but this time even though “net financial flows remained higher, these were not sufficient to finance the current account deficit”. We are told that with recent policies designed to boost exports and curb non-essential imports, “the current account deficit may be contained in the coming months”, but it has been some time since these measures were announced and their impact is not yet making itself felt. In the absence of any other policy interventions, the growing current account deficit could undermine the nascent growth achieved since 2013, and deserves stronger attention, particularly from the State Bank.

It would be easier to buy the State Bank’s assessment that the difficulties on the current account are only temporary, and simply the natural price to pay for rising growth and investment, if we had not heard this story before. It is worth remembering that the State Bank was saying much the same thing from 2004 onwards, when the current account deficit began to balloon, and the promised boost in exports that we were told will come once the imported machinery begins commercial operations did not arrive in quantities sufficient to balance the gaping deficit. This time the vulnerabilities are larger because the growth impetus given to the economy through the large financial inflows over the past three years is meagre by comparison to what we saw in the middle 2000s, and large-scale outflows are set to begin once the Chinese projects start commercial operations. The declining reserves need to be taken more seriously by the State Bank. In the closing months of the fiscal year, if the current account deficit continues to show deterioration, whether or not the ensuing gap is bridged with debt creating financial inflows, we will know that this is the fiscal year when the tide began to turn. External difficulties have engulfed growth spurts in the past, and we need to know why this time round things will be different.

Published in Dawn, March 27th, 2017

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1322998/monetary-policy>

EDUCATION

REFORMING EDUCATION SECTOR | EDITORIAL

A recent report issued by National Education Management Information System (NEMIS) suggests that 22.6 million children are out of school in Pakistan. Despite the constitutional mandate, the state has failed to fulfill its promise of universal education. The situation is also a sad reflection on the dysfunctional state of public education system in Pakistan. Needless to say declaring this is a grave crisis that will affect our future generations.

The provision of quality education has become quite a herculean task. As many as 44 percent children between the ages of five and 16 are still out of school in a country where over a quarter of its population is less than 16 years old. Further, the report indicates a glaring dearth of infrastructural facilities as well as staff members in a majority of public sector primary schools. The situation is worse in the poorer regions such as the Balochistan province and tribal regions, where as many as 70 and 58 percent children are out of school, respectively.

Given the importance of education, one expected policy makers to have formulated concrete policy interventions to efficiently reform the sector. Apart from lofty pledges and seemingly unachievable goals in public speeches, the federal and provincial governments have not yet succeeded in upholding their commitment to bring a lasting change in the education sector. It should be noted that some improvements took place in the recent years especially the increase in spending since the devolution of powers under the 18th amendment in 2010. Subsequently, most provinces have doubled their education budgets.

Despite the recent increase in spending, Pakistan only spends 2% of its GDP on education compared to India's 3.3 and Nepal's 4.7 percent. This fact alone tells us that provision of quality education is not the top priority of the State. However, given the broken system of governance, especially centralized control of the sector at provincial level will not yield results even if education budgets are further increased. Decentralization of education services and involvement of communities and parents would be vital to achieve the target of universal primary education.

Policy interventions need to focus on improving quality of education being imparted and address issues related to faculty absenteeism, ghost schools, cronyism, corruption and

widespread corporal punishment. At the same time, we need to modernize our curricula to achieve better learning outcomes. Teacher training is another crucial area, which has not received proper attention by policymakers. International donors have invested billions into the provincial budgets but the results are tentative at best. Until Pakistan's governance system is not reformed at the national and subnational levels, investments in education will not achieve intended objectives. We need accountable and responsive local governments with adequate powers and resources to deliver the constitutional obligation of the state. The ruling party needs to review its skewed priority of investing in megaprojects at the expense of millions of children that should be in school.

Source: <https://www.facebook.com/thecsspointOfficial/?ref=bookmarks>

A FUNCTIONAL APPROACH TO EDUCATION BY ALASTAIR HUTT

Education is what can seriously impact any nation, and make it flourish through enlightening young minds and motivating them to serve their country with honour and the wisdom they acquire. For the youth to excel, the education system and the educators must provide a suitable platform and latest approaches to knowledge. Presently, that is the need of the day for Pakistan. An educator's approach to learning is critical in the intellectual growth and development of students. I have seen this first-hand for over 20 years in my time as a teacher and school leader. An imperative aspect of an education programme is its bottom-up approach — it identifies age-appropriate goals for its students. For instance, if a child is growing and moving through the Cambridge Primary and Secondary programmes, their goals keep changing; getting more challenging and advanced and the country must make sure that every kid makes it and gains access to the country's workforce.

A thing to note: the teacher's role is fundamentally intrinsic to this whole process. It is the teacher who is to first understand children as individuals, and recognise that learning activities must be tailored to suit each student according to their needs and abilities. The teacher's primary responsibility is to be a facilitator for the students, helping them to find answers to problems and learn more in the process by encouraging students to formulate strategies and understand concepts on their own.

The intellectual growth of a child is a complex process; a graph that increases and plateaus at times, and the teacher's job is to ensure that the trend continues upwards. It is also important for a child to be aware of their own progress.

Setting the foundation for a student's development is the task assigned to all teachers that are responsible for children during their primary years. This is exactly why the Alpha School will be following the Cambridge Primary Programme. It is a broad-based and balanced approach to education, enabling students to appreciate specific subjects through the topics studied, and a better understanding of the world at large.

When I previously introduced the Early Years Foundation Stage (EYFS) Programme and the Cambridge Primary Curriculum into schools in an international setting, I was delighted with the positive reactions from pupils and parents. It was wonderful to hear the children animatedly talking to each other and the adults in the classroom about what they were doing and the freedom with which they expressed themselves. Over the first term, we noticed a blossoming of the children's use and understanding of English directly as a result of the EYFS and the way in which this was delivered by the staff. In addition, the hands-on style of learning enabled the children to physically explore the

learning process in an open and safe way. The focus very much is upon allowing children to find their own pathways to learning in a structured and child-friendly manner in and out of the classroom — something every institution must strive to achieve since every child represents the future of the country.

The co-curricular aspect of school life is fully integrated into the timetable so that children discover their artistic, musical, rhythmical and sporting talents. With the latest equipment and resources, children must be assured to have fun while they are learning.

Teachers play a pivotal role in shaping students — and a curriculum must provide a clear pathway to progress and the freedom to create amazing opportunities for the children.

I am delighted to be working with my students to bring these learning opportunities to the children of Lahore and I hope other institutions all over Pakistan will make sure our students make it in this competitive world.

Published in The Express Tribune, March 11th, 2017.

Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1352100/functional-approach-education/>

OUR EDUCATION SYSTEM BY DR A Q KHAN

Random thoughts

Our educational system is in a bad shape – or rather, in a very bad shape. In world rankings, none of our universities or institutions falls within even the first 500 schools that students should consider attending. As a matter of fact, Comsats – which has the highest ranking – is listed in the 601st position.

We can't put the blame for this miserable state of affairs on successive governments. Vice-chancellors, principals, rectors and professors are all equally responsible. They show little interest in improving the situation while public sector officials are least concerned about the state of affairs. Most of them don't come to university on time and seldom give the students the guidance they are supposed to give and which students require and deserve. They are safe in their positions and nobody can touch them or terminate their services.

The overall result is that our students are neither competent nor do they have adequate knowledge to handle and solve problems. They simply rote learn and lack the ability to apply what they know to practical situations. This problem is not so conspicuous here as 'sub kam chalta hai' is the norm. The real discrepancy becomes apparent when our students go abroad for higher education and find themselves totally clueless in their new environment. They have not been trained to handle/use scientific apparatus/instruments and therefore lack self-confidence. They have managed to get their degrees thanks to sympathetic professors, assistants and technicians in Pakistan. Unfortunately, professors who have gone through these postgraduate problems while studying abroad themselves don't prepare their students at all for the challenges of higher studies.

When our MS or MPhil students go abroad, their lack of training or expertise in handling equipment as compared to other students is immediately apparent. Most students who study abroad handle equipment quite early on in their undergraduate studies and develop confidence by the time they reach the postgraduate level.

I saw this in Germany, Holland and Belgium. Since I started my studies there at the undergraduate level, I went through the whole exercise and never felt that I was inadequate at handling various instruments. After receiving a good training at the famous Technical University in Berlin for about two years, I moved to the Technological University of Delft, Holland – which is considered to be the MIT of Europe at the time. After obtaining an MS, I worked as a research assistant to Professor WG Burgers (my

supervisor) before being offered a scholarship from the Catholic University of Leuven, Belgium – which is now ranked as number one in Europe.

Owing to my solid undergraduate background, I never had to ask local students for assistance and was able to publish many scientific papers in American, British, German and Japanese professional journals. While in Leuven, I wrote an extensive article in a British journal on metallurgical engineering education at Delft, Holland. I was pleasantly surprised to receive a letter of appreciation from Professor Walter Owen, the then head of the metallurgy department at MIT. He had found my article interesting and informative. Dr Owen appreciated my PhD work and asked for copies of my scientific papers.

The lack of training provided to students at the undergraduate level in Pakistan reminds me of something Professor Otto Frisch, a nephew of Professor Dr Lise Meitner (both Frisch and Meitner discovered nuclear fission), wrote in his book 'What Little I Remember'. He wrote about an incident that occurred just after World War I when he was travelling from Berlin to Moscow by train to attend a conference. There was a well-dressed Indian gentleman sitting in the compartment.

After some time, the Indian gentleman – who was Homi J Bhabha, the first chairman of the Indian Atomic Energy Commission – took out a Geiger counter (a device used to count neutrons) from his briefcase and asked Otto Frisch to teach him how to use it. Frisch showed him but was surprised at Bhabha's lack of knowledge – he had a PhD from Cambridge. Meanwhile, my very first experiment at Berlin at the undergraduate level was about the characteristics of a Geiger counter. Nowadays, Indian students are well equipped to handle Ph.D. studies abroad. Their institutes of technology also have a good reputation.

The daughter of my friend from Lahore received an offer from the Erasmus Mundus Programme for a PhD in Sustainable Industrial Chemistry to study in Italy and France. Until she did her MS, she did not have the opportunity to handle any equipment independently. Since I knew that she would have to work with various instruments for her PhD degree, I made a special request to the then PCSIR Laboratories Complex DG Dr Shahzad Alam to allow her to work there for two months to learn how to operate the various pieces of equipment. He accepted my request.

Dr Alam is now the chairman of PCSIR and has his office at the head office in Islamabad. He has a PhD from Japan and is a competent and knowledgeable scientist. Those two months of training proved to be extremely useful to my friend's daughter and

she is now halfway through her PhD in France without facing any insurmountable problems.

I would strongly recommend that students who plan to go abroad should make every effort to learn to handle the equipment that they will be expected to use. After selecting universities that teach the subjects of their choice, they should get in touch with the relevant professors. Nowadays, all information on courses, professors and scholarships are available on the internet. They will also need to get their certificates attested by the school boards, the HEC and the Foreign Office – which can be a lengthy process. Not to forget passports and visas. Never ever give provide any false information. If you know anyone already studying abroad, get tips from them. Remember, PhD degrees are not handed on a platter; they require hard work and perseverance.

My own studies and work experience in Europe helped me forge many long-lasting relationships with colleagues and industrialists, not to mention the invaluable experiences I gained both professionally as well as culturally. It is a mind-broadening experience that every student going abroad should make the most of.

Email: dr.a.quadeer.khan@gmail.com

Source: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/193366-Our-education-system>

LHC SUSPENDS DECISION TO HOLD CSS EXAM IN URDU

The Lahore High Court on Wednesday suspended a single-bench's earlier decision to hold CSS (Central Superior Services) examination in Urdu.

A division bench headed by LHC Chief Justice Syed Mansoor Ali Shah dismissed an earlier decision by a single bench of the court which directed authorities to ensure holding of CSS exam 2018 in Urdu language in view of the Supreme Court's verdict.

During the hearing, CJ Shah remarked that it is not the court's job to change languages. Federal Public Service Commission (FPSC) had challenged the decision of the single bench stating that it is not possible to hold the exam in Urdu as there is no syllabus in the language. The petitioner added that Urdu is not a compulsory course for graduation.

Last month, Justice Atir Mahmood passed the order on a petition filed by Advocate Saifur Rehman, a candidate of CSS 2017, who had objected to an FPSC advertisement that he said was silent about the language in which the examination would be held. The petitioner asked the court to order the FPSC to conduct CSS examination in Urdu language as directed by the Supreme Court in a judgment in 2015. The judge, however, turned down the plea on the implementation of Urdu language in current year CSS examination due to paucity of time.

The commission's counsel informed the court that arrangements were being made for transfer from English to Urdu and a committee for the purpose had also been formed that would make recommendations in this regard in due course of time. He said the matter had also been taken up with the Higher Education Commission of Pakistan.

Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1368506/lhc-suspends-decision-hold-css-exam-urdu/>

WHY ENGLISH AGAIN? BY ZUBEIDA MUSTAFA

SINCE 1999, when Unesco first declared Feb 21 International Mother Language Day, this issue has received much attention throughout the world. In Pakistan, where the language issue has always had a complexity of its own, educators, linguists and activists are now more vocal than ever.

Will the ruckus being created have a real impact on the language situation in various sectors of national life? The courts have given two major language-related verdicts in the past two years. One was the Supreme Court's directive of 2015 asking the government to use Urdu as the official language of administration. The second is the recent order of the Lahore High Court asking the Federal Public Commission to conduct CSS examinations in Urdu.

There is a logical link between the two. A person who is to conduct the affairs of governance in one language should be fluent enough in it to pass an exam to qualify as an administrator. The conclusion that follows is that the CSS candidates should have studied Urdu in school as well as college to be able to take examinations in that language.

Instead, confusion reigns supreme in the language-in-education policy. While we are still ambiguous about the status of our indigenous languages, policymakers and stakeholders have leapfrogged to English in an effort to make it the medium of instruction. Even the sensible proposal of introducing mother tongue-based multilingualism, which is universally recognised as the most feasible approach, has failed to win supporters.

The debate on language policy continues to defy logic.

One misconception is that English is considered a superior language — that if we wish to keep up with the world, our children must study in English and abandon their own so-called inferior languages. Even the idea of teaching English as a second language subject is rejected out of hand. As a result, we are driving a wedge through our already fragmented society, and this quixotic approach is also destroying our education system.

A legacy of colonial times, English is promoted as the language of the political elite — the “language of power” as Dr Tariq Rahman, our leading linguist, puts it. Being dubbed as inferior, native languages are neglected and their speakers become the underprivileged of society. Given our limited resources, it has not been possible to teach English well to all people, thereby ensuring that the majority remains disadvantaged. A

small minority, which has the resources to learn good English from highly qualified teachers, becomes the empowered elite.

One wonders what stops us from thinking rationally about this issue. In 2011, the British Council commissioned a world-renowned linguist, Hywel Coleman, to make suggestions related to this matter. Coleman proposed a three-language policy starting with the mother tongue, followed by Urdu (the language of communication) and finally the global language in vogue, English. This was not reaffirmed in the follow-up report. Instead, Coleman proposed further advocacy on the matter.

Recently, I asked Coleman, “Why advocacy?” He explained that extensive consultations and meetings with provincial ministers of education made him realise that his “original proposal [though ideal for Pakistan] was simplistic and naïve”. So, in the revised proposal, he suggested a lengthy process to raise awareness about the “nature and roles of language in education”.

He emphasises that nobody pressured him to modify his position. He wants advocacy to be directed at parents (so that they appreciate the risks involved in not using the mother tongue in the early years of primary school), education policymakers and planners, politicians, government officials and, above all, the general public so that they see linguistic diversity as a divine blessing.

The tragedy is that language myths persist and are destroying education in Pakistan. There are many reasons for this failure, but the main one is our inability to produce competent and committed teachers. This is not surprising given the fact that the teachers are the products of a system that collapsed several decades ago. An attempt to revitalise teaching will be a major task, but it has to be done. Teachers can be taught pedagogy quite quickly; subject knowledge is a bigger challenge but not impossible to cultivate in short courses spread over several months. But can you teach a language to a teacher in a few weeks and expect her to use it perfectly as the medium of instruction? Yet this is what is attempted from time to time. It would be easier for teachers to learn a subject in the language that they are fluent in, while some teachers with potential could be selected for more long-term training to teach English as a second language.

Why this simple logic eludes us is not clear. But this lack of clarity is making good education the privilege of a few — those enrolled in upscale private schools — while the majority is denied its basic right.

www.zubeidamustafa.com

PAKISTAN EDUCATION STATISTICS 2015-16 BY KHALID KHATTAK

Educational institutions for special students ignored again

The latest education statistics issued by the federal government's educational planning and management body, which placed Punjab on the top vis-à-vis provision of basic facilities in public schools across Pakistan, has once again ignored data about special education institutions for children with disabilities.

The Academy of Educational Planning and Management (AEPAM) report provides data about technical education and vocational training institutes, non-formal education, deeni madaris (religious seminaries) and even teacher training institutions but what is badly missing in the report is data about special education centres, students and teachers and related infrastructural provisions.

A disability rights activist Nadir Khan, who is a wheelchair user, sees this as discrimination and says data is really important to initiate an informed debate. He said the provincial bodies didn't make data public; therefore, the AEPAM's report was really important for all the stakeholders.

It is pertinent to mention here that the federal government was not counting persons with disabilities (PWDs) in the ongoing census. However, now on the directions of the Supreme Court disabled persons are being counted.

"This is unfortunate that the AEPAM report is blank on special education institutions, students and teachers as well as missing facilities in such institutions across the country," Nadir said and demanded the government to ensure that special education also gets due attention in the next volumes of the report.

Meanwhile, according to the report, Punjab tops the list of all the four provinces and federating units as well as Islamabad Capital Territory (ICT) in terms of provision of basic facilities, including drinking water, electricity, toilets and boundary walls in public schools.

As per analysis of the AEPAM statistics, less than one percent public schools in Punjab don't have water facility while in Sindh, almost 50 percent schools don't have this basic facility. In Balochistan, 43 percent and in Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP), 26 percent schools don't have water facilities for students and teachers.

Similarly in terms of availability of toilets, as per the report, Punjab is far ahead than other provinces with just one percent schools lacking this facility. Balochistan has 73 percent, Sindh 46 percent and KP 12 percent such schools.

The schools without boundary walls have gained more attention in the wake of prevailing law and order and Punjab, the report claims, have only 2 percent schools without boundary walls while Balochistan has 55 percent, Sindh 41 percent and KP 13 percent.

The non-availability of electricity in government schools in Punjab is, however, higher than above-mentioned facilities as 7 percent schools don't have electricity in the province. Balochistan has 77 percent such schools, Sindh 63 percent and KP 38 percent. The overall stats show poor condition of schools in Balochistan and Sindh, followed by KP and Punjab.

The schoolteachers in Punjab, however, don't like the way the situation vis-à-vis availability of basic facilities has been 'glorified'. Hafiz Ghulam Mohyuddin, who heads a faction of Punjab Teachers Union (PTU) and is central leader of the United Teachers Council (UTC) Punjab, said the situation on ground was not as 'rosy' as presented in the AEPAM report.

"I live in Faisalabad and public schools in this second largest city of Punjab are marred by lack of basic facilities, including furniture and clean drinking water," the UTC Punjab chief said and added "One can imagine situation in schools of Rajanpur and Dera Ghazi Khan districts etc."

Source: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/193323-Pakistan-Education-Statistics-2015-16>

WORLD

RUSSIA, CHINA VETO UN RESOLUTION ON SYRIA SANCTIONS

UNITED NATIONS - Russia and China have vetoed a United Nations resolution that would have placed sanctions on Syria in response to alleged chemical weapons attacks.

The measure, backed by the Western powers of Britain, France and the United States, would have imposed sanctions on 21 Syrians, organizations and companies that were allegedly involved in chemical attacks in 2014 and 2015. Nine council members voted in favour of the resolution, drafted by France and Britain. Bolivia voted against the text, while Ethiopia, Egypt and Kazakhstan abstained. A resolution needs nine votes in favour and no vetoes by permanent members - the United States, France, Russia, Britain or China - to be adopted. The resolution would have also banned all countries from supplying the Syrian government with helicopters, which were used in the attacks.

The measure was drafted after a joint investigation by the UN and a global chemical weapons watchdog determined the Syrian government carried out at least three attacks involving chlorine gas. The groups also found that the Islamic State extremist group was behind at least one attack involving the use of mustard gas.

Russian President Vladimir Putin described the draft resolution on Tuesday as “totally inappropriate.”

“For my friends in Russia, this resolution is very appropriate,” US Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley told the 15-member council after the vote.

“It is a sad day on the Security Council when members start making excuses for other member states killing their own people. The world is definitely a more dangerous place,” she said.

The vote was one of the first confrontations at the United Nations between Russia and the United States since US President Donald Trump took office in January, pledging to build closer ties with Moscow.

Russia's Deputy UN Ambassador Vladimir Safronkov called the resolution "one-sided", and described the statements made against Moscow in the Security Council as "outrageous" and said "God will judge you."

The resolution would have put 11 Syrians, mainly military commanders, and 10 entities linked to chemical attacks in 2014 and 2015 on a UN sanctions blacklist. The joint panel of the United Nations and the Organization for the Prohibition of Chemical Weapons (OPCW) also found that Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant fighters used mustard gas in an attack in 2015. The Syrian government has repeatedly denied using chemical weapons in the war that has killed nearly 400,000 people and displaced nearly half the country's population since 2011.

Meanwhile, Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan said Tuesday Ankara wanted to work with its allies to capture the Islamic State bastion of Raqa in Syria, but without the involvement of Syrian Kurdish militia.

"If our allies are really sincere, we tell them: We will act with you so long as we cleanse Raqa from Daesh and give it back to its original owners," Erdogan said at an Istanbul airport before leaving for Pakistan. Daesh is an acronym for the Islamic State (IS) group. But he made clear Turkey would not fight alongside Syrian Kurdish fighters, who are viewed by Ankara as "terrorists".

The Kurdish Democratic Union Party (PYD) and its armed wing, the Kurdish Peoples' Protection Units (YPG), are seen by Washington as the most effective force in the fight against IS but are condemned by Turkey.

Erdogan said Turkey clearly told Washington it would never cooperate with PYD or YPG.

"It is certainly not possible for us to agree with or act together with PYD or YPG," he said.

Last August, the Turkish army launched a unilateral military campaign inside Syria, backing opposition fighters to clean its border from IS jihadists as well as Syrian Kurdish militia.

Compared to the lightning advance at the onset of its "Euphrates Shield" operation, the Turkish army sustained increasing casualties to capture Al-Bab.

The strategic town, just 25 kilometres (15 miles) south of the Turkish border, was the jihadists' last stronghold in the northern Syrian province of Aleppo.

On Friday, the Turkish military said together with allied Syrian rebels it had completely taken Al-Bab from jihadists.

Erdogan, who met with Chief of Staff General Hulusi Akar on Monday, said Al-Bab operation was "completed."

"But this doesn't mean the process is over," he said, adding that if Ankara reached an agreement with coalition forces, steps would be taken in Raqa.

He said Turkey was also talking to Moscow because "our solidarity with Russia is also important."

Erdogan said Turkey's Syria campaign had cost the jihadists a "very serious price," saying more than 3,000 jihadists had been killed throughout the operation.

Source: <http://nation.com.pk/international/01-Mar-2017/russia-china-veto-un-resolution-on-syria-sanctions>

N. KOREAN BALLISTIC MISSILE TEST: A CRITICAL ANALYSIS BY BEENISH ALTAF

North Korea recently launched a ballistic missile towards the sea off its eastern coast. Believed to be a modified version of its intermediate-range ballistic missile, Musudan, the shot took off from Banghyon, a town near its northwestern border with China, and flew 310 miles before falling into the sea. Sarcastically narrating, was it really an attempt to mere jolt the new US President?

North Korea has since warned that it could test-launch an ICBM “anytime and anywhere,” in its first challenge to the new US president. Nevertheless, the United States Strategic Command also issued a statement identifying the missile as a medium- or intermediate-range system, which “did not pose a threat to North America.”

The globe continues to question why North Korea speeded up its nuclear detonations? The answer to the question can be wrapped up in the findings primed by John Hemmings, a Research Fellow at the Center for Strategic and International Studies. He believes that “North Korea (has done so) in order to gain its regime survival; acceptance as a nuclear power by the US; a peace treaty between the US and North Korea; trade and economic growth on their terms; and Korean unification under Pyongyang’s benign rule.”

Well, North Korea is building up its nuclear and missile program that is causing apprehension worldwide. Its latest missile test triggered a fear of nuclear terror amongst the US and other relevant states. It triggered a flurry of phone calls between the worried leaders of the US, South Korea and Japan. It was actually the plan of the US to install anti-missile defence system in the South that further elevated and evoked concerns in the North.

The test has ignited global resentment with the UN Security Council agreeing to draw up new sanctions against the North while several Western capitals threatened the country of its dire consequences. Nonetheless, the US, Japan and South Korea also requested urgent diplomatic talks on Monday at the United Nations, which prohibits North Korea from engaging in any ballistic missile activities. But it is rather unlikely that the meeting will lead to any serious punishment since it is already under a slew of U.N. and other international sanctions. At the same time, its nuclear missile program has become a reality. Despite all sanctions and warnings, it has been developing their nuclear program. Ironically, nothing has worked so far; neither the UN sanctions nor the unilateral steps taken by the US, Japan and South Korea. Even the entire focus of the

US has been on tightening sanctions against the impoverished country, which is already under several sets of UN sanctions.

Sarcastically, the test also raised attention-grabbing queries on the proliferation front. Alarming, North Korean nuclear advancements give a clear message to the international non-proliferation regime and, perhaps, undermine the global disarmament efforts. It is taken as a step further towards miniaturisation of its nuclear warheads. Whatsoever, it not only defies the nuclear abolitionists' demands but also increases the probability of the horizontal proliferation of the nuclear weapons in the region. Consequently, it also threatens to undermine an already fragile security situation. Isolating North Korea here has proved to be counter-productive. However, the ideal solution would be to resolve the issues with a balanced approach of sanctions and diplomatic engagements.

There is a prevailing view amongst the US analysts that India has been covertly helping North Korea in developing its nuclear and missile programs despite the UN sanctions since 2006. Since 2006, the UN has issued five major sanctions against North Korea. According to international reports and the US experts, India has been reportedly involved in training dozens of North Koreans who later took key positions in its sensitive missile programs. Moreover, North Koreans have also received training related to missile and space programs in India for the past two decades — an outcome of which can be seen in the shape of the recent ballistic missile test.

The international community along with the other peace-loving countries is exasperated on North Korea's growing nuclear aspirations. Likewise, Pakistan has also condemned it; expressing it as against the objective of a nuclear weapons-free Korean peninsula. More precisely, all that Pakistan wants is peace in Korean Peninsula. It is desired that all countries in the region including North and South Korea, Japan, China, and the US manage the situation diplomatically with utmost responsibility.

The international community is concerned about the new security implications for the country in particular and the region in general. China, one of the biggest partisans of North Korea, has also given a strong verdict against the missile launch; saying that it would worsen the situation in Korean Peninsula. Another point to keep in focus is that "Chinese companies are more implicated in North Korea today than they were before, so the Chinese could stand lose on that front if the US tightens sanctions." But the Chinese will need to be patient and hope that the timing works out so that the diplomatic channel will engage before they are forced to backpedal because of distress in North Korea.

While South Korea and Japan might have legitimate concerns over nuclear movements in the neighbourhood, there is also urgent need to resolve the problem through constructive engagement with the North aimed at addressing its concerns as well. South Korea's Foreign Ministry said the test, the first by the North this year, demonstrated the "maniacal obsession" of the North Korean leader, Kim Jong-un, with developing a nuclear-tipped ballistic missile.

It has been evaluated in the past that the North Korean threat is likely to expand into full-blown nuclear-weapons capability early in the term of the next president, so it could be seen on the screens now. For that matter, the Pentagon had already decided upon THAAD missile defence system, in partnership with South Korea and Japan.

Pragmatically, the test does not mean that North Korea is going to drop any nuclear bomb in the US; instead, the international community is more concerned about the significant escalating enhancement of North Korean nuclear capabilities as each new test results in a more sophisticated expertise and technology than its previous attempts.

There were plenty of opportunities in the past when North Korean leadership expressed its willingness to talk to the world on its nuclear program subject to the lifting of sanctions and the provision of necessary economic assistance. The collaborative approach would have been effective but regrettably, the US preferred to hurl threats on North Korea, aggravating the situation further.

But now North Korea aspires to become the giant of the region by enhancing its nuclear weapons and delivery vehicles. On the other hand, analysts are of the view that in order to carry out nuclear attacks, North Korea would need to miniaturise its warheads so that they can be fitted on a missile for delivery. There still remain reasonable doubts about Pyongyang claims regarding its ability to miniaturise nuclear weapons.

The writer works for the Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad and can be reached at beenishaltaf7@gmail.com

Source: <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/02-Mar-17/n-korean-ballistic-missile-test-a-critical-analysis>

'PAKISTAN, INDIA, CHINA, US PART OF SOUTH ASIA'S N-PUZZLE' BY ANWAR IQBAL

WASHINGTON: Pakistan's security threat comes from India, which has moved to a new strategy of conducting surgical strikes inside Pakistan, says a new study which also warns that despite nuclearisation, the possibility of another war in the region cannot be ruled out.

The 15-month study project by a Washington think-tank, the Brookings Institution, focuses on the "strategic chain" linking Pakistan, India, China and the US.

It argues that the strategic dynamics among these four nuclear powers cannot be understood or effectively addressed on a strictly bilateral basis.

"While Pakistan responds strategically to India, India responds both to Pakistan and China, which in turn responds both to India and the United States," says a report released on the completion of the project.

The 76-page document is the first Brookings publication articulating the Pakistani perspective on its nuclear doctrine.

"Without Indian restraint, Pakistan is unlikely to constrain its programmes unilaterally. Without Chinese restraint, India will be very reluctant to limit its programmes unilaterally or engage in bilateral controls with Pakistan that, according to India, would limit its options vis-a-vis China. And without US constraints on capabilities of concern to China, Beijing may continue to resist curbing its strategic modernisation efforts," it argues.

The study notes how India and the US have expressed concern about longstanding Pakistan-China cooperation in important areas, and Pakistan has expressed concern about India-US cooperation in important areas, especially in the wake of the US-India civil nuclear deal.

Although not included in the study, the report also explores the influence of other major powers on South Asia's strategic dynamics, arguing th

at Russia too is an additional link in the chain. The report warns that as the nuclear gap between China and India narrows, China may increase its interest in the India-Pakistan nuclear competition. This is because China "fears that the widening nuclear and

conventional military gaps between India and Pakistan may threaten regional stability,” the study adds.

It includes a paper on Pakistan’s strategic environment and doctrine authored by Syed Muhammad Ali of the Centre for International Strategic Studies, Islamabad.

The paper summarises Pakistan’s threat perceptions and the steps it is taking to deal with those perceptions.

It argues that “Pakistan’s security threat comes from India” and the longstanding unresolved Kashmir dispute lies at the heart of tensions between the two neighbours.

The author notes that India’s political elite, with its growing economy, is pursuing an ambitious and destabilising military build-up, to become a global power and regional hegemon.

New Delhi, emboldened by a Western-supported military build-up, is less willing to pursue a negotiated and peaceful resolution of the Kashmir dispute, while the Kashmiri people continue to struggle for their UN-recognised right to self-determination.

“The absence of a meaningful, sustainable and result-driven dialogue and the growing strategic partnership between India and the United States are matters of grave concern for Pakistan,” the author warns.

He notes that 42 years after its first nuclear test, New Delhi spends almost seven times more on its military than Islamabad. The author believes that India’s growing conventional and strategic capabilities are overwhelmingly poised against Pakistan.

He also examines the Indian “Cold Start” doctrine, which “aims to rapidly launch shallow thrusts inside Pakistani territory to capture and use it for coercing Pakistan”.

The author points out that the large-scale Indian development of highly-mobile and armoured mechanised formations, artillery, rapid airlift capabilities, forward displacement of troops and garrisons, supporting communication infrastructure and massive spending provide compelling evidence of operationalisation of the “Cold Start” doctrine, despite Indian official reluctance to formally accept it.

He notes that India has the oldest, largest and fastest-growing unsafeguarded nuclear programme of all non-Non-Proliferation Treaty states and the entire developing world.

Rejecting India's argument that its missiles are meant to tackle a perceived threat from China, the author argues: "The most advanced, accurate, and operationally-ready Indian missiles can be employed against Pakistan more effectively than against China."

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Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1318345/pakistan-india-china-us-part-of-south-asias-n-puzzle>

GOOD FOREIGN POLICY IS INVISIBLE BY JAMES GOLDGEIER AND ELIZABETH N. SAUNDERS

In his quest to Make America Great Again by putting America First, U.S. President Donald Trump spent his first weeks in office disrupting relations with allies and adversaries alike. He complained to the Australian prime minister about what he called the “dumb deal” the United States made in agreeing to relocate approximately 1,250 refugees from Australia to the United States; he suggested to the Mexican president that the United States might help take care of some “tough hombres” there; and he declared to French President François Hollande that the United States should get its “money back” for its years as NATO’s leader. He apparently also remains determined to enact an executive order temporarily banning immigration from seven Muslim-majority countries despite the early judicial rulings against his efforts.

Micah Zenko and Rebecca Lissner, from the Council on Foreign Relations, have described Trump’s approach to foreign policy as “tactical transactionalism,” that is “a foreign-policy framework that seeks discrete wins (or the initial tweet-able impression of them), treats foreign relations bilaterally rather than multidimensionally, and resists the alignment of means and ends that is necessary for effective grand strategy.”

But the problem isn’t just about any one deal. It isn’t even Trump’s lack of an overall grand strategy. The problem is that successful foreign policy is largely invisible. It often means paying up front for benefits that are hard to see until you lose them, or that will only be obvious when you really need them. Sometimes, successful foreign policy even means keeping real victories quiet.

Invisible foreign policy doesn’t appeal to a president who cares about showmanship and flashy successes. Although Trump’s initial storm of activity seems to have calmed in recent days, there is no evidence that he has turned to the kind of quiet, routine actions that make U.S. foreign policy run smoothly. Such efforts are not dramatic, but they are essential, and their absence could severely undermine U.S. interests.

INVISIBLE BENEFITS ARE BORING

The policies that Trump decries have something in common. Free trade, alliances, and non-splashy diplomacy all come with public costs and less visible benefits. For example, free-trade agreements make it cheaper for everyone to buy consumer goods like televisions; but because such a benefit is spread out among all Americans, any given shopper at Best Buy is not likely to give the free-trade agreements themselves much

thought. They certainly notice, however, the costs when a factory closes down in their town.

Trade restrictions have the opposite effect: the “Buy America” policies Trump advocates could increase costs for a broad swath of the American public. As has been widely reported, a survey of the ingredients of Trump-branded goods reveals that even Trump himself doesn’t think that buying American is always the best deal for American entrepreneurs.

Economists have long understood the concentrated costs and diffuse benefits of trade, which make costs politically salient and benefits harder to sell. Less obvious is that the benefits of alliances and diplomacy are also largely invisible. The only kind of diplomacy Trump ever talks about is deal making, but a better analogy for most diplomacy is preventive care: it’s incremental and it involves tending to allies, trading partners, and other strategically important countries. Alliances and diplomatic relationships are like insurance: however badly you need them in a crisis, you can only access them if you’ve been paying your premiums all along.

Preventive alliance care is boring but essential. The benefits are hard to measure (although the New York Times recently made a valiant attempt to quantify what the United States gets out of its alliances: we do \$699 billion in trade with our European Union partners alone), but if the alliances disappear, there will be big and obvious costs.

Regular diplomacy also functions this way: most diplomatic visits abroad by the president and secretary of state are not to secure major deals, but rather to reinforce or maintain existing diplomatic partnerships. The apparent marginalization of Secretary of State Rex Tillerson from Trump’s decision-making and public diplomacy would make sense only to a president who views diplomacy as marginal.

THIS ONE WEIRD TRICK HAS GIVEN AMERICA PEACE AND PROSPERITY

Thomas Schelling, the Nobel Prize–winning scholar who passed away late last year, noted that all of us tend to prioritize short-term gratification over long-term benefits. This means, as Schelling described, that “many of us have little tricks we play on ourselves to make us do the things we ought to do or to keep us from the things we have foresworn.”

The liberal international order has been American foreign policy’s most important trick for paying attention to the long term (at least since the end of World War II). Elites have

agreed that a liberalizing trade environment, a robust network of alliances, and regularized diplomacy provide worthwhile benefits.

In addition to providing benefits that are hard to see, such as the lower costs of goods thanks to trade, this trick also stops policymakers engaging in policies like protectionism that seem like a quick win but can be seriously damaging. The Smoot-Hawley tariff was introduced in 1930 to protect the U.S. economy from foreign competition, but it ended up prolonging the Great Depression. After this dismal experience, the Reciprocal Trade Agreements Act (RTAA) changed the institutional blueprint according to which American trade policy was set. The new format helped make protectionism easier to resist by giving the president advance authority from Congress to negotiate trade agreements, lowering the requirement for congressional approval to a simple majority rather than a majority of two-thirds, and tying U.S. tariff reductions to reciprocal foreign tariff cuts, all of which generated increasingly durable political support for free trade.

Alliances and day-to-day diplomacy force policymakers and the public to pay the premiums on insurance policies that they may need when things get tough. They have also helped keep major wars at bay for 70 years, both directly, through good relationships with allies and partners, and indirectly, through the balance of power that strong alliances help reinforce.

This is one reason why Trump's berating of Australian Prime Minister Malcolm Turnbull was so shocking. Critics—including many former GOP foreign policy officials—pointed out that Australia has been a staunch U.S. ally, contributing troops to nearly all the conflicts in which the United States has been involved since World War I, including the 2003 Iraq War. Australia's contributions to conflicts in Asia—over 17,000 Australians served in the Korean War and over 60,000 in the Vietnam War—are an important reminder of Australia's importance to the United States' future position in Asia in the face of a rising China.

To be sure, most Democratic and Republican foreign policy elites still back a version of the liberal international order, but they need to step up as Trump challenges it. Indeed, there are important pockets of support even within Trump's administration. Both Tillerson and James Mattis, Trump's new secretaries of state and defense, respectively, voiced strong support for NATO during their confirmation hearings, despite the president's assertion that the alliance is "obsolete"; and Vice President Mike Pence voiced strong support for NATO at this year's Munich Security Conference.

DON'T BLAME THE PUBLIC

Usually, when we worry about domestic support for the international order, we're worried about public opinion (for example, scholars have debated whether public support for the international order has eroded, particularly in an era of partisan polarization). However, Trump's rise is not simply a story of popular revolt against the liberal order. Even people's views about trade, which can affect jobs and wages, do not necessarily track cleanly with their economic self-interest. Rather, trade preferences often reflect economic or social anxieties—in other words, they are shaped by many of the same forces that drove the presidential vote, rather than by the specifics of trade policy.

Most voters probably weren't thinking much about alliances and diplomacy when they cast their ballots, but even if they had, it's doubtful they would train their fire on longtime U.S. partners, as Trump has done in his first few weeks. Indeed, as the Times reported, in a survey conducted just before the revelation of the troublesome Australia call, respondents were asked to rate whether countries were allies or enemies of the United States. Among Republicans, the country that came out top on the list of allies? Australia.

Trump made these issues salient by weaving a campaign narrative around concerns about Americans losing jobs due to free-trade deals and paying too much to support rich allies. He then wrapped these issues up in rhetoric about the most egregious mistakes elites have made in recent years, most notably the Iraq war debacle and the 2008 financial crisis, to seek to convince the public that a new approach was necessary seven decades after the end of World War II.

In short, the source of today's attack on international order is not the public, nor is it partisan elites, but rather it is the president himself, with White House adviser Steve Bannon by his side. All this will severely complicate any efforts to restore faith in the order. It is not merely a problem of better messaging—it will always be difficult to get voters roused about something as abstract as the liberal international order.

Instead, it's up to those elites who still recognize and prioritize the invisible benefits that the system has provided to protect or promote it. Those inside Trump's administration, such as Tillerson, Mattis, and recently appointed National Security Advisor H.R. McMaster, as well as their few allies in Congress—particularly in the Republican Party—can play a key part if they are willing to take the risk, and if Trump gives them a hearing.

Someone will have to tell Trump to take a trip to Germany without the expectation of bringing home a deal. Someone will have to remind him that strong alliances with Australia, Japan, and South Korea will be useful if there is a confrontation with China, especially since China itself lacks allies. Someone will have to point out to Trump that trade protection leads to price hikes at Walmart.

These same elites may also have to remind Trump that some foreign policy victories need to stay invisible—that he won't be able to take public credit for some of them. Crisis stability, terrorism prevention, intelligence gathering, and many other aspects of foreign policy are largely about the dogs that didn't bark, the project that takes time to bear fruit, or the story that must stay secret until some day far in the future.

Elites still need to confront the criticisms of the existing order that Trump has exploited. The costs of free trade do fall disproportionately on some Americans; Council on Foreign Relations trade expert Edward Alden has detailed the failure of every administration since John F. Kennedy's to deliver on promised trade adjustment assistance to workers left behind by increasing globalization. NATO allies do need to get serious about spending a minimum of 2 percent of their GDP on defense, as they have pledged to do (only Estonia, Greece, Poland, the United Kingdom and the United States manage)—not because meeting the target would have major defense implications, but rather to maintain political support from NATO's chief benefactor.

The track record of the postwar international order has been written in invisible ink. But it is remarkably strong. If we are not successful in defending it, its benefits may finally become plain to see—precisely because they are gone.

Source: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/2017-02-28/good-foreign-policy-invisible>

HOW CLEVER IS VLADIMIR PUTIN? BY HARLAN ULLMAN

What might be Russian President Vladimir Putin's next steps towards Europe, the West, and the United States for advancing Russian interests globally? Obviously, the policies of the Trump administration are, at best, unclear if not contradictory. Putin needs to understand who in the White House and administration is key in making policy.

An iron law of politics in Washington is that influence on the president is inversely proportional to physical distance from the Oval Office. While Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis is by far the most experienced and knowledgeable senior appointee in national security and defence, the Pentagon is metaphorically a million political miles away from 1600 Pennsylvania Avenue. In contrast, Secretary of State Rex Tillerson has so far been relatively invisible in setting a mark on US foreign policy.

No doubt the FSB has compiled dossiers on the two Stephens — Bannon and Miller — who appear to hold sway over much of President Donald Trump's thinking. That should make for interesting reading. Last weekend, the Washington Post ran a lengthy piece on Bannon's personal history uncovering a man who combined secrecy and a vagabond existence with no clear permanent place of residence, and the new National Security Advisor (NSA) Lt. General H.R. McMaster has not been in place long enough to detect what his future policies may or may not be.

Putin has been described as someone who reads and learns from history. If that is correct, the Russian president only needs to go back four or five decades for appropriate lessons. The most relevant is President Richard Nixon's triangular politics balancing the Soviet Union with an outreach to China. The second is Ronald Reagan's firm stand on intermediate nuclear forces that ultimately led to the Intermediate Nuclear Forces Treaty (INF) between Moscow and Washington.

For much of the Cold War and certainly during the Eisenhower/Kennedy/Johnson administrations, the main enemy was the threat of 'monolithic communism' embodied in the unshakable 'alliance' between Moscow and Beijing. Of course, this monolithic threat was nonsense. Nixon understood or at least believed that major fissures existed. Hence, the overture to China not only eased withdrawal from the Vietnam War. Détente with the Soviet Union followed along with the ABM Treaty and Strategic Arms Limitations agreements.

In the face of powerful anti-nuclear forces demanding disarmament in the West, Reagan persisted in deploying both cruise and Pershing missiles to Europe to counter Moscow's SS-20's. Perseverance paid off. The INF treaty led to the withdrawal of these systems.

Ironically, the aims of the nuclear disarmament factions were partly achieved because of Reagan's steadfastness.

For Putin, as Nixon exploited the USSR-PRC cleavages, Moscow can do the same regarding the U.S. and pressures in Europe eroding alliance cohesion and the chaos in the Middle East and Persian Gulf. From Ronald Reagan, Putin must not back down once he embarks on his policy choices. Should he heed the successes of both American presidents and act accordingly, he will present a most formidable challenge for Washington.

As Putin gazes across the geostrategic landscape, what does he conclude? First, the seemingly monolithic cohesion of NATO and the EU is in tatters. Brexit, populism, the popularity of both President Trump and senator Bernie Sanders, elections in Netherlands (on March 16th) and France and Germany later in the year, and the growing rift between Turkey, Netherlands and Denmark and possible confrontation with the U.S. in Syria over the Kurds are indicators that "something is rotten" in these alliances. This 'rottenness' can be exploited as Nixon did in the early 1970's with China and Russia.

Secondly, conditions in the Middle East and Persian Gulf are even riper for Russian engagement than before. As the battle for Raqqa appears to grow closer, U.S. support and reliance on Kurdish Pesh Merga and YPG forces enflame vehement Turkish hostility towards the PKK (Kurdish People's Party) and the Kurds. Further, the concern if not alarm of the Arab Gulf states over the P-5 Plus One nuclear agreement with Iran and growing costs of the Yemen intervention provide Moscow an opportunity to play honest broker.

Signs have been present of increasing Russian presence. Russian arms deal with Iran, Egypt, possibly Libya and the UAE, along with sales to Egypt, give the Arab states an alternative to the US. Worse for the US, greater Russian access to these markets can lead to better understanding of the capability and technology of weapons the U.S. has sold. Along with arms sales, achieving greater influence is not impossible. How then might Putin's fertile mind (or of those around him) be working? The major if not overriding aims are to enhance Russian security on geostrategic, political and economic levels. That means reducing or dissolving the coherence of NATO and the EU. In the Middle East, it means focusing on eliminating the danger of the Islamic State and other terrorist groups that could or do reach into Russia while reducing the influence of the US.

A weakened Europe almost certainly could be manipulated to give relief from sanctions imposed over annexation of Crimea. Election of populists such as Marine Le Pen could lead to 'Frexit' and very likely the beginning of the end of the EU. Whether Le Pen would attempt a Charles de Gaulle and withdraw from NATO militarily or entirely is surely not impossible. Moreover, the electoral defeat of German Chancellor Angela Merkel by a government more favourably disposed to Russia is likewise not beyond belief.

Regarding South Asia, especially on matters related to India and Pakistan, Russia has real interests in increasing its influence and arms sales. From the side-lines, Russia could be helpful in Afghanistan by virtue of its relationship with Iran and becoming an honest broker mediating between India and Pakistan. This is what the US has attempted to do with little success. Now that the Trump administration may be following an 'America First' policy, interest in becoming embroiled further in the region is an opening for Moscow.

So, what to expect? If Putin is as clever as some believe, the opportunities are too great to waste. Reliance as in the past on military intimidation through no notice exercises and increased military deployment to borders with the West and Kaliningrad in the Baltic would be replaced by both subtle and 'active measures.' As Nixon exploited cleavages between China and the Soviet Union, Putin would leverage the fault lines in the alliance. Closer relations with Turkey would provide leverage both in Northern Europe and in Syria especially if Ankara were perceived to be moving towards Moscow's orbit.

Propaganda, fake news, disinformation and misinformation, hacking and the buying of political fellow travellers in these states are tools the Kremlin knows how to use. If Western cohesion cannot be entirely shattered, it is unlikely that these activities would provide a new cause celebre around which NATO and the EU might unite as during the Cold War. Given the tensions in the Gulf and uncertainty of what comes next when or if Mosul and Raqqa fall, Russian influence without the involvement of large number of military forces surely will grow. A further benefit is that if the Trump administration continues to increase forces in the fight against IS, it too might be caught in a quagmire. Time will tell to see how clever Putin may or may not be.

The writer is UPI's Arnaud de Borchgrave Distinguished Columnist, a Senior Advisor at Washington D.C.'s Atlantic Council and chairman of two private companies. His next book due out this year is Anatomy of Failure: Why America Loses Wars It Starts that argues failure to know and to understand the circumstances in which force is used guarantees failure. The writer can be reached on Twitter @harlankullman

Source: <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/16-Mar-17/how-clever-is-vladimir-putin>

REASONS FOR REJECTING GLOBALISATION: BEYOND INEQUALITY AND XENOPHOBIA – ANALYSIS BY MIGUEL OTERO-IGLESIAS AND FEDERICO STEINBERG

This paper presents five hypotheses to account for support for anti-establishment and anti-globalisation movements. In addition to the predominant perception that the economic decline of the middle classes and the growing xenophobia evident in the West account for Donald Trump's victory in the US, Brexit and the rise of the National Front in France, among others, the authors set out another three reasons: the difficulties that significant layers of the population are having in adapting to technological change, the crisis of the welfare state and the growing disenchantment with representative democracy.

Analysis

A consensus has existed for decades among the main political forces of the US and Europe revolving around the idea that economic openness is positive. The flows of trade and investment and, to a lesser extent, workers have thus been gradually liberalised over time. Thanks to this liberal order, Western societies have become more prosperous, more open and more cosmopolitan. Although some lost out from this economic openness, the majority of voters were prepared to accept a greater level of globalisation. As consumers they could acquire products more cheaply from countries such as China, and they also understood that the welfare state would protect them appropriately if they temporarily fell into the category of the losers (in political economy this is known as the 'compensation hypothesis',¹ according to which more open countries tend to have larger state sectors and redistribute more). For their part, developing countries have also benefitted from economic globalisation, exporting products to the wealthy transatlantic market (which is more and more open) and sending remittances from the West to their countries of origin. The invention seemed to work.

In recent years however, and in particular since the global financial crisis and the Eurozone crisis, the advocates of these policies (social democrats, Christian democrats and liberals) have become increasingly squeezed electorally by new extremist parties calling for, to a greater or lesser extent, the closing of borders, both to trade and to immigration. Most of these are parties of the far right (although there is also a far-left variety), and they call for regaining national sovereignty, the loss of which they attribute to global markets, to a dysfunctional EU and to migration policies that they consider excessively liberal. 'Take back control of the country' is a slogan shared by Trump in the

US, the more nationalist supporters of Brexit in the UK and the French National Front. All of them aspire to achieving this by reducing international trade and expelling immigrants. Their protectionist, nationalist and xenophobic messages seek to give simple solutions to complex questions, and are attracting increasing numbers of voters disenchanted with the directions their societies are taking.

Over the course of what follows we put forward five hypotheses to account for the support for these new parties. To the idea that the economic decline of the middle classes and the growing xenophobia evident in the West account for Donald Trump's victory in the US, Brexit and the rise of the National Front in France, among others, we add another three reasons: the difficulties that significant layers of the population are having in adapting to technological change, the crisis of the welfare state and the growing disenchantment with representative democracy.

Economic decline and xenophobia

In general, experts and news media concentrate on two (not necessarily contradictory) hypotheses to explain why the electorate is lending increasingly more support to the new anti-establishment parties. First, there are those who maintain that the populist revolt is fuelled by lower and middle-class voters who have seen their incomes stagnate and are convinced that their offspring will be even worse-off than they are. As Branko Milanovic² has shown (see Figure 1), these are the people who have lost out from globalisation. In the main they are poorly-qualified workers from Western countries who have been unable to adapt to the new world-wide economic and technological reality and who, on losing their jobs due to the competition from products made in low-wage countries and seeing how the welfare state is not helping them enough, choose to support those who promise to protect them by closing borders. This hypothesis would explain why the French National Front, for instance, is increasingly drawing on the support of socialist voters, from the working and even middle classes, disillusioned with Hollande's economic policies, and why many unemployed and poorly-paid workers in areas suffering industrial decline, traditional Labour voters, supported Brexit in the hopes that a UK outside the EU and with greater political room for manoeuvre might better protect them from external competition.

Reasons For Rejecting Globalisation Beyond Inequality And Xenophobia – Analysis
Miguel Otero-Iglesias and Federico Steinberg

The second, similarly plausible, hypothesis is that voters are not leaning to the right for economic but rather identity and cultural reasons. Thus, the latent racism and xenophobia that have always existed in the West (but since the end of the Second

World War it has been politically incorrect to express) are emerging owing to the social and cultural impact of the increase in immigration in recent decades. Voters are thus turning to parties with strong leaders (whose pronouncements verge on the authoritarian, as with Orbán in Hungary) promising to protect the 'national identity' and halt the process of change and watering-down of values and cultural traditions that openness and multiculturalism have entailed. Fear of terrorist attacks perpetrated by extremist Islamic groups fuels this discourse because it enables hostility towards foreigners to be focused on Muslim immigrants (who are mixed in with the debate on refugees in Europe), placing security at the heart of the political debate, something that Europe has not experienced for many years. Thus, strong leaders with simple and clear ideas (featuring such messages as 'us against them') seduce a fearful electorate, fuelling the hope that the answer to their fears involves installing a protective father-figure at the head of the government, the paradigmatic example of which is Putin in Russia, a person both Trump and Le Pen profess to admire.

For the moment there is empirical evidence to corroborate both hypotheses. In a recent study, the management consultancy McKinsey showed that between 2005 and 2014 real income in advanced countries had stagnated or fallen for more than 65% of households, comprising some 540 million people.³ Moreover, various studies show that those regions of the US that import the most Chinese products tend to de-industrialise most rapidly, creating pockets of unemployment that, far from rapidly finding work in other industries, find themselves permanently excluded from the labour market. Furthermore, it is precisely these areas that tend to vote for the most radical politicians, with the most protectionist policy platforms.⁴

Meanwhile, other studies have shown that voters supporting parties of the extreme right in Europe and Trump in the US, far from being the losers of globalisation, are mainly white middle and upper classes who are becoming more and more openly xenophobic. Thus, according to a study of electoral behaviour in seven European democracies, the best predictor of voting for the far right is support for policies clamping down on immigration, not centre-right economic preferences or mistrust of politicians in general or of European institutions in particular. Another study showed that men are more disposed to supporting these parties than women, even though it is the latter who are worst affected by the increase in free trade, occupying as they do low-wage jobs to a greater extent.⁵

For many, it is important to discern which of the two hypotheses is correct to be able to design public policies that confront the rise of anti-establishment parties threatening to reverse decades of economic policies that have generated wealth and prosperity. But perhaps both hypotheses are correct, in which case it will be necessary to address both

causes together. It is possible, however, that limiting the problem to economic decline, inequality and xenophobia is overly reductionist. The reality is more complex and there are other factors that might account for the rejection of globalisation and the liberal order. This is what we intend to explore below.

The impact of new technology

Robotics and artificial intelligence are normally presented as major advances for our societies. They increase productivity and create huge opportunities. Robots have been introduced into many industries, from car-making to aviation and even shipyards. In the future they will drive and cook for us and make household repairs. The simple daily use of smart phones has solved a good many headaches. We can use them to chat instantaneously, carry out banking operations, watch a football match or film and find out how to get anywhere as fast as possible. The advent of Uber as a replacement for conventional taxis, in addition to other applications, is transforming our lives. But it is precisely this progress, and the speed with which it is unfolding, that scares many people. In New York the drivers' union has announced that it is going to fight against the introduction of Uber's driverless cars. The hotel industry is alarmed by the growth of Airbnb.

Technology increases productivity, but it also reduces employment in the short term, particularly routine work not requiring much in the way of qualifications. This leads many members of the working classes, but also more and more members of the middle classes, to look askance and even reject modernity and the major technological changes underpinning the liberal order, just like the Luddite movement that called for the destruction of the machines during the Industrial Revolution. Robots are now not only replacing employees in assembly lines, they are also gradually replacing white collar workers such as secretaries, bank employees, accountants and even lawyers and financial advisers (see Figure 2).

Reasons For Rejecting Globalisation Beyond Inequality And Xenophobia – Analysis
Miguel Otero-Iglesias and Federico Steinberg

Many millennials (those born between 1980 and 2000), for example, rarely visit a branch of their bank and they manage their savings using a robot-advisor logarithm (in other words, via a computer screen). All this is creating a major technological gulf between the highest-qualified professionals, who see their incomes rise and are consequently comfortable in an ever-more competitive, cosmopolitan and globalised world, and those that are not. This division explains in part why the average rural voter supported Trump and Brexit whereas the big cities were inclined towards Hillary Clinton and the UK's membership of the EU.⁶

In this case, the fear being expressed in the protest vote does not so much reflect jobs that have been lost as the fear of losing future jobs or joining the ranks of low-paid workers. Millions of poorly-qualified and rural voters feel that the state has failed to do enough to help them clamber aboard the train of modernity. The educational gulf is becoming ever wider. Those who can afford to invest in an education that will prepare them for the 21st century have everything to gain. Those who cannot afford this will experience more and more difficulties in finding work and will be stranded on the sidelines, even if they have a university degree. This creates enormous frustration and may account for the anti-establishment vote.

The welfare state fosters protectionism

Another possible cause of the discontent among a large part of the electorate is the one Robert Gilpin pointed out in the 1980s: that the gradual expansion of the welfare state can create protectionist interest groups.⁷ Consider pensioners. Otto von Bismarck introduced the first pensions system in 1881. In those days, people retired at the age of 65 because life expectancy at the time was exactly 65 years. These days, however, while retirement has remained at 65 (or has risen to 67), life expectancy in most developed countries has risen to around 80 years. In an increasingly competitive and globalised world, this level of social spending is hard to maintain. It requires raising the retirement age, increasing the contribution years or cutting the value of pensions, but the resistance is enormous. Most people in many European countries view pensions as an inalienable acquired right. Some of the solutions put forward to protect them are increasing tariffs on products originating from Asia, introducing capital controls to preserve wealth inside the country and raising taxes to offset the social cost.

Another group that may be becoming more and more protectionist is public sector workers. Hitherto, workers in the state sector have been much less exposed to foreign competition than their counterparts in the private sector, which enabled their salaries to remain relatively high. However, once the globalisation of economic activity passes from the secondary sector of industrial manufacturing to the service sector, including public services, competition is also going to be noticed in the public sector. And because public-sector workers tend to have better-organised trade unions, resistance to liberalisation will be accordingly greater. The recent opposition to the free-trade agreement between the US and the EU (TTIP) and TISA (a multilateral agreement to liberalise trade in services negotiated under the auspices of the World Trade Organisation), which both seek to liberalise services, may be explained from this perspective. By the same token, the opening up of the public tendering process to foreign suppliers is seen as a threat because it is argued that the tendency to privatise public services could start with awarding contracts for a limited number of years, which

then act as a Trojan horse for completely privatising such sectors as education, health and water.

Indeed, teachers –workers– and students in state education comprise another interest group that is becoming more and more resistant to globalisation. The former do not want to be exposed to the competition that exists in the private sector. And the latter demand high-quality state education funded by public spending. Like many pensioners, they argue that wage competition with emerging economies should be restricted and capital controls should be used to retain the generation of wealth and its taxation in order to be able to fund state education. Again, this rationale would explain the hostility evident in many universities towards such free trade and services treaties as TTIP and TISA. There is a feeling that free trade benefits the upper echelons of the establishment above all, because they can provide their offspring with a better education and insert them into the transnational elite that has benefitted from globalisation. They can afford an education at Harvard or Berkeley in the US, Oxford, Cambridge or the London School of Economics in the UK or the Grandes Écoles in France, to give just some examples, while the children of the middle and lower-middle classes are educated at public universities with dwindling resources.

The crisis of representative democracy

The fifth and final cause that might account for the rejection of the liberal order is the growing mistrust that large swathes of the population feel towards democratic institutions. This is due to various factors. First, many Western countries have witnessed the development of a kind of *partitocrazia*,⁸ mainly among parties of the centre-left and centre-right, that have played an excessively dominant role in political life. For many voters, this liberal centre takes turns wielding power, but their policies are very similar. Moreover, there is the ever-growing sensation that this *partitocrazia* is at the mercy of a plutocracy, comprising major economic interests, that benefits disproportionately from the way the system operates. This leads to a lack of connection and trust between the elites and the rest of the population. The principle of authority itself is being called into question. Many citizens think that the political class does not represent them, that they are deprived of a voice (or for that matter a loudspeaker to express their ideas, as they do through social media) and think, moreover, that experts form part of this elite that benefits from the current system, which is why they fail to offer solutions benefitting the majority.

According to this hypothesis, the global financial crisis of 2008 and the way it was subsequently handled will have had social effects, the impact of which we are only just starting to discern. The credibility of experts, above all of economists, the most

influential profession in the public debate, has been conspicuously damaged by their failure to predict the crisis. Thereafter the perception that the current political and judicial system benefits the elites will have been reinforced by the fact that taxpayers had to bail out banks while very few bankers have had to pay for their mistakes. On the contrary, many voters feel that the banks' upper echelons have walked away with early retirement pay-offs worth millions of dollars, or euros, while ordinary employees have to work all their lives and never earn such amounts. The reputation of experts was even more damaged after the crisis. Many television viewers and newspaper readers became aware that experts were not neutral. Each expert explained the causes of the crisis from a very different perspective and put forward solutions that were often in mutual conflict. Some called for greater fiscal stimulus, while others defended austerity. This has created a good deal of confusion, while simultaneously undermining the role of experts. For many there is a sensation that each expert has his or her own agenda, and that almost all defend the liberal order because it benefits them. By the same token, it is thought that many of these experts, who are educated at the finest universities and therefore far removed from the average citizen, hold liberal values towards religion, abortion, same-sex marriage, racial diversity and gender equality that are not shared by a large part of the population, especially in the US.⁹

Experts' and technocrats' loss of legitimacy arises from the lack of political solutions to our societies' problems. For many years, politicians have hidden behind a veil of technical solutions. They have agreed that central banks should be independent and headed by technocrats shielded from public and democratic scrutiny. They have also delegated the negotiation of free-trade and investment treaties to experts and ceded sovereignty to international bodies such as the World Trade Organisation and the International Monetary Fund. In the case of Europe, the transfer of sovereignty to the European Central Bank and the European Commission (still far removed from voters) has been even greater. Such delegation worked well for as long as the economy and employment were growing. But with the advent of the crisis, the authority and legitimacy of the technocrats started to be called into much greater question, particularly when, amid the lack of a political response, they began to accumulate more and more power. Indeed, it may be argued that the politicians have left it to the central banks to tackle the crisis with monetary stimuli. Unfortunately, however, it is becoming more and more evident that the structural problems besetting developed societies cannot be solved by monetary policy alone.

All this questioning has led to doubts being cast on the open society and many voters being prepared to lend their support to candidates who speak in a way that connects with the ordinary citizen and promises easy solutions to complex problems. The anti-establishment message thereby succeeds in attracting an amalgam of highly

heterogeneous voters, but with an ever-wider basis. It encompasses those who feel vulnerable and left behind, but also those who are doing well economically but are disillusioned with politicians and technocrats and who therefore wish to curb the power of the state and the establishment to unleash market forces. The questioning of experts emerged particularly starkly in the Brexit campaign.¹⁰

Conclusions

Donald Trump's victory in the US elections, Brexit and the rise of parties like the French National Front and the Alternative for Germany have taken the establishment by surprise and have called into question decades of moderate forces alternating power in Western countries. The causes of this phenomenon are manifold. They encompass the anger of those who have lost out from globalisation, the widespread fear of losing national identity in societies that are increasingly diverse and cosmopolitan, anxiety about technological change and its impact on employment, frustration concerning the dwindling resources available to maintain the welfare state and indignation at the unrepresentative nature of many aspects of the democratic system in an ever-more globalised world where the concept of national sovereignty has been rendered obsolete.

All these intermingle and threaten the open society and the international order that has held sway for decades and been responsible for spectacular economic progress but has also produced growing material inequalities and inequalities of opportunity in advanced societies.

Responding to the well-founded fears of their citizens is perhaps the greatest challenge confronting Western nations. The nationalist, protectionist, xenophobic and authoritarian leanings of many anti-establishment parties' new agendas need to be combated by focusing on the causes from which they arise. Simply ignoring them and hoping that the storm will blow over, as has been the habit of recent years, is a recipe for failure. Developing better policies for integrating immigrants and refugees is crucial in this context. It is also necessary to ensure a better redistribution of the enormous amounts of wealth generated by globalisation, to emphasise the advantages of diversity and to prepare citizens for technological change, equipping them with the resources to adapt themselves. It is not so much a case of protecting against the effects of globalisation as empowering citizens, enabling them to get the most out of it to the fullest extent possible. Finally, it is necessary to give a better explanation of the limitations faced by the welfare state and the reforms it needs in order to be sustainable, and to open new public forums and channels enabling citizens to feel more and better represented.

*About the authors: Miguel Otero Iglesias, Senior analyst, Elcano Royal Institute | @miotei

Federico Steinberg, Senior analyst, Elcano Royal Institute | @Steinbergf

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Notes: 1 See Dani Rodrik (1998), 'Why do more open economies have bigger governments?', *Journal of Political Economy*, nr 106, p. 997-1032.

2 Branko Milanovic (2016), *Global Inequality. A New Approach for the Age of Globalization*, Harvard University Press.

3 McKinsey Global Institute (2016), *Poorer Than Their Parents. A New Perspective on Income Inequality*, June.

4 David Dorn & Gordon H. Hanson (2013), 'The China syndrome: local labor market effects of import competition in the United States', *American Economic Review*, vol. 103, nr 6, p. 2121-2168; David Dorn & Gordon Hanson (2016), 'Importing political polarization? The electoral consequences of rising trade exposure', Working Paper nr 22637, NBER; and Yi Che, Yi Lu, Justin R. Pierce, Peter K. Schott & Zinghan Tao (2016), 'Does trade liberalization with China influence US elections?', Working Paper nr 22178, NBER.

5 These and other examples are summarised by Zack Beauchamp in 'White riot'.

6 A good summary of the impact of technology on the labour market can be found in David Rotman (2013), 'How technology is destroying jobs', *MIT Technology Review*, 12/VI/2013.

7 See chapter 2 of Robert Gilpin (1987), *The Political Economy of International Relations*, Princeton University Press, Princeton.

8 For this concept, see Peter Mair (2013), *Ruling the Void: The Hollowing of Western Democracy*, Verso Books, New York & London.

9 This idea is explained in Charles Camosy (2016), 'Trump won because college-educated Americans are out of touch', *The Washington Post*, 9/XI/2016.

10 For the rise and fall of the role of experts, see Sebastian Mallaby (2016), 'The cult of the expert – and how it collapsed', The Guardian, 20/X/2016.

Source: <http://www.eurasiareview.com/16032017-reasons-for-rejecting-globalisation-beyond-inequality-and-xenophobia-analysis/>

GLOBAL NUCLEAR BAN | EDITORIAL

Saying that the time was not the right time for such measures, the United States led a group of countries – which include allies like Britain and France – in a boycott against a conference at the United Nations (UN) which proposes to ban all nuclear weapons.

It is one those few times that Russia and China – two other veto wielding rival nations – stand on the same side of a major policy issue as the United States. Pakistan and India, also usually found on opposite ends of UN resolutions, have expressed their opposition to the move.

The lines, as they are currently drawn, are not based on political affiliations; instead the nations with nuclear weapons oppose the ban, the ones without support it.

A group of 120 nations led the efforts to start a conversation on the ban back in October of last year, but despite their numbers, this outcome was to be expected.

The official reason given by the United States and its allies is that countries like North Korea and Iran will not abide by the ban and hence global disarmament would never be possible – although both North Korea and Iran sat in on the talks.

However, it is not hard to see that the military and political power afforded by nuclear weapons will never make them obsolete for the nations that possess them.

Given how almost all nuclear-capable countries are in the process of upgrading their arsenal, it is difficult to see them give it up.

Despite the nigh impossibility of the move, counties who support the ban are not deterred.

They hope to pass a resolution banning nuclear weapons through their numbers, and then letting the moral and legal pressure generated from the abstinence of major nations to whittle them down.

These are ambitious, and slightly unrealistic plans – ones that would take decades to have any effect.

Source: <http://nation.com.pk/editorials/29-Mar-2017/global-nuclear-ban>

EU VOWS UNITY AS BRITAIN BRACES FOR BREXIT

LONDON: With the clock ticking on Britain's EU membership, the bloc's leadership vowed unity while in London the government was set to begin the arduous task of disentangling itself from Brussels.

"This is a moment to unite," European Commission head Jean-Claude Juncker said on Wednesday, hours after Britain formally started procedures to end its 44-year membership of the EU.

With just two years foreseen for negotiations, Juncker said the rights of EU citizens will be top of the agenda.

Settling Britain's exit bill – estimated by the Commission to be 60 billion euros (\$64 billion, £52 billion) – will also be a priority when talks get underway, expected mid- to late-May.

But even before the negotiations start, Britain on Thursday will begin the monumental task of incorporating EU legislation for when the divorce is finalised.

Speaking in parliament on Wednesday, Prime Minister Theresa May said that was important "so that on the day we leave everybody knows those rules still apply and everybody knows where they stand".

The government will publish a "white paper" policy document on Thursday outlining its plans for the legal overhaul, which for better or worse will give MPs the opportunity to amend the laws as they are brought under the national system.

Meanwhile Juncker will meet in Malta with EU President Donald Tusk, German Chancellor Angela Merkel and Spanish Prime Minister Mariano Rajoy.

Tusk bid farewell to Britain on Wednesday, after receiving the British government's divorce letter triggering Article 50 of the EU's Lisbon Treaty – the exit clause.

"We already miss you," he said.

Merkel called for "fair and constructive" negotiations, while dismissing Britain's wish to have exit negotiations run concurrently with talks on its future relationship with the EU.

European stock markets closed slightly up Wednesday, but dealers said investors had largely “priced in” Brexit already.

Britain has until October 2018 at the latest to come up with a draft divorce plan, according to the Commission’s Brexit negotiator Michel Barnier.

While May asserted in January that “no deal is better than a bad deal”, in her Brexit letter she adopted a more conciliatory tone and called for Britain and the EU to “work hard” to avoid failure in the negotiations.

The cliff edge scenario of Britain leaving the European bloc with no deal has alarmed business leaders, who have also emphasised the need for a transitional arrangement to allow for the divorce deal to be gradually implemented.

The European Parliament’s chief Brexit negotiator, Guy Verhofstadt, said such a transition period should be limited to three years.

Tusk is due to issue draft “negotiating guidelines” on Friday and leaders of the 27 remaining EU countries will hold a special summit on April 29 to rubber stamp the plans.

While the bloc has tried to show a united front in the face of Brexit, celebrating the EU’s 60th anniversary earlier this month, in Britain the prime minister is struggling to unite her own country.

Britons last year voted 52 percent to 48 percent in favour of Brexit, leaving the country bitterly divided with tens of thousands of pro-EU protesters marching in London on Saturday.

The referendum result has also led to a resurgence of Scotland’s independence campaign, after Scots voted to stay in the EU but were outnumbered nationwide.

“Dear Donald Tusk, We’ll see EU soon” read Thursday’s headline of Scotland’s pro-independence newspaper, The National.

The Telegraph, meanwhile, described Brexit as “A magnificent moment” on its front page, quoting Foreign Minister Boris Johnson who played an instrumental role in the leave campaign.

“We have every reason, in reality, to be brimming with confidence,” Johnson wrote in the newspaper.

POST-IMPERIAL NOSTALGIA: BREXIT AND THE EMPIRE BY JEREMY WHITE-STANLEY

Boris Johnson, on a post-Brexit state visit to Pakistan, declared that two per cent of the British population can trace its origin to this land creating an “indissoluble bond” and called for closer ties between the two countries as the UK embarks on its mission to have a “global outlook” after voting to leaving the EU. Johnsons’s fawning over the past empire will not come as a surprise to those who have followed his career, but what should the people of Pakistan make of these allegedly deep bonds with their former colonial masters? Is there any popular desire to rekindle the links with this distant European island? To answer this question one must first look to Britain which is undergoing a reimagining of its identity and place in the world.

With political turmoil of Brexit and an ever-shakier British Union, the UK has been forced reconsider where it stands in the world. Many of the Brexiteers have declared Britain as now open for business on the international stage, now it has been released from the “shackles” of Brussels. With the declaration of “global Britain” the rhetoric has crept back to the last time Britain was a global nation; however now the imperial pink has all but gone from the map with only a few far-flung outposts remaining as reminders of the Empire’s former reach. Many MP’s have been calling for the better trade deals with the Commonwealth, though it is not clear how prepared the UK really is to deal with Pakistan on an equal footing. When the UK is trading on colonial nostalgia it is difficult to see a meaningful and mutual beneficial relationship, with the subcontinent.

There has been a concerted push to get better trade deals between the colonies in the Anglosphere. After Theresa May’s first visit to the USA Breitbart, a far-right news outlet, declared it as a heralding of “the return of the Anglosphere”. The desire for further cooperation between the “English speaking peoples” has been taken up by British MP’s such as Daniel Hannan, who has called for a union of English speaking countries. This idea has manifested itself into the political organisation CANZUK, which is backed by the influential media mogul Conrad Black. In contrast, the non-English speaking commonwealth countries have not received such a warm embrace; one cannot envisage the likes of Hannan calling for close bonds with the Caribbean Commonwealth countries, which also share a common language and monarch with the UK. Pakistan, a country further removed from the “shared heritage” of the CANZUK nations by virtue of its distant language, culture and religion, is at risk of being marginalized. So how can an organisation striving for equality, which so brazenly plays favorites, be positively received in Commonwealth countries outside of the Anglosphere?

The idea that the predominantly white English speaking CANZUK nations are just extensions of the UK abroad runs deep. Boris Johnson once claimed the UK joining the common market was an act of betrayal toward the commonwealth countries like “Australia and New Zealand”. Boris at one point even suggested a free movement between Australia and the UK. This was in contrast to his campaign to leave the EU, a campaign that heavily focused on curtailing European immigration particularly from Eastern Europe. Antipodean immigrants have always held a different status than immigrants from developing countries; the term expat is often reserved for them, as opposed to the derisive term of immigrant, reveals that the idea they are still part of the imperial family has never fully left the British psyche.

In an article for the New Statesman, Jonathan Line, Director of British Influence, cuttingly stated, “The loss of our own empire remains an unacknowledged national trauma, which we both grieve and fail to accept”. A 2014 YouGov poll found that 59 per cent of respondents thought the British Empire was “more something to be proud of” rather than ashamed of. However it would be misleading to characterise the recent rise of British imperial nostalgia as a phenomenon without severe tensions and fault lines in a country that is acutely divided.

The Brexit vote showed the new conflicts in British society as young middle-class voters rallied around the EU as a progressive cause, seeing themselves more as international citizens. The Brexit vote came from deprived working-class areas in the post-industrial North of England, left behind by globalisation, as well as from an older generation that holds to national identity more dearly. The British Union is on increasingly shaky ground as the Scottish National Party (SNP) dominate local politics, taking all but one Westminster seat in the 2015 general election. The SNP’s strangle hold on Scottish politics is evident in their threats to once again hold an independence referendum after they were dragged out of the EU by England and Wales — Scotland voted to remain by a margin of 62 per cent to 38. If the socio-political distance between England and Scotland- countries which share a remarkable amount of culture and links — has grown, it makes the commonwealth attachments between the UK and Pakistan seem consigned to the history books.

It is difficult to see post-Brexit attitudes as sustainable given the current limits to Britain’s global reach and influence. Although we’ll never truly see the demise of British nationalism, it is unlikely to continue in its current pseudo-imperialist trajectory. The hypocritical tirade of UK, EU and US populist-nationalists against the globalization bogeyman is ironic because the ideas of these movements are organized and disseminated through globalised communication such as social media and internet forums. The erosion of national and cultural barriers through globalised communication,

economy and infrastructure means that romantic imperialist notions dissolve on contact with political realities. India, which some politicians have pinned their post Brexit trade hopes on, recently rebuffed British trade interests over the Theresa May's past decision to cancel Indian post university visas. Britain faces a difficult task in forging a new identity and place in the world; its revitalised interest in the former Empire will certainly bring a revaluation of the colonial legacy in the wider commonwealth.

The writer is UK-based freelance columnist

Source: <http://dailytimes.com.pk/opinion/09-Mar-17/post-imperial-nostalgia-brexite-and-the-empire>

RUSSIA, TRUMP, AND A NEW DÉTENTE BY ROBERT DAVID ENGLISH

Fixing U.S.-Russian Relations

In his first press conference as president of the United States, Donald Trump said no fewer than seven times that it would be “positive,” “good,” even “great” if “we could get along with Russia.” In fact, for all the confusion of his policies toward China, Europe, and the Middle East, Trump has enunciated a clear three-part position on Russia, which contrasts strongly with that of most of the U.S. political elite. First, Trump seeks Moscow’s cooperation on global issues; second, he believes that Washington shares the blame for soured relations; and third, he acknowledges “the right of all nations to put their own interests first,” adding that the United States does “not seek to impose our way of life on anyone.”

The last of these is an essentially realist position, and if coherently implemented could prove a tonic. For 25 years, Republicans and Democrats have acted in ways that look much the same to Moscow. Washington has pursued policies that have ignored Russian interests (and sometimes international law as well) in order to encircle Moscow with military alliances and trade blocs conducive to U.S. interests. It is no wonder that Russia pushes back. The wonder is that the U.S. policy elite doesn’t get this, even as foreign-affairs neophyte Trump apparently does.

MEMORY LOSS

Most Americans appreciate the weight of past grievances upon present-day politics, including that of the United States’ own interference in Iran in the 1950s, or in Latin America repeatedly from the 1960s through the 1980s. Yet there is a blind spot when it comes to U.S. interference in Russian politics in the 1990s. Many Americans remember former President Bill Clinton as a great benefactor to Russia as the country attempted to build a market democracy under then-President Boris Yeltsin. But most Russians see the United States as having abetted a decade of degradation under Yeltsin’s scandal-ridden bumbling. Washington, they believe, not only took advantage of Moscow’s weakness for geopolitical gain but also repeatedly interfered in Russia’s domestic politics to back the person—Yeltsin—who best suited U.S. interests. Americans’ ignorance of this perception creates a highly distorted picture of Russia’s first postcommunist decade.

Russia’s misery during the 1990s is difficult for outsiders to comprehend. After the fall of the Soviet Union in 1991, Russia’s economy entered a sharp slide that would continue for over eight years. Although this decline is rarely referred to as a depression in

Western media, in fact it was much worse than the Great Depression in the United States—between 1929 and 1932, U.S. GDP fell by some 25 percent, whereas Russia's fell by over 40 percent between 1990 and 1998. Compared with the Great Depression, Russia's collapse of the 1990s was nearly twice as sharp, lasted three times as long, and caused far more severe health and mortality crises. The public health disaster reflected Russia's prolonged agony: stress-aggravated pathologies (suicide, disease caused by increased alcohol and tobacco use) and economically induced woes (poor nutrition, violent crime, a crumbling public health system) combined to cause at least three million "excess deaths" in the 1990s.

Faith in free markets, and admiration for the United States, fell sharply in Russia in the 1990s. The failures of "shock therapy," or the rapid transition to a market economy, made such alienation inevitable, as the rush toward privatization and slashing of the state led not to self-regulating growth and broad prosperity but to a pillaging of national wealth by rapacious oligarchs, who flourished under Yeltsin. Worse, American talk of a Marshall Plan for Russia proved empty, and U.S. aid—particularly in the critical first years of transition—was a paltry \$ 7 billion. Much of that was in the form of credits that came attached with strings requiring the purchase of U.S. goods or the hiring of U.S. consultants. Also hurting America's image were much-publicized cases of corruption on the part of some Americans, involving insider trading, money laundering, and similar scandals.

In 1993, hyperinflation and poverty led to protests, and the Russian parliament passed legislation attempting to block Yeltsin's reforms. Yeltsin responded by deciding to close the legislature and redesign the political system to concentrate power in his hands. This, however, was blatantly unconstitutional, and many deputies refused to disband. Some turned to violent resistance and were crushed by the army. The Clinton administration regretted the bloodshed but blamed it on the opposition, while ignoring the illegality of Yeltsin's power grab. And the United States supported Yeltsin again two months later, when a referendum on a "super-presidential" constitution passed in a rigged vote.

In 1996, there was more U.S.-assisted mischief on the part of Yeltsin. The worst incident was the "loans for shares" scandal, a crooked privatization scheme in which Yeltsin sold Russia's most valuable natural-resource firms to oligarchs by way of fraudulent auctions—a fraud that was matched by that of the 1996 election, when Yeltsin won his second term. The United States was again tarred by complicity, by winking at such electoral violations as state media working to elect Yeltsin or the gross violations of campaign spending limits, and even by sending U.S. advisers to help Yeltsin's stumbling campaign.

The Clinton administration tolerated Yeltsin's regime in part to gain Russia's compliance on global issues, including NATO expansion. But even this was shortsighted as well as hypocritical. George Kennan, author of the Cold War containment policy, warned that pushing NATO toward Russia's borders was "a strategic blunder of potentially epic proportions," which was likely to provoke an anti-Western backlash. Other experts, such as intelligence veteran Fritz Ermarth, issued warnings at the time over the United States' complicity in Russia's domestic corruption. "We have largely lost the admiration and respect of the Russian people," Ermarth wrote. "Think how [U.S. policy] must look to Russians: you support the regime's corruption of our country on the inside so it supports you in your humiliation of our country on the outside. One could not concoct a better propaganda line for Russia's extreme nationalists."

ALTERNATIVE REALITY ABOUT RUSSIA

Few Russians who endured this corruption and humiliation have much sympathy with U.S. anger over Russian meddling in the 2016 election. And with any perspective on the 1990s, it is hard to fault them. Yet such perspective among Americans is rare, in part because the Western media often adopted the Clinton administration's cheery narrative, downplaying negative phenomena as bumps in the road toward a democratic Russia. And despite subsequent revelation of so many scandals from the 1990s, Putin's "autocracy" is still contrasted with Yeltsin's "golden era of democracy," ignoring the fact that it was Yeltsin's team who perfected such tactics as 110 percent turnout in remote precincts, and whose oligarchs used their media empires as lobbying firms while brazenly buying parliamentary votes (to create personal tax loopholes). Many myths about the Yeltsin years persist. A recent National Geographic article by Julia Ioffe, for instance, attributes Russian growth under Putin to "tough economic reforms adopted by Boris Yeltsin" and describes Putin as "coasting on historically high oil prices and economic reforms implemented in the Nineties."

High oil prices, yes. But had Putin merely coasted on the policies of Yeltsin, there would have been little tax collected on the oligarchs' profits to pay for pensions, rebuild infrastructure, and create reserve funds. And there would have been no agricultural revival, because private land tenure would have remained illegal. In his first few years in office, Putin passed tax and banking reform, bankruptcy laws, and other pro-market policies that Yeltsin hadn't managed in a decade. Denying Putin credit in this way is typical. Paul Krugman recently argued in *The New York Times*, for instance, that growth under Putin "can be explained with just one word: oil." But note that in 2000, when Putin became president, oil stood at \$30 per barrel and petroleum accounted for 20 percent of Russia's GDP. But in 2010, after a decade's rise pushed oil over \$100 per barrel, petroleum had nevertheless fallen to just 11 percent of GDP, according to the World

Bank. Thus as oil boomed, Russian agriculture, manufacturing, and services grew even faster.

Krugman's fellow columnist Thomas Friedman similarly decried Russia's low life expectancy over a period "that coincides almost exactly with Putin's leadership of the country ... the period of 1990–2013," while blaming Putin for "slow gains in the life expectancy of an entire nation." In fact, the first half of this period coincides almost exactly with Yeltsin's leadership, when male life expectancy fell by over six years—unprecedented for a modern country in peacetime. Under Putin, both male and female life expectancy have made rapid gains, and their combined average recently reached 70 years for the first time in Russian history.

VLADIMIR THE TERRIBLE

Distaste for many aspects of Putin's harsh rule is understandable. But demonization that veers into delusion by denying him credit for major progress (and blaming him for all problems) is foolish. Foolish because it widens the gulf between U.S. and Russian perceptions of what is going on in their country, with Russians rating Putin highly because they value the stability and pride he has revived. Foolish because it encourages the illusion that everything bad in Russia flows from Putin, so that if only Putin were removed then Russians would elect another liberal like Yeltsin. And foolish simply because that is how American leaders look when they mock Russia's prospects, as former U.S. President Barack Obama did when he said, "Russia doesn't make anything. Immigrants aren't rushing to Moscow in search of opportunity. The population is shrinking."

In fact, Russia's population has been growing since 2010, and the country has one of the higher birth rates in Europe. Russia is the world's third-largest immigrant destination in the world, behind only the United States and Germany. And Russian products include the rockets that ferry U.S. astronauts into space. Both Obama and former Secretary of State Hillary Clinton were given to careless quips about Russia. Both mocked Putin, and Clinton compared him to Adolf Hitler—a comparison that would be laughable were they not so offensive to Russians, who lost 26 million countrymen in World War II. It was also reckless, given Putin's broad popularity in Russia. But when confronted with this popularity, Obama replied, "Saddam Hussein had a 90 percent poll rating." He explained, "If you control the media and you've taken away everybody's civil liberties, and you jail dissidents, that's what happens." This view is deeply mistaken.

There is, of course, much to fault in Putin's Russia, and both Obama and Clinton were subject to nastiness from Moscow. But it is undignified and unwise for a U.S. president

to disparage not just a foreign leader but his entire country in the way that Obama did. The urge to answer taunts in kind cannot overpower regard for Russian public opinion, and so confirm the Russian media's portrayal of America as ignorant and arrogant. It seemed clever when Hillary Clinton pounced on Trump as "Putin's puppet." But apparently it didn't resonate much with ordinary Americans, who elected Trump, and neither does the pettiness and demonization of Putin resonate with ordinary Russians.

These ordinary Russians are the forgotten people—the hard-working teachers, doctors, and mechanics whose savings, careers, even health were destroyed by the catastrophe of the 1990s. They are the fledgling voters who saw their new democracy bought and sold by Yeltsin and his cronies, and the onetime admirers of the United States who longed for a leader to restore their pride in Russia after a decade of humiliation. Under Clinton, the United States treated Russia like a defeated enemy and capitalized on its weakness to expand NATO. Claims that this was merely a defensive expansion were belied by NATO's bombing of Serbia, a Russian ally, in 1999. Under President George W. Bush, the United States further intimidated Russia by abrogating the Anti-Ballistic Missile Treaty, imposing punitive tariffs, launching a reckless invasion of Iraq, continuing to expand NATO, and further encircling Russia by cozying up to Georgia and Ukraine.

It is thus unsurprising that in 2008, Russia hit back, answering a Georgian strike in the disputed region of South Ossetia (which killed some Russian peacekeepers) with a crushing counterblow. For finally pushing back, Putin's approval rating soared to nearly 85 percent—the highest it would reach until Crimea's annexation in 2014.

HOW NOT TO PROMOTE DEMOCRACY

This is the Russia—and the Russians—that Obama inherited in 2009: prideful, angry, and in no mood for the sanctimony that came with the new administration's stress on democracy promotion. They had seen Bill Clinton ally with a corrupt Yeltsin to make a mockery of their new democracy. They had fumed as Vice President Dick Cheney faulted Russian democracy while praising that of Kazakhstan. And they heard their country criticized for interfering in the affairs of weaker neighbors, even as NATO was expanding right up to Russia's borders, and the United States was launching an invasion of Iraq in the name of democracy promotion that would set the Middle East aflame. Not surprisingly, the Russian media ever more frequently paired the term "double standard" with America.

Thus it may have been unwise for the Obama administration to pursue democracy promotion as brashly as it did, criticizing Russian elections and encouraging Putin's opposition. This carried a whiff not only of hypocrisy but of danger, too, appearing, as it

did to many within Russia, as a threat to destabilize Putin's rule. Democracy promoters may draw a distinction between policies aimed at advancing NATO and those aimed at advancing political liberalization in Russia and other former Soviet states—emphasizing that Obama enacted the latter but not the former. But Putin's skepticism was easy to understand given the West's record of undermining Moscow's allies, as in Serbia, Georgia, and Ukraine, and then seeking to anchor their new regimes in the Western political and military blocs. As a senator, too, Obama was an early supporter of Ukraine joining NATO, and preparations for Ukraine's integration with NATO continued throughout his presidency. Hillary Clinton also advocated a NATO "open door" for Ukraine, and then incurred Putin's wrath by pushing humanitarian intervention (which soon turned into regime change) in Libya. So her demand for "a full investigation of all reports of fraud and intimidation" in Russia's 2011 elections was most unwelcome. Michael McFaul, an expert on democracy promotion and longtime critic of Putin, was a particularly provocative choice for new Obama's ambassador to Russia in 2012.

Neither should righteous indignation at Putin's post-election crackdown prevent rethinking of the targets as well as the tools of American public diplomacy. Some fault the focus on Russia's liberal opposition, a small number of Moscow-centered activists who best reflect U.S. values. Many of them are discredited in the eyes of the Russian majority: for their earlier support of Yeltsin's regime, for their disparaging of the widely admired Putin, and for their reflexive backing of U.S. policies—such as NATO expansion—even when they clash with Russian interests. They appear, in a word, unpatriotic. They are earnest, articulate, and highly admirable. But even if they weren't stigmatized by Putin—or tarred by identification with the 1990s—they embody liberal-cosmopolitan values alien to most conservative-nationalist Russians. And while this makes them appealing to the West, it also makes them a poor bet as the focus of democracy-promotion.

Consider the case of Pussy Riot, the feminist-protest rock group, some of whose members were convicted of hooliganism in 2012 for staging a protest in Moscow's Church of Christ the Savior—profanely mocking not only Putin but also the Russian Orthodox Church and its believers. Both activists and state officials in the United States praised Pussy Riot and demanded their release. Yet basic decency—and regard for the values and traditions of others—would suggest that hailing Pussy Riot as champions of free speech was disrespectful of Russia. It was also insensible if the United States is interested in cultivating sympathy among Russians, some 70 percent of whom identify as Orthodox believers. Russia is a conservative society that viewed the years of Yeltsin's rule, and its onslaught of pornography and promiscuity, with horror. In polls, only seven percent of Russians said that political protest was permissible in a church, and only five percent agreed that Pussy Riot should be released without serious

punishment. Surely the sensibilities of ordinary Russians deserve as much regard as those of a minority of cosmopolitan liberals. And hectoring by the West will hardly ease traditional Russian homophobia. Indeed, the outcry on behalf of Pussy Riot likely strengthened popular support for the notorious 2013 law against “propaganda of nontraditional sexual relations.”

Russians see a double standard in U.S. judgments about their country—a prosecutorial stance that criticizes Russia for behaviors that go unnoticed in other countries. For example, The Washington Post has closely covered Russia’s anti-LGBT policies but has paid scant attention to the same in countries such as Lithuania, Georgia, and Ukraine, and when it has it has suggested that Russia is to blame for exporting its anti-gay beliefs. Since 2014, the Western media has similarly reported on Moscow’s alleged propaganda onslaught, while largely ignoring the brazen purchase of positive publicity by countries such as Azerbaijan, Kazakhstan, and Ukraine. This is not the usual lobbying or public relations but the funding of ostensibly independent research on a country by that country itself—paying for upbeat election reports and other assessments by such groups as the Parliamentary Association of the Council of Europe.

Americans rarely hear of such activity, even as alarm over Moscow’s subversion nears hysteria. A recent U.S. intelligence report on Russian meddling in the 2016 U.S. presidential election warned of “a Kremlin-directed campaign to undermine faith in the U.S. government and fuel political protest.” Yet a key culprit is the news channel RT (which has a miniscule share of the U.S. audience), on the grounds that it runs “anti-fracking programming highlighting environmental issues” and “a documentary about the Occupy Wall Street movement [that] described the current U.S. political system as corrupt.” In fact, unlike the 2014 Maidan occupation in Ukraine, which was actively supported by some U.S. and EU officials, Russian diplomats carefully kept their distance from the 2011 Occupy Wall Street protests.

DEMOCRACY PROMOTION

Another double standard, ignored by the U.S. media but noted overseas, was Obama’s denunciation in 2014 of the Crimea secession referendum that preceded the peninsula’s annexation by Russia. Rejecting parallels between Crimea’s secession from Ukraine and Kosovo’s 2008 secession from Serbia—which the West supported but Russia, along with Serbia, rejected as illegitimate—Obama said that Kosovo only seceded “after a referendum was organized ... in careful cooperation with the United Nations and with Kosovo’s neighbors. None of that even came close to happening in Crimea.” In fact, none of that even came close to happening in Kosovo. There was no referendum at all—just a vote by Kosovo’s Albanian-majority parliament. As for cooperation with the

neighbors, Serbia desperately opposed Kosovo secession; Bosnia-Herzegovina, Romania, and Slovakia still have not recognized Kosovo; and others, such as Bulgaria, Croatia, and Hungary, only agreed under Western pressure.

Such a factual error—belief in things that never occurred, yet are cited as legal justification to dismember a country—is worrisome regardless. It also highlights an illusion about the free, democratic choice facing countries in central and eastern Europe as they are tugged between Washington and Moscow. In fact, the freedom of their choice belies the powerful political and economic levers employed to pry these countries away from Russia. As noted above in the case of the Kosovo referendum, Kosovo’s neighbors were pressured by the United States and NATO to recognize the region’s secession from Serbia. In fact, carrots and sticks have been continually applied to the countries of eastern Europe to encourage the policies desired in Brussels, Berlin, and Washington, D.C. When eastern Europeans grew concerned about the higher than expected costs of joining the EU—or about the backlash that NATO expansion was provoking in Russia—accession was sweetened for political and business elites while the masses were sometimes sidestepped with popular referenda replaced by simple parliamentary votes. Occasionally Brussels and Washington pulled in opposite directions, as with the International Criminal Court—backed by the EU but opposed by the Administration of George W. Bush. In this, as in other cases, the countries of central Europe exercised their supposedly free choice under enormous political and economic pressure.

Nobody argues that joining the Russia-led Eurasian Economic Union would benefit most countries more than the EU. (NATO is another matter, as the costs of Russian backlash now rival any security benefits from further expansion.) The point is simply to grasp the legitimacy in Moscow’s perspective—that expansion of the Western blocs is not an organic, democratic process but, rather, one engineered by the United States and its allies, and motivated as much by power as by principle. The West must also see the costs to the countries involved (and to its own alliances) in a payoff-driven, elite-centered process that shortchanges the concerns of majorities and is in key ways undemocratic. Long before the Syrian refugees crisis soured them even further, support for the EU in central Europe had already fallen because the costs were much higher than expected, whereas the benefits seemed mainly to reward a wealthy business elite.

As an example of this dynamic, consider the case of Moldova, where the EU has supported local pro-European parties to help this desperately poor country toward accession. Few in the West read much about the country until a spate of headlines last November, such as the Telegraph’s announcement: “Pro-Russia Candidate Wins Moldova Election.” Spinning this result in terms of geopolitics was misleading. The

election had turned largely on domestic issues, such as corruption and the economy. Ordinary Moldovans worried that EU accession would mainly benefit elites, and Moldova's pro-EU Liberal Democratic Party was reeling from a scandal in which party leaders funneled \$1 billion—half the reserves of the Moldovan National Bank—into private bank accounts. But just as in the cases of similar elections in Bulgaria and Montenegro, U.S. media focused on the struggle for influence with Moscow. Indeed, Montenegro casts all of these issues into sharp relief. This is a country whose secession from Serbia the United States encouraged—for geopolitical goals, to weaken the Serbian leader Milosevic—by backing the epically corrupt boss Milo Djukanovic. Now, a decade later, Djukanovic's Democratic-Socialist party exploits similar geopolitical tensions to engineer Montenegro's accession to NATO—a step of doubtful benefit to either the alliance or Montenegro, provocative to Russia, and one that buttresses a deeply corrupt, patronage-based regime. This focus on geopolitical threats, however, obscures the bigger socioeconomic one: pluralities or even majorities in many eastern European countries now believe that life was better under communism. Such alienation drives anti-EU sentiment in those countries and empowers demagogues like Hungary's President Viktor Orban—not some nefarious influence from Vladimir Putin but deep economic inequality and the manifest failings of European integration.

Western understandings of the conflict in Ukraine show a similar bias. Recall that the crisis erupted in 2013 when President Viktor Yanukovich balked at the EU's harsh accession terms and opted instead to align with Russia. And he was ousted in a revolt that America and the EU openly cheered. No matter how corrupt his rule was, he was elected democratically and had acted constitutionally in making his decision. (In fact, he was elected in 2010 because the previous pro-EU government had proved both corrupt and incompetent.) But in 2014, as the protests in Ukraine grew, the United States decided to abandon a power-transition deal that it had agreed upon with Russia, and instead supported the protests calling for Yanukovich's ouster, which essentially turned into a coup. But this quickly boomeranged, as the Russians concluded that if the West could support an unconstitutional seizure of power in Kiev, then they could hold an unconstitutional referendum in Crimea or support an unconstitutional seizure of power in Donbas. There was a compromise path, but treating Ukraine as something to be yanked from Russia's orbit—which raised the specter of NATO again as well as loss of their centuries-old Crimean naval base—made Putin's choice to hit back an easy one.

Of course this hardly justifies the savagery that Russia has abetted in fighting over the Donbas. But U.S. and EU actions helped spark the conflict by treating Ukraine as a prize to be grabbed, rather than as a linguistically and ethnically divided country in which Russia has legitimate interests. Western policies recklessly ignored these interests and needlessly raised the stakes. As seen, some officials stressed a NATO

“open door” for Ukraine while the likelihood of rapid EU accession was exaggerated as well. Before the war, Ukraine had an annual income-per-capita of \$4,000, on par with Albania and Kosovo, and in corruption surveys it ranked below Russia and on the same level as Nigeria. Today, after an Association agreement, billions in aid, and three years of EU-mandated reforms, Ukraine is still a corrupt, bankrupt mess—highlighting how unprepared it was for EU accession, how heavily it depended on Russian trade and subsidies that are now lost, and how unwise it was for Western leaders to push an either-or choice on Kiev.

THE ART OF THE DEAL?

In the latest corruption surveys, Ukraine still ranks below Russia. Scandals erupt daily, with an economic drain greater than the conflict in Donbas. Ukraine’s pro-EU President Petro Poroshenko has a 17 percent approval rating, lower than the pro-Russian Yanukovich’s 28 percent on the eve of his ouster in 2014. Ironically, this means that the pro-Russian Yanukovich was the most popular Ukrainian president of this century. And in the latest poll finding, only 41 percent of Ukrainians still support the EU Association Agreement, the rejection of which sparked the Maidan revolution in the first place. It is trends like these, along with a right-wing turn in Western European states that erodes their patience and generosity with troubled eastern neighbors, that should trouble EU leaders. Instead, across the region, Europeans are on high alert for Russians spreading anti-Western news, supporting anti-Western politicians, and deploying an army of anti-Western internet trolls.

Yet for all the paranoia about Russian subversion, crisis is more likely to come from elsewhere, such as an unraveling of fragile Bosnia leading to a clash between Serbia and NATO. Or it could be Moldova, with the nationalist majority renewing a push to unite with their Romanian kin, thereby reviving conflict with the Russian minority. Hungary could leave the EU, delivering a critical blow to European unity. Or Ukraine could simply collapse of its own corrupt, bankrupt weight.

Yet Ukraine could also be where America and Russia begin repairing ties. The Russian economy is weak—incomes are down a third since 2013—and relief from Western sanctions is sorely needed. Europe, too, cries for the revival of normal trade with Russia. A deal between Russia and the West would build upon the stalled Minsk Accords. Moscow would withdraw from the Donbass and restore Ukraine’s eastern border, and Kiev would grant local self-rule to this Russian-speaking region. Russia would, in turn, get a commitment from NATO not to incorporate Ukraine, and Ukraine would get a treaty guaranteeing its territorial integrity as well as military aid. Kiev would

also gain major Western investments, while benefitting enormously from restoration of trade with Russia.

Purists will call such a deal a betrayal, as it would be a de facto recognition of the Russian annexation of Crimea. But the best is the enemy of the good. Moscow will not allow Crimea to be snatched away again, as it was in 1954, after nearly 200 years as part of Russia. And by democratic rights, it shouldn't—the fact is that a large majority of Crimeans want to remain with Russia. Ukraine, moreover, would benefit from peace and investment, instead of diverting more resources into conflict. Normal political and trade ties with Russia would also benefit Europe as a whole, helping to slow and maybe to reverse the current slide toward dissolution. Continuation of the status quo, by contrast, only exacerbates crisis.

WILL THE REAL VLADIMIR PUTIN PLEASE STAND UP?

A diplomatic breakthrough between Russia and the West on Ukraine—or on Syria, or other major issues—will also require firm agreement on non-interference in each other's domestic affairs: no more Russian cyber-intrusion in the politics of America and its allies; no more U.S. backing of domestic protest and rebellion in Russia and her allies. Such diplomacy would test the mettle of the Trump administration's foreign-affairs neophytes, but the greater unknown is Putin. A majority of the U.S. political elite believes that no deals are possible because Putin is irremediably hostile. Whether they attribute that hostility to ideology (an ingrained KGB worldview) or corruption (an illegitimate regime that needs a foreign enemy to distract its people from domestic woes), many American policymakers believe that Putin simply has no interest in peace with the West. In their view, he is bent on expansion and will gladly endure sanctions as the price of fomenting discord in the West.

Another group of policymakers is also skeptical of Putin, but do not blame him alone for the deterioration of relations. Many of these analysts opposed NATO expansion from the outset, for the same reasons that Kennan did—because it would become a self-fulfilling prophecy. These experts also criticize the United States' misadventures in Iraq and Libya, failure to respect Russia's red lines on expansion into Georgia and Ukraine, and petty demonization of Putin. Yet they mainly stand with the first group now in believing that containment, not cooperation, is what the West must practice, because Putin's recent actions threaten the postwar liberal order.

A third group of analysts—the realists, who make up a minority of the foreign-policy establishment—reply that Putin does not threaten the entire postwar liberal order but only challenges the post-Cold War U.S.-dominated order that consistently ignores

Russia's interests. They wonder how some can admit the folly of NATO's continual expansion and fault the many double standards in U.S. policy but not agree that America must meet Russia halfway. Like realists such as Kennan or Hans Morgenthau, who early warned against the folly of Vietnam, they are sometimes derided as weak (or Putin apologists) for cautioning against inflating foreign threats while ignoring the United States' domestic weaknesses.

These realists argue that the early Putin prioritized market economic reforms and good relations with the West, yet saw his open hand met by the clenched fist of the George W. Bush-era neoconservatives. And Obama, reset or no, continued efforts to expand the Western economic and military blocs that had started under Clinton in the 1990s. In other words, for over two decades, whether motivated by residual Cold War mistrust or post-Cold War liberal hegemonism, America has steadily pushed Western military and political-economic power deeper into Russia's backyard. If history teaches anything it is that any great power will, when facing the continued advance of a rival, eventually push back. And much as Obama-Clinton defenders dislike being reminded of it, any chance of America's post-Cold War power being seen as uniquely benign ended in Serbia, Iraq, and Libya.

It may be that both sides are correct—that two decades of ignoring Russia's interests have abetted Putin's embrace of a deep-seated anti-Americanism and that a new détente is impossible. Or it may be that Putin is not innately hostile, but rather a typical strongman: proud and spiteful, but not uniquely corrupt or cruel, and capable of embracing a cooperative position if he finds a partner skilled enough to forge a deal respecting both U.S. and Russian vital interests. The only thing not in doubt is that both America and Russia—indeed, Europe and the wider world—badly need that détente.

Source: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/russian-federation/2017-03-10/russia-trump-and-new-d-tente>