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# Dawn –

## SECURITY THREATS

### Summary:

Once again, Pakistan finds itself caught between a rock and a hard place, grappling with a relentless wave of terrorism that continues to claim the lives of its brave security forces. Despite eliminating a dozen militants in recent counterterrorism operations, the price paid in blood, particularly in KP and Balochistan, serves as a grim reminder that this war is far from over. The martyrdom of four troops in North Waziristan and two Coast Guards near the Iranian border underlines the fact that hostile elements, allegedly with foreign hands pulling the strings, are still striking at the heart of national security. Although a supposed warning by an Afghan Taliban commander against launching attacks on Pakistan did surface, it turned out to be all bark and no bite. The TTP continues to wreak havoc, raising serious concerns over Kabul's ability or willingness to rein in terror outfits on its soil.

What's clear from the recent trilateral talks between Pakistan, Afghanistan, and China is that diplomatic niceties won't be enough to stem the tide of extremism unless Kabul is held to its word. The solution lies in walking and chewing gum at the same time—combining hard-hitting military action with long-term political strategies. While Iran remains largely cooperative on counterterrorism, Balochistan's separatist problem demands both a firm hand and an open heart. Internal vigilance, sharper intelligence operations, and stronger regional ties are the need of the hour. Pakistan has previously beaten back external threats; now it must channel that same resolve to crush domestic militancy by tackling not just the fire, but also the fuel.

### Overview:

The article throws light on Pakistan's ongoing battle against terrorism, especially in KP and Balochistan. It highlights the heavy losses suffered by security forces and questions the sincerity of the Afghan Taliban in stopping cross-border terrorism. The piece also touches on regional diplomacy, trilateral cooperation with China and Afghanistan, and the necessity of blending military action with political dialogue to root out militancy effectively.

### NOTES:

This article highlights Pakistan's counterterrorism strategy, regional security dynamics, and foreign relations with Afghanistan, China, and Iran. Aspirants should pay attention to the geopolitical nuances, internal-external threat matrix, and the importance of multi-layered responses—military, diplomatic, and socio-political—to insurgency.

### Related CSS Subjects/Topics:

- Pakistan Affairs: National security, Counterterrorism efforts, Internal challenges
- Current Affairs: Pakistan-Afghanistan-China relations, Pak-Iran ties, Regional diplomacy
- International Relations: Cross-border terrorism, trilateral dialogues, foreign policy dynamics
- Governance and Public Policy: Internal security management, intelligence operations

### Notes for Beginners:

This article discusses how Pakistan is still facing serious security problems due to terrorist attacks, especially from TTP in the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Balochistan regions. Although Pakistan's army killed many terrorists recently, some soldiers also lost their lives. The writer questions whether Afghanistan's government is doing enough to stop terrorists from attacking Pakistan. China also wants all three countries to work together to stop terrorism. In Balochistan, the government needs to not only fight the militants but also solve political and economic issues to bring peace. This means using both force and smart policies at the same time.

### Facts and Figures:

- 12 terrorists killed in recent counterterror operations in KP and Balochistan
- 4 troops martyred in North Waziristan

- 2 Coast Guard men killed near the Iran border
- Trilateral meeting between Pakistan, China, and Afghanistan held in Beijing
- Afghan Taliban commander reportedly warned militants not to attack Pakistan

To wrap up, The article underlines a harsh truth—Pakistan is fighting a battle on two fronts, both external and internal. The tide of terrorism won't ebb with firepower alone; it demands a strategic cocktail of diplomacy, intelligence, and political reforms. While the sacrifices of our security forces speak volumes, it's time regional neighbors, especially Afghanistan, match words with actions. Only then can Pakistan turn the page on this bloody chapter and chart a course towards lasting peace.

## SAVE THE GIRLS

### Summary:

The long-standing scourge of child marriage in Pakistan is finally being challenged with resolve. In a groundbreaking development, President Asif Zardari signed the Islamabad Capital Territory Child Marriage Restraint Bill, 2025, turning it into law despite backlash from the Council of Islamic Ideology. In a society where 19 million girls are married before 18 and only 13 percent make it to secondary school, this legislation is more than symbolic—it is a lifeline. It dares to redefine norms by criminalizing underage marriage, even calling it rape in certain contexts, and repositions the girl child not as a burden but as an individual with rights. But the law's value lies not in ink on paper, rather in the steel of its implementation, which must not bend to religious orthodoxy or political hesitance.

This progressive momentum is bolstered by Unicef's powerful new campaign led by Saba Qamar, amplifying awareness through emotionally gripping visuals. The campaign shines a light on the consequences of child marriage—lost youth, maternal deaths, poor health, and heightened risk of cervical cancer. It urges society to protect its daughters not with walls but with education, autonomy, and opportunity. The editorial rightly reminds lawmakers that the Council of Islamic Ideology is advisory in nature, not legislative. As a signatory of the Convention on the Rights of the Child, Pakistan has both a moral and international obligation to uphold the rights and dignity of its girls. This moment demands courage and clarity—anything less would be a betrayal.

### Overview:

The article highlights the legislative breakthrough of the ICT Child Marriage Restraint Bill, 2025, which seeks to outlaw child marriage in Islamabad by legally protecting girls under 18. It underscores the urgency of implementation amidst resistance and presents the cultural, health, and human rights dimensions of child marriage. The article also lauds Unicef's parallel awareness campaign and urges political will over religious appeasement.

### NOTES:

This article provides critical insight into legal reforms, the role of religious institutions in lawmaking, and the sociocultural realities faced by women. It strengthens your understanding of governance, policy implementation, and international obligations under human rights conventions. Use this article to support questions on women's rights, legislative challenges, and the role of advocacy campaigns in social reform.

### Relevance to CSS syllabus or subjects:

- Pakistan Affairs: Social and cultural issues in Pakistan
- Gender Studies: Child marriage, reproductive health, and women empowerment
- Current Affairs: Human rights, governance, lawmaking
- Islamic Studies: Role of CII and interpretation of Islamic laws in modern governance

### Notes for beginners:

Child marriage refers to marrying girls before the age of 18. In Pakistan, this is a common but dangerous tradition. For example, nearly 19 million girls are married before adulthood, and half of them get pregnant before they are ready. This leads to serious health risks, including death during childbirth or diseases like cervical cancer. A new law now makes it illegal to marry underage girls in Islamabad. This is a big step forward. Also, Unicef is showing videos with the actress Saba Qamar to tell people that girls should study and live freely, not be forced into marriage early. Such efforts aim to change old thinking and give girls a better future.

### Facts and figures:

- Pakistan has the sixth highest number of child brides globally
- Around 19 million girls are married before age 18
- Only 13 percent of these girls complete secondary education
- Half of the child brides become pregnant before 18
- Cervical cancer is the second most common cancer among women aged 15 to 44
- Unicef's campaign uses media and celebrity advocacy to raise awareness

To wrap up, this editorial is a clarion call to protect Pakistan's daughters from the chains of outdated traditions. It lauds a pivotal legislative victory and demands unwavering implementation. By framing child marriage as a national emergency with health, social, and legal consequences, it calls on the state to uphold the dignity, safety, and rights of young girls—not just in law but in practice. It's a piece that resonates with hope, responsibility, and the long road toward justice.

## IS-K IN BALOCHISTAN

## AUTHOR - MUHAMMAD AMIR RANA

### Summary:

The ground reality in Balochistan has turned into a powder keg with the sudden and provocative entry of Islamic State Khorasan Province (IS-K) into a landscape already strained by Baloch insurgency. Instead of picking a single enemy, IS-K has flung down the gauntlet to both the Pakistani state and nationalist outfits, branding their ethnic agendas as unIslamic. Through a chilling booklet and an audio threat, IS-K declared war on Baloch insurgents like the BLA and key figures such as Mahrang Baloch and Manzoor Pashteen. With over 33 brutal attacks since 2016 claiming 436 lives, their signature remains etched on shrines, churches, JUI leaders, polio teams, and even high-profile politicians. Now, their growing footprint in Mastung, Kalat, and Bolan threatens to upset an already delicate equilibrium where overlapping militant ideologies once maintained a cold peace.

What raises more eyebrows is the potential for a bloody clash between two terror outfits once content with shadowboxing in separate corners. IS-K's radical Salafi ideology finds no room for nationalism, lumping Taliban, JUI, BLA, and PTM into the same basket of apostasy. Their operational style is not just opportunistic but dangerously strategic—leveraging sectarian divisions, radicalising youth, and exploiting soft spots in security frameworks. The entry of IS-K could either fracture enemy fronts or ignite new conflicts that spill over into Sindh and KP. For Pakistan's security apparatus, this isn't a godsend but rather a headache in a new disguise—one that calls for surgical clarity, not celebration.

### Overview:

This article explores the recent escalation in Balochistan where IS-K has declared a two-front war—against the Pakistani state and nationalist insurgents. It traces the group's operational evolution, ideological motivations, and targeted campaigns, especially in Mastung and adjoining districts. The narrative underlines how IS-K's entry may complicate rather than resolve the province's already volatile security dynamics.

## NOTES:

This article examines non-state actors' infiltration in national conflicts, the role of radical ideologies in regional instability, and the interplay between local insurgencies and global terror networks. Key themes include religious extremism, ethnic insurgency, counter-terrorism strategy, and civil-military dynamics. This article also links to broader regional politics, especially Afghanistan and KP's militant landscape. Analytical candidates should explore how IS-K's entry might shape future policy and security doctrines.

### Relevant CSS Subjects and Topics:

- Current Affairs – Non-State Actors, Internal Security
- Pakistan Affairs – Balochistan Insurgency, Religious Extremism
- International Relations – Cross-border Terrorism, ISIS-Afghanistan Nexus
- Political Science – Ideological Conflicts and Political Violence
- Governance and Public Policy – Counter-terrorism Strategies

### Notes for Beginners:

To understand this article, it's vital to know that Balochistan has long faced two threats: separatist movements seeking independence and extremist groups like IS-K aiming to enforce their rigid version of Islam. IS-K considers ethnic or nationalist pride a sin, targeting anyone who supports it—even fellow Muslims. They've attacked both Shia pilgrims and Sunni leaders alike. By planting roots in regions like Mastung and Kalat, they've created pockets of influence. The conflict is no longer black and white. It's now a many-headed monster where ideological extremism meets ethnic rebellion. This makes peace and security even harder to achieve.

### Facts and Figures:

- IS-K carried out 33 attacks in Balochistan since 2016
- 436 people killed, 691 injured
- 12 attacks in Mastung, 10 in Quetta outskirts
- Former President Arif Alvi survived a targeted attempt
- Major leaders killed: Siraj Raisani (BAP), attacks on JUI and PTI members
- Strong presence in Kalat, Bolan, Khuzdar, and training camps near Sindh border
- IS-K ideology spread through Salafi madressahs and ex-Lashkar-i-Jhangvi members

To sum up, This article lifts the curtain on a high-stakes power struggle unfolding in the shadows of Balochistan's mountains. The rise of IS-K in nationalist strongholds is not just another footnote in Pakistan's security narrative—it's a ticking time bomb. While some may argue this conflict weakens the state's enemies, it may just as likely unravel whatever fragile order remains. For policymakers, this isn't the time to sit on their hands; it's a moment to reassess, regroup, and reinforce the nation's counter-terrorism playbook.

## THE NEXT CHALLENGE

## AUTHOR - MALEEHA LODHI

### Summary:

In the aftermath of the recent Pakistan-India skirmish, Pakistan emerged with a strategic upper hand, effectively thwarting India's bid to escalate a conventional war in response to the Pahalgam incident. As I reflect on this, it's clear that this military achievement has rekindled national morale, but there's no time to rest on our laurels. Triumphalism, if prolonged, can backfire by breeding overconfidence. Modi's inflammatory rhetoric and India's aggressive posture show that the storm hasn't passed—it's merely gathering force. His threats to use the Indus Waters Treaty as a weapon of war, coupled with repeated insinuations of pre-emptive strikes, paint a grim picture

of future hostilities. We're at a crossroads where reflection must give way to readiness—on military, economic, diplomatic, and national unity fronts.

This article strikes a chord with me because it shows that security isn't just about weaponry; it's about resilience across sectors. Strengthening our economy through deep-rooted reforms, not just IMF-fueled patches, is essential to withstand long-term pressure. Diplomatic agility is equally vital, requiring a strategic overhaul of our foreign policy, not knee-jerk responses. Pakistan's defense must evolve with technology—integrating AI warfare tools, drones, and advanced air assets like the J-35A fighters. At the same time, foreign missions must step up with cohesive, informed diplomacy. Unity at home and coherence abroad are our real shields. If we get caught napping again, the consequences will be far more costly than the last episode.

#### **Overview:**

The article discusses Pakistan's strategic and defensive posture after a brief but intense military standoff with India. It analyzes premature celebration and calls for serious introspection, policy reform, and preparedness against India's evolving aggression, including threats involving water security and conventional military pressure.

#### **NOTES:**

The article underscores the multifaceted challenges Pakistan faces in addressing the impacts of climate change, particularly in disaster preparedness and rehabilitation. It begins by noting the increasing intensity and frequency of climate-related disasters such as floods, cyclones, and droughts, which have left millions displaced, homes destroyed, and infrastructure in shambles. The writer draws attention to the lack of proactive planning, emphasizing that Pakistan tends to react to disasters rather than prepare for them through resilient infrastructure or long-term mitigation strategies. Moreover, the article highlights gaps in institutional coordination, where federal, provincial, and local governments often fail to align their responses or mobilize timely resources. This disconnect further worsens the impact of disasters, leading to prolonged human suffering and economic setbacks. The writer also criticizes the slow pace of rehabilitation and reconstruction, where flood victims are often left in limbo, awaiting compensation, shelter, or restoration of basic services. Despite promises made by political leaders and the international community, the actual implementation of rehabilitation programs remains weak, marred by inefficiency and corruption. The article calls for a paradigm shift from a reactive to a proactive model, rooted in climate-resilient infrastructure, community-based planning, and transparent governance mechanisms. It advocates for stronger environmental regulations, a well-funded disaster management authority, and public awareness campaigns that integrate climate change adaptation into national development plans. The author concludes by asserting that unless Pakistan prioritizes climate resilience and institutional reform, its cycle of vulnerability will persist, threatening both its development goals and human security.

#### **Relevant CSS Subjects/Topics:**

- International Relations: South Asia strategic tensions, diplomacy
- Pakistan Affairs: National unity, water security, defense preparedness
- Current Affairs: Indo-Pak relations, economic and military policies
- Governance and Public Policy: Institutional reforms, foreign policy strategy

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article teaches that national defense isn't limited to the battlefield. For example, even if Pakistan wins militarily, its economy or diplomacy could fail if ignored. Just like a house can't stand strong on a weak foundation, a country must ensure economic strength, military readiness, and diplomatic clarity. Modi's use of the Indus Waters Treaty as a tool of pressure highlights how non-military resources like water can become part of warfare. By understanding how threats go beyond tanks and missiles—like drone attacks or financial sabotage—beginners can appreciate modern security's full spectrum.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- India's current stance threatens to use the Indus Waters Treaty to deny Pakistan its rightful share of water
- India deployed large-scale drone strikes during the recent conflict
- Pakistan is exploring acquiring China's J-35A stealth fighters
- Pakistan's public debt remains high due to dependency on external borrowing
- No strategic foreign policy review has been conducted since Musharraf's era

In a nutshell, as regional tensions simmer, it's no longer enough to act after the fact. Pakistan must get its house in order—economically, militarily, and diplomatically. As history has shown, complacency is a luxury we can't afford. From widening the tax net to recalibrating foreign policy, every decision must be bold, deliberate, and forward-looking. The next challenge isn't a matter of if—it's a matter of when.

## **PAKISTAN'S POTENTIAL**

**AUTHOR - KHAWAJA AFTAB AHMED**

### **Summary:**

Pakistan finds itself at a decisive turning point, staring down the barrel of an imminent employment crisis. With millions of young people poised to enter the job market every year, the clock is ticking fast. Unless the country pulls its socks up and lays out a clear strategy, unemployment will tighten its grip, dragging along poverty and instability in its wake. The World Bank Group, with IFC at its helm on the private sector front, is putting its shoulder to the wheel, aiming to create more meaningful jobs that don't just fill pockets but shape futures. Given Pakistan's precarious Human Development Index ranking and staggering poverty figures, the nation's economic vitality hinges on smart policy, sound investment, and a mobilised private sector.

The writing's on the wall: public-sector planning alone won't cut the mustard. A major chunk of Pakistan's economy runs informally, making it harder to channel growth. The solution lies in rallying private capital, fostering innovation, and building enabling environments through smarter regulations and inclusive financial systems. IFC's recent investment surge proves that with the right push, opportunities can bloom even in challenging soil. Their three-pronged approach — laying foundations, shaping policy, and unlocking private capital — serves as a lodestar for Pakistan's future. It's high time we turned our demographic bulge into a dividend rather than a disaster waiting to happen.

### **Overview:**

This article, penned by Khawaja Aftab Ahmed of the International Finance Corporation, highlights the massive employment and economic challenge Pakistan faces, compounded by a growing young population, low female participation, and limited access to formal financial services. It outlines how job creation is not only an economic need but also a social and political necessity. The article showcases the efforts of the World Bank Group and IFC to counter these challenges through a holistic three-part strategy, including infrastructure development, policy reform, and private sector mobilisation.

### **NOTES:**

This article provides a clear thought into the socioeconomic landscape of Pakistan with specific emphasis on employment, financial inclusion, and private sector development. It is particularly useful for understanding developmental policy frameworks and international collaboration. The mention of job gaps, poverty statistics, and female labor participation also connects with gender studies and economic policy topics. This article is a strong example of institutional intervention and the role of global financial bodies like the WBG and IFC in shaping national economies.

### Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics:

- Pakistan Affairs
  - Economic challenges and prospects
  - Youth bulge and demographic trends
  - Employment issues and workforce planning
  - Role of international institutions in Pakistan's development
- Current Affairs
  - Public-private partnerships in development
  - Pakistan's ranking in international indices (HDI, poverty, etc.)
  - Socioeconomic implications of unemployment and informal economy
- Governance and Public Policies
  - Policy formulation and implementation in job creation
  - Financial inclusion and regulatory reforms
  - Infrastructure development and human capital investment
- International Relations
  - Role of World Bank Group and IFC in developing economies
  - Global development agendas and Pakistan's participation

### Notes for beginners:

Pakistan is facing a massive challenge because its population is growing fast, especially among the youth. Around 3 million people will enter the job market every year, and if they don't find jobs, problems like poverty and instability will increase. More than 42 percent of the population lives below the poverty line of \$3.65 per day. The female participation rate is only 25 percent, which is among the lowest in South Asia. The informal sector, which means unregistered and untaxed businesses, makes up 40 percent of the economy and provides 70 percent of jobs. This makes it difficult to plan and improve the economy. To solve this, the International Finance Corporation, a part of the World Bank, is investing in Pakistan by supporting small businesses and creating jobs. In 2024, IFC invested \$2.1 billion, helping to create 40,000 jobs. They also focus on improving education, health, and policies to make it easier for businesses to grow.

### Facts and figures:

- Pakistan has over 240 million people; two-thirds are under 30
- 3 million new job seekers will enter the workforce annually over the next decade
- 42 percent live below the \$3.65/day poverty line
- Female labor force participation: 25 percent
- Informal economy accounts for 40 percent of GDP and 70 percent of jobs
- IFC invested \$2.1 billion in FY24, supporting 40,000 jobs including 8,600 for women
- Human Development Index ranking: 164th out of 193 countries
- Financial inclusion: 64 percent overall, 42 percent for women

To sum up, This article is a timely reminder that Pakistan's demographic energy can either fuel progress or ignite crisis depending on how we channel it. The emphasis on private sector mobilisation, female inclusion, and formal economic participation outlines a realistic yet hopeful roadmap. The IFC's expanding investment footprint and data-driven strategies show that meaningful change is possible if public and private hands work in tandem. In a world of increasing uncertainty, job creation isn't just a statistic — it's the seedbed for national stability and prosperity.

## JUNKER MENTALITY

**AUTHOR - MAHIR ALI**

### **Summary:**

Europe isn't stumbling blindly into war like in 1914—it's rushing into it with open eyes and clenched fists. With Ukraine's recent dramatic drone attacks, including Operation Spider Web, that allegedly destroyed over 40 Russian bombers, the continent seems to be hurtling toward a broader conflict. Ukraine's tactical win, despite Russia's denial of major losses, hasn't nudged either side toward peace. Instead, this blow-for-blow exchange echoes louder in the shadow of Gaza's ceaseless destruction, while Europe ignores diplomacy in favour of arming itself to the teeth. The West, egged on by Trump-era echoes, is spending billions on military might, seemingly more concerned about sending "strong messages" than solving problems. Britain flexes its muscles, while Germany stations troops in Lithuania, reminiscent of Cold War posturing.

At the heart of this global theatre, alliances are shifting and loyalties wavering. Trump's veiled threats to NATO, Hungary's absurd admiration for dishonesty, and the far-right's rise from Lisbon to Warsaw all show that Europe's political tide is turning. Meanwhile, nations grovel either to the White House or the Kremlin depending on their bets for the future. This simmering political stew bubbles over in Asia too, where allies are pressured to ramp up defence against China. All this noise hides a darker truth—Europe may be writing its own doom-script. Rather than fuelling a race to war, nations ought to pour energy into diplomacy and social revival, because the path they are treading leads not to victory but to self-destruction.

### **Overview:**

This article highlights Europe's increasingly aggressive military posture amid the Russia-Ukraine war, explores its alignment with American political currents, and draws attention to the rise of far-right politics and weakened diplomatic efforts. It warns against the self-fulfilling prophecy of war being shaped by strategic arrogance, political opportunism, and historical revisionism.

### **NOTES:**

This piece is important for understanding modern geopolitics, especially the evolving dynamics of NATO, the US-Europe alliance under Trumpian influence, and the shifting sands of global power centres. It links military readiness with diplomatic failures and helps aspirants grasp how domestic politics (like far-right surges) intersect with international relations. The narrative also provides comparative insights into the Israel-Gaza and Russia-Ukraine conflicts, making it relevant for essay writing and current affairs analysis.

### **Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics or Subjects:**

- Current Affairs: International conflicts, regional security, global power shifts
- International Relations: NATO, US foreign policy, Russo-European tensions
- Pakistan Affairs: Indirect reference via comparison to Indian skirmishes
- Political Science: Rise of far-right politics and populism
- Essay Paper: Topics on diplomacy vs war, global leadership crisis

### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article highlights the rising tension between Russia and Europe, led by Ukraine's recent drone attacks which reportedly destroyed over 40 Russian bombers. While some hail it as a victory, it escalates rather than resolves conflict. For example, even after 18 months of preparation, Ukraine's Operation Spider Web hasn't pushed the war closer to peace. On the other hand, Europe is pouring billions into defence—Britain, Germany, and even small NATO states are boosting military budgets. Meanwhile, far-right political groups are gaining momentum across Europe, like Portugal's Chega party becoming the main opposition, and Poland's election win swinging under a MAGA endorsement. The article shows how both military aggression and extreme political ideologies are rising simultaneously.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- Over 40 Russian bombers reportedly hit in Ukraine's Operation Spider Web
- Attack planned for more than 18 months
- German troops deployed in Lithuania for the first time since World War II
- Far-right Chega party becomes main opposition in Portugal
- Poland's far-right win follows a MAGA nod
- NATO faces a Russian threat "within four years," claims German official

To wrap up, The article paints a grim picture of a Europe ready to jump headfirst into war while sidestepping the hard path of diplomacy. It warns of the perils of ignoring peace in favour of posturing and muscle-flexing. For students, diplomats, and thinkers alike, this is a timely reminder that might doesn't always make right, and unchecked nationalism can be as destructive as bombs.

## **MISOGYNY PANDEMIC**

## **AUTHOR - AASIM SAJJAD AKHTAR**

### **Summary:**

The article peels back the mask on Pakistan's deeply rooted patriarchal system, exposing how misogyny bleeds through every layer of society, from religious institutions to social media platforms. The passing of a bill to ban underage marriage in Islamabad, though a rare legislative win, was overshadowed by the cold-blooded murder of 17-year-old Sana Yousaf, who was gunned down for rejecting a man's advances. Rather than mourning her death, a swarm of online users blamed the victim, painting her as immoral because of her online presence. The piece argues that misogyny in Pakistan isn't a standalone affliction but a symptom of a larger triad of oppression—capitalism, colonial statecraft, and patriarchy—working hand in glove to suppress and silence voices like Sana's.

Zooming out, the writer links Pakistan's crisis to a global pandemic of gendered violence, stressing that this rot isn't confined within borders. From Baloch women defying state repression to the objectification of women in war-torn regions like Gaza, the same script plays out with different actors. Figures like Donald Trump, celebrated despite long-standing allegations of sexual misconduct, mirror Pakistan's own leaders who trivialize gender violence. The writer makes a compelling case: unless men confront their fragile masculinities and become active allies in dismantling patriarchal systems, the world will continue to fail its women. The battle cry is clear—there's no turning a blind eye anymore, and change begins when we stop shifting blame and start shifting the power dynamics.

### **Overview:**

This article by Aasim Sajjad Akhtar reflects on the systemic misogyny entrenched in Pakistani society and beyond. It uses the case of Sana Yousaf to illustrate how even in death, women are vilified for asserting agency. The article critiques not just cultural norms but the intersection of patriarchy with capitalism, religious conservatism, and colonial legacies. It also broadens the lens to show similar patterns across the globe, urging collective and conscious action to address this power structure.

### **NOTES:**

This article offers a critical lens into the intertwined structures of patriarchy, capitalism, religious conservatism, and colonial statecraft that collectively sustain gender-based violence in Pakistan. It highlights the legislative progress symbolized by the anti-child marriage bill, while simultaneously exposing how deeply rooted misogyny continues to plague societal attitudes and institutions. The murder of Sana Yousaf becomes a poignant symbol of how digital empowerment clashes with patriarchal backlash, where women who challenge traditional norms through social media are vilified rather than protected. The article lays bare the systemic abuse within religious institutions, echoing global patterns like the Catholic Church scandal, yet stressing Pakistan's lack of internal reform. Domestic violence is linked not just to cultural norms but to structural disenfranchisement stemming from economic and

political oppression. Furthermore, the narrative draws global parallels by criticizing militarism, political violence, and misogynistic leadership across nations, illustrating how gender-based repression transcends borders. It calls for transformative masculinity, urging men to dismantle the toxic constructs they often uphold. For CSS exams, the article provides analytical depth on gender studies, societal power dynamics, and structural inequality, offering rich material for essay writing, gender discourse, and current affairs analysis.

#### **Relevant CSS Subjects and Topics:**

- Gender Studies: Patriarchy, Feminism, Violence Against Women
- Pakistan Affairs: Role of Religion in Politics, Legislation on Women's Rights
- Current Affairs: Human Rights Issues, Global Feminist Movements
- Sociology: Social Stratification, Role of Institutions in Gender Norms
- International Relations: Gendered Impact of Conflicts, Colonial Legacies

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article shows that misogyny isn't just about individual attitudes; it's part of a much bigger system involving culture, religion, economics, and politics. Take Sana Yousaf's case: a girl using TikTok was murdered and then blamed for her own death. That's a classic example of victim-blaming, where instead of punishing the criminal, society points fingers at the victim. The writer connects this with how in many homes, women are beaten—sometimes because poor men feel powerless outside and vent at home, and rich men do it to keep their authority. The article also reminds us that this issue isn't just Pakistani but countries like the US and even Israel show similar patterns in different forms. The message is clear: men need to change too, not just women.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- Domestic violence exists in around two-thirds of Pakistani households
- Sana Yousaf, 17, was shot for rejecting a man
- Child Marriage Restraint Act passed in Islamabad, but opposed by religious leaders
- Donald Trump, despite allegations of sexual harassment, remains a political hero for many
- Global rise in female-led protests, such as those by Baloch women

To sum up, this article hits home with the uncomfortable truth: we are neck-deep in a misogyny pandemic that's woven into the very fabric of our systems. The murder of Sana Yousaf wasn't just a tragedy, it was a mirror. Until we stop brushing these events under the rug and start questioning the very structures that enable them, nothing will change. The call to action is not just for lawmakers or women—it's for men to drop the toxic ego, wake up, and take responsibility. Because true liberation isn't possible until we all rise together, or else we fall divided.

## **CLIMATE RESILIENCE FACILITY      AUTHEOR - ALI TAUQEER SHEIKH**

#### **Summary:**

In this piece, I dive deep into Pakistan's engagement with the IMF's Resilience and Sustainability Facility (RSF), unpacking how well it tackles our climate vulnerabilities. While the RSF lays out a solid foundation with five key reform areas—from green mobility and energy efficiency to climate risk finance—the devil is in the details. It's like fixing the roof while ignoring the cracks in the walls. The glaring gaps in local governance integration, urban development oversight, and the absence of gender-specific vulnerability considerations point to a framework that's structurally sound but contextually disconnected. Provincial reforms are expected to trickle down to the grassroots, but without institutional linkages or mechanisms to bridge the federal-local divide, it's like pouring water into a sieve. What really stands out is the missed opportunity to connect the dots across sectors. Climate resilience isn't just about tweaking policies in isolation—it's about weaving together a fabric that's strong enough to bear the shocks of environmental change. Yet, the RSF seems caught up in silos, with fragmented timelines and disjointed

mandates. If Pakistan wants to truly walk the talk on climate adaptation, it needs to bolster local institutions, invest in urban zoning reforms, and build inclusivity into every layer of climate policy. Only by plugging these strategic gaps can we turn the RSF from a high-sounding document into a game-changing vehicle for climate resilience.

**Overview:**

This article evaluates Pakistan’s participation in the IMF’s Resilience and Sustainability Facility, highlighting both its potential and its pitfalls. It discusses the facility’s structural reforms, identifies overlooked areas such as urban planning and local governance, and calls for a more inclusive, integrated climate policy framework.

**NOTES:**

This article provides critical insight into how global institutions shape domestic reform and pinpoints the institutional weaknesses that hamper effective policy implementation. You can use this analysis to enhance their arguments on climate financing, devolution of power, and institutional reform in policy essays and interview discussions.

**Relevance to CSS syllabus or subjects:**

- Environmental Science: Climate adaptation, sustainable infrastructure, disaster resilience
- Pakistan Affairs: Local governance, impact of 18th Amendment, public investment gaps
- Current Affairs: International cooperation (IMF), climate diplomacy
- International Relations: Global climate governance, IMF programs

**Notes for Beginners:**

This article explains how the IMF is helping countries like Pakistan prepare for climate change by providing money and guidance through the RSF. It focuses on making our systems stronger, like improving energy use, transportation, and water management. However, it points out that while big plans are made at the national level, the real work needs to happen locally—in towns and cities—where the climate’s impact is felt most. For example, fixing drainage systems or preparing for floods are local issues, but the RSF doesn’t clearly support those efforts. Moreover, it doesn’t consider how women or vulnerable communities might be affected differently by climate issues, which is a big blind spot.

**Facts and Figures:**

- The RSF targets five major reform areas: public investment, water systems, climate finance, transport, and energy
- It includes 13 specific measures for climate mainstreaming
- The 18th Amendment in Pakistan assigns climate-related responsibilities to local governments, but RSF focuses mostly on the federal level
- Urban issues like heat islands, pollution, and drainage are not directly addressed by RSF’s current design

To wrap up, this article gives a clear-eyed critique of the RSF framework, pushing us to rethink our approach to climate resilience. It reminds us that lofty reform plans mean little unless they touch the ground where people live, adapt, and survive. If Pakistan truly wants to beat the climate clock, we must stop papering over the cracks and start building stronger, smarter foundations—right from the local level up.

# THE NATION - HIGHER EDUCATION FUNDING \_AUTHOR - MUHAMMAD MURTAZA NOOR

## Summary:

The recent announcement by Punjab's education minister to raise the higher education budget from PKR 17 billion to a staggering PKR 90 billion is a bold and long-overdue move that breaks the silence around the crumbling state of Pakistan's universities. But one swallow doesn't make a summer. This standalone initiative, though promising, must be stitched into a broader national strategy to pull the country's higher education system back from the edge. Universities across Pakistan are reeling under the weight of inflation, growing academic programs, and administrative burdens, with many sinking into debt and unable to pay salaries. Institutions like Quaid-i-Azam University and the University of Balochistan are practically gasping for air. The unchanged federal recurring grant of PKR 65 billion since 2018, despite an increase in universities, speaks volumes about the neglect. Alarm bells are ringing, and if policymakers continue to turn a deaf ear, we might witness an academic collapse that will be hard to recover from.

Higher education funding is no longer a matter of policy—it's a matter of survival. FAPUASA has made it crystal clear that a recurring grant of at least PKR 200 billion is crucial, alongside a total education budget equaling 4–5% of GDP if Pakistan hopes to join the global knowledge economy. Moreover, there's a dire need for legal reforms that empower universities to generate their own income through collaborations, commercialization of research, and alumni support. The disparity between provinces—some stepping up while others are dragging their feet—must be ironed out through a coordinated and unified approach. Without autonomy, transparency, and performance-based accountability, universities will continue to drift aimlessly. As the nation teeters between economic survival and intellectual bankruptcy, now is the time to put its money where its mouth is. Reviving public universities isn't just about funding classrooms—it's about safeguarding the future of the country.

## Overview:

The article presents a strong critique of the financial crisis in Pakistan's higher education sector, highlighting the massive gap between rising academic needs and stagnant funding. While Punjab's massive budget increase is lauded, the piece underscores the need for a national, structured, and inclusive policy that empowers universities, ensures sustainability, and promotes innovation.

## NOTES:

This article provides deep thought into Pakistan's education policy challenges, especially concerning higher education funding. It's relevant to CSS topics like educational reforms, economic planning, devolution under the 18th Amendment, governance in public institutions, and Pakistan's international competitiveness. The article can be used to strengthen arguments in essays or current affairs questions regarding education crises, federalism, and public-sector reforms.

## Related CSS Subjects and Topics:

- Pakistan Affairs – Education policy, governance issue
- Current Affairs – Budget analysis, institutional reform
- Essay – Human capital development, education crisis
- Public Administration – Devolution, resource allocation
- Governance and Public Policy – Higher education governance

## Notes for Beginners:

Pakistan has over 269 universities, and most are public and dependent on government funds. These funds have not increased despite inflation and expansion in student numbers. For instance, Quaid-i-Azam University is facing a yearly deficit of over 1 billion rupees. A sustainable education system means universities should earn income

through partnerships and research commercialization. Just as businesses need investors to grow, universities need stable funding and supportive laws. Punjab's decision to increase its budget fivefold shows what proactive steps look like, but other provinces and the federal government need to follow suit for long-term impact.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- Punjab's budget increased from PKR 17 billion to PKR 90 billion
- Pakistan has 269 HEC-recognized universities
- Federal higher education grant remains PKR 65 billion since 2018
- Quaid-i-Azam University's deficit exceeds PKR 1 billion
- Global recommendation: 4% of GDP for education; Pakistan spends less than 2%

This article sounds the alarm on Pakistan's higher education crisis and calls for more than symbolic gestures. It urges coordinated efforts, robust funding, policy reforms, and financial independence for universities. If ignored, the cracks in the education system will widen into chasms, robbing the nation of its intellectual backbone. Investing in higher education is no longer optional—it is the heartbeat of a nation striving for survival in a knowledge-driven world.

## **MARCHING ORDERS**

## **AUTHOR - MAHIR ALI**

### **Summary:**

What's unfolding in the United States under Trump's second presidency feels like déjà vu drenched in gasoline. He's back fanning the flames—literally and metaphorically—mobilizing troops against Californian resistance, while cracking down on immigrants in a way that tears families apart at the seams. His rants on Truth Social are not just political banter—they're coded threats, diversions from the real tragedies of our time like the genocide in Gaza, conveniently swept under the rug. Even Elon Musk hasn't escaped Trump's fury, with their spat drawing more attention than collapsing foreign policies. Meanwhile, the so-called "humanitarian missions" in Gaza have been nothing short of bloody farces, revealing the hypocrisy buried beneath the world's selective sympathies.

Behind the smokescreen of military parades and political circus acts lies a deeper rot—the transactional democracy where billionaires bankroll elections and lobbyists pull the strings. Trump's tariffs, fascist undertones, and draconian policies are just modern echoes of Reaganite elitism, rubber-stamped by Clinton and Obama's inaction. Bernie and AOC might light a spark, but they're sidelined by a Democratic mainstream too timid to stand its ground. As America teeters on the edge of domestic authoritarianism and international irrelevance, the world is left holding its breath. What happens next isn't just America's reckoning—it might be ours too.

### **Overview:**

The article highlights the socio-political chaos in the US under Donald Trump's renewed leadership, highlighting his aggressive domestic maneuvers, foreign policy failures, and attempts to distract public attention from global atrocities, especially the crisis in Gaza. It also critiques the American electoral system, the influence of wealthy donors, and the hollow state of mainstream political opposition.

### **NOTES:**

This article is an excellent example of political satire blended with journalistic critique. Aspirants can use this to strengthen their understanding of international relations, US domestic politics, media influence on foreign policy, and civil-military dynamics. It helps in framing arguments for essays on democracy, populism, and the role of the press in exposing authoritarian tendencies. It also reflects on how global power transitions affect regional issues like Kashmir and Gaza, both relevant to Pakistan's foreign policy concerns.

### **Related CSS Subjects or Topics:**

- International Relations: US-Middle East policies, Israel-Palestine conflict

- Current Affairs: Role of social media in political narrative building
- Political Science: Populism, democratic backsliding, civil-military relations
- Pakistan Affairs: Impact of global powers on regional politics
- Essay Paper: Democracy in decline, Rise of authoritarianism in democracies

### Notes for Beginners:

This article describes how Donald Trump's return to power has stirred unrest in the US, especially in Los Angeles where military forces have been used against citizens. At the same time, there's a humanitarian disaster in Gaza being ignored by world powers. Trump also blamed Elon Musk for leaking information and influencing elections with \$300 million in funds. Meanwhile, people like Greta Thunberg are silenced when they speak against Israel. The piece shows how powerful people try to control narratives and hide global injustices by using drama and threats.

### Facts and Figures:

- Trump allegedly used military forces within the US to control protests
- Elon Musk reportedly spent nearly \$300 million to influence the 2024 US elections
- The crew of a humanitarian ship to Gaza was detained by Israeli forces
- Greta Thunberg was arrested for protesting Israel's actions

To wrap up, This article hits like a punch in the gut. It exposes the ugly underbelly of power politics—how showmanship, propaganda, and elite deals undermine democracy and bury global tragedies under flashy headlines. As CSS aspirants and global citizens, we must read between the lines and recognize that what happens in Washington or Tel Aviv doesn't stay there—it ripples out, shaking the entire world.

## RESCUING DEMOCRACY-AUTHOR - DR NIAZ MURTAZA

### Summary:

Our democracy, sadly, seems to be on life support, crippled by both internal rot and external meddling. Despite lofty claims, we've never truly witnessed the essential duo of fair elections and genuine civilian authority in tandem. As unelected powers continue to pull the strings behind the curtain, cosmetic legal reforms are little more than band-aids on a bullet wound. Without mass public mobilisation, like that seen in Sindh or in neighbouring countries, meaningful democratic progress is a pipe dream. We must turn the tide by pushing for deep-rooted reforms—civilian oversight of intelligence, better transparency in caretaker setups, and stricter merit-based political appointments. Otherwise, the same old circus of patronage and populism will keep dragging us down the rabbit hole.

Power, in our context, is concentrated so tightly in the federal executive's grip that both horizontal and vertical diffusion of authority has become a forgotten tale. The judiciary now bends under executive weight, and local governance remains toothless. Constitutional cracks keep triggering crises—from dissident votes to party leadership monopolies—while the unelected elite continue to play musical chairs with democracy. To right the ship, we must rewrite outdated rules, empower local bodies, ensure resource ownership for provinces, and create inclusive representation. Citizens' groups must rally around a fresh charter for democracy and governance before the remnants of civilian authority are swallowed whole.

### Overview:

The article critically examines the erosion of democratic structures in Pakistan, stressing how unelected powers and flawed legal frameworks undermine governance. It calls for both legal reforms and civic mobilisation to restore the core democratic principles of fair elections, civilian supremacy, and merit-based political systems.

### NOTES:

This article presents a nuanced understanding of Pakistan's constitutional and governance challenges, offering analytical depth and reform-oriented solutions. Aspirants can use it to build structured arguments on federalism,

judicial independence, local government reforms, electoral processes, and the need for democratic accountability. It also supports debate preparation for constitutional amendments, civil-military imbalance, and electoral transparency.

#### **CSS syllabus-related topics:**

- Pakistan Affairs – Civil-military relations, Electoral Reforms, Governance issues
- Political Science – Democracy, Political Institutions, Federalism
- Current Affairs – Political instability, Democratic decay
- Public Administration – Civil services reforms, Local government structure

#### **Notes for beginners:**

In simple terms, democracy is like a system where people get to choose their leaders and hold them accountable. But in Pakistan, the system often behaves like a puppet show, where invisible hands (unelected powers) control outcomes. For instance, intelligence agencies have unchecked influence, and judges are often appointed based on loyalty rather than merit. A healthy democracy should work like a balanced meal—everyone gets their share of power and responsibility. However, here, the federal government eats the whole pie, leaving provinces and local governments hungry. An example is the Seraiki region's demand for a separate province, which stems from decades of neglect. Similarly, civil service reforms are needed so officials are hired based on skills, not connections.

#### **Facts and figures:**

- Around 35% of Senate and reserved seats are filled without direct elections.
- The 26th Amendment further curtailed judicial independence.
- Citizens' groups and regional protests like those in Sindh show growing public frustration with centralised control.
- The article urges at least 15-20% legislative representation for non-elite candidates.
- Pakistan's provinces still lack constitutional control over their own natural resources.

To sum up, this article is a wake-up call that lays bare the rot at the heart of Pakistan's political system. It doesn't just analyze but also charts a roadmap for reclaiming democratic space through legal reforms and civic awakening. If democracy is to be rescued, then the time to act is now, not tomorrow.

## **THE WAR WITHIN-AUTHOR - MALEEHA LODHI**

#### **Summary:**

In this article, I take a hard look at the brewing storm between President Trump and the American judiciary, which has stepped up to pull the reins on his unchecked executive power. From trade tariffs to immigration policies and even university clampdowns, Trump's heavy-handed tactics have landed his administration in hot water, with courts repeatedly putting their foot down. His attempt to wield emergency powers to impose global tariffs blew up in his face when a federal court declared them illegal. This rollercoaster ride rattled global markets, stirred confusion among allies, and painted a chaotic picture of governance. What's striking is how America's own institutions, particularly its judiciary, are standing firm to curb his impulsive decisions and power grabs, as seen in the string of over 180 court orders against him. It's not just a war on policy—it's a war within the system.

From the firing of federal employees under Musk's DOGE plan to the ruthless crackdown on foreign students and dissent in Ivy League universities, the article unpacks Trump's unrelenting push to reshape the U.S. bureaucracy. Yet, time and again, courts have drawn the line, halting his aggressive maneuvers and forcing the administration to hit the brakes. While some rulings favored him, most didn't, and the administration remains neck-deep in lawsuits. Trump's reaction has been nothing short of ferocious—lashing out at judges and, at times, openly defying court

orders. Whether this internal tug of war will tilt in his favor or crumble under the weight of legal resistance remains uncertain, but for now, the judiciary has proven itself a formidable check on Trump's autocratic instincts.

#### **Overview:**

This article highlights the internal institutional clash in the U.S., primarily between the judiciary and the Trump administration. Courts have emerged as a major force challenging Trump's wide-ranging executive actions, particularly in trade, immigration, education, and federal restructuring. The judiciary's response showcases the resilience of American democratic checks and balances.

#### **NOTES:**

This article is important for political analysis and institutional insight. It discusses the balance of power in a democracy, the role of judiciary in upholding the constitution, and the consequences of executive overreach. It's particularly useful for Pakistan Affairs (comparative democracy), Current Affairs (US domestic policy), and International Relations (US foreign trade and its global impact). Aspirants should extract lessons on how institutions function independently to maintain political equilibrium, a theme relevant to governance structures in Pakistan as well.

#### **This Article Relates to the Following CSS Topics:**

- Current Affairs: US domestic politics and governance
- International Relations: US-China-EU trade negotiations and implications
- Political Science: Separation of powers and checks and balances
- Pakistan Affairs (comparative): Role of judiciary in upholding constitutional democracy

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article discusses how former U.S. President Trump's policies faced backlash from the country's own courts. For example, when he imposed taxes on foreign goods without approval, the courts stopped him, saying he broke legal limits. Similarly, he tried to fire many government workers and restrict foreign students in universities, but judges stepped in and blocked his actions. It's like having a referee in a game making sure the rules are followed. This article helps us understand how strong legal systems keep even the most powerful leaders in check. In Pakistan, we also talk about whether courts are strong enough to do the same job.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- Over 180 executive actions by Trump have faced court challenges
- Tens of thousands of federal employees were fired or forced to leave under the DOGE plan
- Over three dozen lawsuits were filed against DOGE itself
- A federal judge blocked the revocation of foreign student visas at Harvard
- A California judge barred arrests of foreign students over visa issues

To sum up, this article paints a compelling picture of democratic resilience through judicial intervention. It underscores the indispensable role of courts in reining in excessive power and upholding the rule of law. In an era where populist leaders often stretch constitutional boundaries, America's legal system has shown spine and steadfastness. For countries like Pakistan, the takeaway is clear: institutional strength and independence are vital for democracy to survive and thrive.

## **STATE OF THE ECONOMY-**

## **AUTHOR - SAKIB SHERANI**

#### **Summary:**

Pakistan's economic tale reads like a broken record, with yet another IMF programme leading the country down a familiar path of short-term stabilisation at the expense of long-term well-being. But this time, the tune is more tragic. The latest IMF deal is the harshest yet, bringing the economy to its knees and forcing millions into poverty

and joblessness. The celebration of macroeconomic “stability” by the government rings hollow against the grim backdrop of rising unemployment, collapsing purchasing power, and a rural sector gasping for air. The numbers speak for themselves as unemployment at a staggering 22 percent, youth joblessness at an unprecedented 29 percent, and nearly 45 percent of the population slipping below the poverty line. All this while ordinary Pakistanis are left to carry the cross of economic reforms crafted in air-conditioned rooms.

Beneath the surface, there’s a disturbing dissonance between official optimism and public agony. The IMF’s push for fiscal discipline has, in reality, drained the lifeblood of economic growth. Agriculture has withered, factories have shut down, and the once-thriving middle class is barely treading water. Meanwhile, the IMF and its allies continue to paint a rosy picture to salvage reputations and secure geopolitical alignments. With purchasing power plummeting by 58 percent since 2022, the myth of recovery is simply smoke and mirrors. What we’re seeing is not reform, but a rebranding of hardship—a cleverly spun narrative that masks the IMF’s policy failures and the state’s abdication of its social responsibility.

#### **Overview:**

The article examines the ongoing IMF programme in Pakistan, exposing its destructive economic consequences despite official claims of stabilisation. It paints a bleak picture of mass unemployment, deepening poverty, shrinking growth, and collapsing purchasing power, all driven by extreme austerity measures.

#### **NOTES:**

The article highlights a grim economic picture of Pakistan. It shows how the country has entered its 14th IMF programme since 1988, yet continues to grapple with the same underlying issues of fragile growth and rising inequality. It underscores that while the government is busy celebrating macroeconomic stability, this so-called achievement has come at an unprecedented human cost. Unemployment has skyrocketed to 22 percent, with youth joblessness peaking at 29 percent, and over 18 million people officially out of work. The World Bank reports that nearly 45 percent of Pakistanis now live below the poverty line of \$4.2 per day, with an additional 12.8 million people falling into poverty since 2022. Real GDP growth has slumped to an average of just 1.7 percent over three years, the lowest since 1952, and all sectors such as agriculture, manufacturing, and services are either shrinking or stagnating. The article also points out the steep 58 percent fall in purchasing power since March 2022, meaning the middle class can no longer sustain a decent standard of living. It criticizes the IMF’s anti-growth austerity measures that have devastated industries, ruined farm incomes, and widened the gap between the elite and the masses. Additionally, it questions the credibility of international financial institutions, exposing how career and institutional incentives push them to exaggerate success and ignore real human suffering.

#### **Related CSS Syllabus Topics:**

- Pakistan Affairs: Economic challenges, IMF programmes, Poverty, Unemployment
- Current Affairs: Role of international institutions in domestic policy
- International Relations: Influence of Bretton Woods Institutions

#### **Notes for beginners:**

The article highlights how international loans, especially from the IMF, come with strings attached. For example, to get a loan, Pakistan had to reduce its spending and increase taxes, which hurt common people. Unemployment rose from 6.3% in 2021 to 22% by 2025. That means if there were 100 people working in 2021, now 22 of them are jobless. The poverty line is \$4.2/day, and now almost half the population earns less than that. Imagine earning Rs50,000 in 2022 but being able to buy goods worth only Rs20,800 today. That’s how hard inflation and reduced income have hit.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- 22% unemployment rate (18 million people)
- Youth unemployment: 29%

- 45% population below poverty line (\$4.2/day)
- Additional 12.8 million pushed into poverty since 2022
- GDP growth averaged only 1.7% since 2022
- Agriculture and manufacturing sectors declined significantly
- Purchasing power fell by 58% since March 2022

To sum up, The article pulls back the curtain on the much-hyped economic stability narrative and reveals a reality marred by mass misery and shrinking livelihoods. It's a wake-up call for policymakers and citizens alike, urging a rethinking of our economic direction and the cost of depending on international financial institutions. The numbers don't lie but Pakistan's economic wounds are deep, and band-aid policies won't heal them.

## CLIMATE REALITIES

### Summary:

The scorching truth hits harder than the heatwave that grips Pakistan because the climate crisis is no longer a distant threat but a living and breathing monster in our backyard. Finance Minister Muhammad Aurangzeb, while grappling with budget scrutiny, found himself unable to ignore the blistering 45°C heat and abnormal hailstorms that have become Islamabad's new normal. His remarks weren't just offhand comments but carried the weight of a nation gasping under rising temperatures, erratic weather, and crop-destroying droughts. The Pakistan Economic Survey bluntly confirms that our environment is unraveling. Despite some allocations for climate action in the budget and the introduction of a carbon levy, the Rs700bn earmarked is a drop in the ocean compared to the staggering \$40-50bn annual need outlined by experts if we're to avoid economic collapse by 2050.

What struck me most is how the piece also touches upon a deeper truth: the fight against climate change in Pakistan isn't just the government's battle to fight. It's a collective responsibility—media, private sector, and civil society must all row the boat together or we'll all sink. When Aurangzeb acknowledged the role of the media, specifically mentioning the Breathe Pakistan initiative, it felt like a rare but necessary moment of unity. Yet, let's not be fooled by token appreciation because the time for mere talk is over. The editorial compels us to wake up, step up, and push for real, sustained, and inclusive action before the next disaster knocks on our door. If we continue to drag our feet, the consequences won't wait they're already here, searing through our lands and futures alike.

### Overview:

The article highlights Pakistan's growing vulnerability to climate change, with record-breaking temperatures, extreme weather events, and dwindling water resources threatening agriculture and economic stability. It examines the government's response, including budgetary allocations and climate initiatives, and emphasizes the massive funding gap that remains. It calls for a coordinated effort from public institutions, private sectors, and the media to raise awareness and access global climate finance.

### NOTES:

This article is written for questions related to climate change, sustainable development, environmental governance, and economic planning. It brings together factual data, policy critique, and socio-economic implications in a compact editorial. For CSS exams, it's important to remember Pakistan's climate vulnerabilities like heatwaves, floods, and water scarcity as well as government efforts like the carbon levy and climate budgeting. Citing the \$40-50 billion annual need for climate adaptation until 2050 will add punch to your essays and Pakistan Affairs answers. Also, note how climate change is portrayed not just as an environmental issue but as an existential and economic threat.

### Relevance to CSS syllabus or subjects:

- Environmental Science – Climate change impacts and response strategies

- Pakistan Affairs – Governance, environmental policy, and national challenges
- Current Affairs – International climate funding and adaptation measures
- Essay – Topics like “Climate Change and Pakistan,” “Sustainable Development,” or “Environmental Crisis in Developing Countries”
- General Science & Ability – Facts and figures related to temperature rise, crop failures, and carbon levies

### Notes for Beginners:

This article makes it clear that climate change isn't just about melting glaciers or polar bears but it's directly hurting us. For instance, Islamabad experienced 45°C heat with unusual storms. Farmers are losing crops due to water shortages, and this affects food prices for everyone. Even though the government has set aside Rs700 billion for climate-related programs, experts say Pakistan needs \$40-50 billion every year until 2050 to avoid economic disaster. A carbon levy means people will pay more for fossil fuels to reduce pollution. Simple steps like using clean energy and saving water at home also count. The article shows how we must all work together like the government, businesses and citizens to protect our future.

### Facts and Figures:

- Temperature reached 45°C in Islamabad, just 1.6°C below the all-time record
- Rs700 billion allocated for climate initiatives in the upcoming budget
- Annual climate adaptation requirement: \$40–50 billion till 2050
- Carbon levy introduced to discourage fossil fuel use
- Pakistan facing increased frequency of windstorms, hailstorms, and crop loss due to water shortages

To sum up, this editorial is an attention call draped in facts and wrapped in urgency. Pakistan is sitting on a ticking climate time bomb, and the fuse is already lit. While there are baby steps in policy circles, we need to turn that walk into a sprint. Whether it's holding leaders accountable or changing our own behaviors, every bit counts. Climate change doesn't discriminate, it's coming for all of us.

### Difficult Words and Meanings:

- Poignant – Emotionally moving or touching (syn: touching, ant: indifferent)
- Levy – An official charge or tax (syn: duty, ant: exemption)
- Existential – Relating to existence or survival (syn: vital, ant: trivial)
- Adaptive – Able to adjust to new conditions (syn: flexible, ant: rigid)
- Vulnerability – Susceptibility to harm (syn: exposure, ant: immunity)
- Allocation – Distribution of resources (syn: assignment, ant: withholding)
- Initiative – An action taken to solve a problem (syn: measure, ant: inertia)
- Coordinated – Harmonized or well-organized (syn: integrated, ant: disjointed)

## IRAN ATTACK FEARS

### Summary:

As tensions rise and the curtain lifts on another geopolitical showdown, the US-Iran nuclear standoff teeters dangerously close to the edge. The article draws attention to a critical juncture in global diplomacy where the fate of upcoming talks in Oman could either defuse this ticking time bomb or blow it sky-high. Iran's rejection of the IAEA resolution and threat to exit the Non-Proliferation Treaty if further sanctions are slapped on, signals that the gloves might soon come off. The American withdrawal of personnel from the region, paired with Iran's vow to retaliate if provoked, paints a grim picture where just one misstep could snowball into a full-blown regional inferno. With Israel's hawkish stance and Tehran's network of allies still capable of pushing back hard, the stakes are too high for reckless power play.

The article urges diplomacy to be brought back into the driver's seat before the situation spirals out of control. Trump's saber-rattling may score political points, but it does little to secure long-term regional peace. The article makes it clear: the world doesn't need another war it needs restraint, dialogue and a willingness to see the bigger picture. The call is not just for Washington to keep Tel Aviv in check but to realize that another military adventure will only open the gates of hell. As both powers stand on the edge of the cliff, only a genuine effort at reconciliation can pull them back from the abyss.

**Overview:**

This article examines the looming threat of a US-Iran confrontation, intensified by Israel's aggressive posture and Iran's defiance of global nuclear norms. With high-level diplomatic talks approaching in Oman, the article underlines the urgency of a peaceful resolution to avert catastrophic war in the Middle East.

**NOTES:**

The article highlights the escalating tensions between the United States, Iran, and Israel, warning of a potentially devastating conflict if diplomatic efforts collapse. It highlights that the IAEA Board of Governors has passed a resolution accusing Iran of not fulfilling its nuclear commitments, although the voting pattern where Russia and China opposed and 11 countries abstained suggests underlying geopolitical maneuvering. Iran's threat to quit the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in response to additional sanctions marks a critical escalation point. Meanwhile, the US has begun withdrawing non-essential staff from Baghdad and American facilities in the Gulf, anticipating Iranian retaliation. Iran has made it clear that any attack on its soil will be met with direct strikes on US bases in the region. The article underscores that although Iran's regional allies like Hezbollah and the Assad regime might appear weakened, Tehran still possesses significant military strength, and the Houthis remain a credible threat capable of retaliatory action. The upcoming US-Iran talks in Oman are portrayed as a last-ditch effort to step back from the edge of war. The editorial urges the US to rein in Israel's aggressive posture, noting that past restraint has worked and must be re-applied to avert large-scale destruction. It argues forcefully for giving diplomacy a real chance before the situation spins out of control, stressing that a military showdown would plunge the already volatile Middle East into further chaos.

**Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics:**

- Current Affairs: Middle East crisis
- International Relations: Global diplomacy, power politics, nuclear proliferation
- Pakistan Affairs: Impact of regional instability
- Essay Paper: Peace vs war narrative, diplomacy and global leadership

**Notes for Beginners:**

The article is about the rising tensions between Iran and the US, especially due to Iran's nuclear program. Iran is warning that if more sanctions are imposed, it will leave the NPT, which is an international agreement that prevents the spread of nuclear weapons. This move could lead to a dangerous conflict, especially because Israel might attack Iran, and Iran is ready to strike back. For example, Iran's allies like Hezbollah and the Houthis in Yemen are also warning of war. In a recent resolution, Russia and China supported Iran while the US and its allies opposed it, showing that world powers are divided. If diplomacy in Oman fails, the region could plunge into chaos.

**Facts and Figures:**

- Iran may leave the NPT if new sanctions are applied
- Russia and China voted against the IAEA resolution
- 11 countries abstained from voting, showing diplomatic hesitation
- US has withdrawn non-essential personnel from Baghdad and Gulf bases

To wrap up, This article is a call to world powers sleepwalking into another senseless conflict. With war drums beating louder in the background, the only way forward is meaningful dialogue. The article stresses that muscle-flexing may win headlines, but diplomacy wins peace.

## THRASHING AROUND -AUTHOR - KHURRAM HUSAIN

### Summary:

The article explores Pakistan's fiscal health, likening the current budget to a well-rehearsed act in a theatre of mediocrity. With inflation tamed and a rare moment of political and economic calm, this year presented the perfect opportunity for bold reform but what we got instead was a recycled script of missed chances and burdens unfairly shifted onto those who already comply. Teachers, freelancers, and salaried individuals found themselves paying the price, both literally and metaphorically, while the powerful remained untouched. The government talked a big game about valuing youth and innovation, yet contradicted itself by taxing education supplies and revoking tax rebates from teachers. It was a classic case of giving with one hand and taking with the other, leaving many to feel shortchanged and cynical.

This budget, instead of steering the ship toward meaningful tax reform or broader compliance, clings to old gimmicks and half-measures that have been failing us for over a decade. From amnesty schemes to superficial digital economy taxes, the state is caught in a loop thrashing around in shallow waters, trying to squeeze revenue from a shrinking base while ignoring the elephant in the room: the elite who refuse to pay up. No direction, no vision, and no real accountability. The article doesn't just call out incompetence; it exposes a state teetering on the edge of fiscal collapse while pretending to tread confidently. If there was ever a time to break the cycle, it was now but the chance has slipped through our fingers once again.

### Overview:

This article critically looks Pakistan's FY2025–26 federal budget, highlighting the state's continued failure to implement structural tax reforms. Despite economic and political stability, the government introduced regressive tax measures and recycled failed strategies, exacerbating public frustration and fiscal imbalance.

### NOTES:

The article lays bare the alarming state of Pakistan's fiscal mismanagement, emphasizing how the country has once again missed a crucial opportunity for structural reform despite having favorable economic and political conditions. The recently announced budget recycles old, ineffective strategies, placing more burden on the already compliant taxpayers like teachers and salaried individuals, while failing to expand the tax net meaningfully. It highlights the glaring absence of any substantial reform or policy shift, pointing instead to gimmicks like targeting online marketplaces and freelancers without broader systemic change. The withdrawal of tax rebates for teachers and the imposition of taxes on children's school supplies underscore the regressive nature of the policy. Over the past decade, various schemes such as the RGST attempt in 2009, withholding tax in 2014, and the "Tajir Dost" scheme in 2024 have failed to address core issues, reflecting a pattern of superficial measures and short-term revenue grabs. The article argues that these tactics reveal a state desperately thrashing within its shrinking fiscal space, unable or unwilling to implement bold reforms. The result is a budget that does little to alter the status quo and continues to rely on squeezing more from the few who are already contributing, pushing Pakistan further into economic stagnation.

### Related CSS Syllabus Topics:

- Pakistan Affairs: Economic challenges, Public Finance, Governance
- Current Affairs: Budgetary policy, Fiscal reforms, IMF relations
- Governance & Public Policy: Policy implementation, Accountability mechanisms

- Essay/English (Precis & Composition): Economic inequality, Bureaucratic inefficiency

**Notes for Beginners:**

The article explains that instead of fixing Pakistan's tax system, the government keeps taxing people who already pay honestly. For example, teachers just lost a tax rebate that helped reduce their financial burden. Meanwhile, people who don't file taxes or hide income remain untouched. It also talks about schemes from 2014 to 2024 like taxing shopkeepers based on electricity usage, but these efforts didn't bring in enough money. This kind of unfair policy puts more pressure on good citizens and weakens trust in the system. In simple terms, the government is not solving the root problem of a narrow tax base and is just repeating old ideas that never really worked.

**Facts and Figures:**

- Pakistani freelancers brought in \$400 million in one year
- The 2024 "Tajir Dost" scheme failed to deliver expected results
- Last meaningful tax reform attempt (RGST) was back in 2009
- Various schemes introduced from 2014 to 2024 failed to broaden tax base
- New taxes introduced on teachers, school supplies, and digital transactions

To wrap up, this article doesn't just criticize a budget, but it also captures a moment where real change was possible, but apathy and short-sightedness won the day. For students and analysts it acts as both a mirror and a warning. Without courage and vision, Pakistan will remain stuck in a vicious cycle of taxing the compliant and appeasing the untouchables.

**Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Pious-sounding: superficially virtuous or moral
  - Syn: sanctimonious | Ant: sincere
- Recalcitrant: resisting authority or control
  - Syn: defiant | Ant: compliant
- Mediocrity: the state of being average or below expectations
  - Syn: inferiority | Ant: excellence
- Amnesty: official pardon for offenses, especially tax evasion
  - Syn: reprieve | Ant: penalty
- Viability: ability to function or sustain
  - Syn: sustainability | Ant: failure

## **DERADICALISATION -AUTHOR - MOHAMMAD ALI BABAKHEL**

**Summary:**

In societies struggling with political instability and rising extremism, the article throws light on the burning need to strike a delicate balance between safeguarding civil liberties and countering radical ideologies. The writer argues that democracy thrives only when inclusivity, dialogue, and justice form its backbone. Yet, in Pakistan and many other postcolonial states, retributive justice often takes precedence over rehabilitation, failing to uproot the causes of radicalisation. Rather than throwing people behind bars, a democratic state should invest in community engagement, psychological support, and civic education that fosters tolerance and critical thinking. The root causes of extremism like disenfranchisement, alienation, and social exclusion must be addressed at the grassroots level to counter the appeal of violent ideologies.

The article pulls no punches in critiquing the superficiality of some deradicalisation efforts, particularly when foreign-funded or ideologically skewed. It warns that imposing one-sided narratives can backfire, deepening mistrust and marginalisation. Moreover, the piece raises red flags about ethical concerns such as privacy violations

in prison-based programmes and discriminatory targeting based on ethnicity or religion. The revised National Action Plan's inclusion of non-kinetic strategies is a step forward, but without ideological neutrality and long-term commitment, real progress remains elusive. As the writer highlights the ultimate challenge lies in walking the tightrope that guardt against extremism without trampling on democratic values. If done right, deradicalisation can act as a healing balm for fractured societies, nudging them toward peaceful coexistence and democratic maturity.

#### **Overview:**

This article explores the complex relationship between democracy and radicalisation in Pakistan, advocating for inclusive, community-driven, and rights-based approaches to deradicalisation. It discusses how punitive measures often worsen the problem and highlights the ethical, cultural, and operational challenges faced by such programmes.

#### **NOTES:**

This article is important for looking to understand internal security, human rights, counter-terrorism strategies, and governance. It adds depth to essays or questions concerning democracy versus security, postcolonial justice systems, and civic education reforms. It shows how successful deradicalisation requires more than surveillance. It demands societal transformation through justice, dignity, and inclusive narratives.

#### **Relevance to CSS syllabus or subjects:**

- Pakistan Affairs – National Action Plan, extremism, counter-terrorism
- Current Affairs – Global counter-extremism strategies, human rights
- Governance & Public Policy – Criminal justice reform, civic education
- International Relations – Role of NGOs, external influence on domestic deradicalisation efforts
- Political Science – Democracy, civil liberties, inclusion

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

Deradicalisation means helping individuals who once believed in extreme views return to normal society. This includes giving them psychological support, education, and job skills. For instance in many European countries former extremists are rehabilitated by being involved in community work and education. In Pakistan, the revised National Action Plan (NAP) now includes nine non-kinetic steps, like education and dialogue, to counter extremism. But challenges still exist, like public mistrust or biased programmes. A community-based method works best when local people, like teachers or religious leaders, help identify and resolve early signs of radical views. Without balancing safety and personal freedoms, these efforts can lose their moral ground.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- Pakistan's revised NAP has nine non-kinetic (non-military) points dedicated to deradicalisation.
- Many deradicalisation efforts in prisons worldwide face criticism for violating human rights.
- In conservative societies, foreign-funded deradicalisation programmes often fail due to credibility issues.

To sum up, This article underlines that deradicalisation isn't merely a technical challenge but a moral one that tests the very fabric of democracy. It reminds us that real security doesn't come from iron fists but from open minds, shared values, and inclusive policies. If Pakistan wishes to turn the tide against extremism, it must walk the talk—investing in education, justice, and community trust rather than quick fixes or imported solutions.

#### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Disenfranchisement – the state of being deprived of rights (Syn: marginalisation, Ant: enfranchisement)
- Retribution – punishment inflicted as vengeance (Syn: penalty, Ant: forgiveness)
- Ideological neutrality – unbiased approach without favoring a belief (Syn: impartiality, Ant: partisanship)
- Deradicalisation – the process of making people abandon extremist beliefs (Syn: rehabilitation, Ant: radicalisation)
- Surveillance – close observation, especially of suspected individuals (Syn: monitoring, Ant: neglect)

## 'DECLARATION OF WAR'

### **Summary:**

This editorial captures the Middle East on the brink, with Israel's latest military assault on Iran sparking fears of an all-out war. By bombing multiple Iranian cities and assassinating top Iranian military officials, Israel has practically lit a match near a powder keg. The piece lays bare Israel's aggressive streak, calling out the Zionist state's repeated assaults on neighbouring countries like Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and now Iran these all under the flimsy pretext of self-defence. While Israel paints itself as the victim, the article rips away that façade and presents it as a habitual provocateur. Tehran's fiery reaction, branding the attack a "declaration of war," is shown not as hyperbole but as a natural response to decades of baiting and bloodshed. The editorial argues that if the global community doesn't act fast, the region may tip into chaos that could shatter not just Middle Eastern peace but also global economic stability. It also takes aim at global hypocrisy. The US, through former president Trump's outrageous praise of the offensive, stands exposed as an enabler rather than a peacemaker. Meanwhile, the Muslim world has voiced strong condemnation, with Pakistan's leadership joining the chorus against Israel's naked aggression. But words alone won't douse this fire. The editorial hints that Iran, seasoned by a brutal war with Iraq and known for playing the long game, won't just sit on its hands. If the US jumps into the fray in the name of Israeli defence, we may well be staring at a regional war with worldwide consequences. With the UN Security Council now scrambling to intervene, the editorial closes with a warning—this is a moment for statesmanship, not sabre-rattling, or the cost will be colossal.

### **Overview:**

This article highlights Israel's military escalation against Iran, questioning the legitimacy of its self-defence claims. It explores the wider implications of such provocations, especially the risk of a regional war and the role of global powers like the US. It urges immediate diplomatic intervention to avoid catastrophe.

### **NOTES:**

The article shows the escalating hostilities between Israel and Iran, sparked by Israel's large-scale military strikes on Iranian soil that targeted both civilian zones and high-level military officials, including the Iranian army chief and the head of Pasdaran. These strikes, described by Tehran as a "declaration of war", underscore the dangerous brinkmanship currently defining Middle Eastern geopolitics. The editorial criticizes Israel's self-defence narrative by presenting a long trail of aggressive actions, including attacks on Syria, Lebanon, Yemen, and Gaza, as well as its role in assassinating key figures like Hamas leader Ismail Haniyeh. It highlights that these provocations have consistently destabilized the region, and Israel's claim of acting to preserve its own survival does not hold water. Furthermore, the article brings to light the global power imbalance, especially with the US ex-president Trump applauding the Israeli offensive while paradoxically calling for negotiations, a move perceived as both aggressive and contradictory. Pakistan's official condemnation and expression of solidarity with Iran reflect the broader Muslim world's stance against Israel's aggression. The editorial ends with a serious warning: if global powers fail to defuse the situation diplomatically, and if countries continue to fan the flames of conflict, the world might soon witness a full-scale regional war with devastating economic and political consequences.

### **Relevance to CSS syllabus or subjects:**

- International Relations – Middle East crises, role of major powers
- Pakistan Affairs – Pakistan's foreign policy stance
- Current Affairs – UN involvement, regional security threats
- Political Science – State sovereignty, legitimacy of self-defence
- Global Issues – Diplomacy, war ethics, oil and economic stability

### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article talks about how Israel launched an attack on Iran, targeting both civilian and military areas. For example, the Iranian army chief and scientists were killed. Iran called it a "declaration of war" because it was unprovoked. Israel says it was acting in self-defence, but the article argues Israel has attacked other countries too, including Syria and Lebanon. The US, especially Trump, supported Israel's attack, which could encourage more violence. If more countries get involved, like the US or allies of Iran, it could lead to a big war. The United Nations is trying to calm the situation, but the risk is still high.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- Iran's top military officials were killed, including the army chief and Pasdaran head.
- Several Iranian cities were bombed by Israel, with residential and military targets hit.
- The US president supported the attack, calling it "excellent".
- UN Security Council held an emergency meeting on the conflict.
- Pakistan officially condemned Israel and supported Iran's right to self-defence.

To sum up, this editorial doesn't just describe a crisis; it sounds the alarm. It shows that unchecked aggression, masked as self-defense can push the world to the edge of catastrophe. It calls for serious diplomacy, not hollow condemnation or partisan cheerleading. If the international community fails to act wisely and swiftly, we may all pay the price.

## **ALL HAIL THE KING**

**-AUTHOR - RAFIA ZAKARIA**

### **Summary:**

As I walk you through the troubling account laid bare in this piece, what jumps out is the deeply theatrical yet ominous turn American politics has taken under Donald Trump. A military parade set for Washington D.C. is not merely a celebration of the army's 250th anniversary but it's an ego-fueled show of might on the president's birthday. The timing reeks of authoritarian ambition. Trump's obsession with power, cloaked in patriotic theatrics, is out in full swing. From cracking down on migrant-friendly protests in California to calling in the Marines against unarmed citizens, Trump seems hell-bent on flexing muscle where none is needed. The \$45-million parade feels less like national pride and more like a desperate grasp at kingship, especially with over 1,600 protests expected and the day mockingly dubbed 'No Kings Day'. The stench of dictatorship hangs thick in the air.

This article highlights the broader erosion of democratic norms in America. Calling out the military on civilians, targeting a state based on political rivalry, and vilifying migrants—these are not isolated missteps, but signals of democratic decay. Even those sitting on the fence are starting to see through the smoke and mirrors; Trump's approval ratings have nosedived to an 80-year low. The parade, instead of galvanizing support, may mark the beginning of his undoing. Economic promises remain unmet, while divisive stunts take center stage. In essence this isn't just a story of tanks on the road, it's a reflection of a presidency spinning out of control, blinded by its own delusions of grandeur.

### **Overview:**

This article by Rafia Zakaria highlights the growing authoritarian impulses within the Trump administration, focusing on a planned military parade coinciding with Trump's birthday and a crackdown on immigration protests in California. It critiques the use of state power for personal glorification and how such displays undermine democratic values, with widespread public backlash and political overreach forming the core of the criticism.

### **NOTES:**

The article looks at several significant developments under the Trump administration that raise alarm about democratic backsliding and the misuse of state power. It begins with the announcement of a \$45-million military parade in Washington, D.C., coinciding with the 250th anniversary of the US Army and Trump's birthday—a move

widely criticized as a vanity project and likened to authoritarian displays of power. The spectacle will involve 6,600 troops and is expected to provoke over 1,600 protests across the country. The timing is particularly troubling as it follows a harsh federal crackdown on protests in California, where demonstrators opposing ICE raids were met with militarized law enforcement and violence. Trump's decision to deploy the National Guard and even Marines in a state that opposed the federal approach is seen as political overreach driven by his disdain for Democratic leadership in California. The article also highlights the alarming rhetoric used by federal officials, labelling Los Angeles a "city of criminals," and reinforces how such narratives fuel division and target racial minorities. Public reaction has been overwhelmingly negative, with Trump's approval rating dropping to an 80-year low. Furthermore, economic promises remain unfulfilled, and growing discontent is visible even among non-protesters. Ultimately, the piece portrays a deeply fractured political landscape, where authoritarian tendencies, excessive military spectacle, and racialized enforcement tactics are eroding public trust and undermining foundational democratic rights such as protest and dissent.

**Relevant CSS syllabus or subjects:**

- Pakistan Affairs: Democratic institutions and governance
- Current Affairs: Populism, protest rights, political repression
- International Relations: Civil-military balance, diplomacy vs show of force
- Political Science/US History (optional): Rise of authoritarian traits in modern democracies

**Notes for Beginners:**

At the heart of the article is an analysis of how leaders can misuse power under the guise of patriotism. For example, instead of celebrating the army in a way that unites the nation, Trump uses the parade to promote his image. Similarly, calling the Marines to handle peaceful protests is like using a hammer to swat a fly too extreme. Such actions mirror the behavior of authoritarian regimes where dissent is crushed, not heard. Over 1,600 protests reflect how Americans still hold fast to their rights, showing democracy's pulse beats strong, even when power is misused.

**Facts and Figures:**

- \$45 million spent on the military parade
- 6,600 soldiers involved in the event
- Over 1,600 anti-parade protests expected
- Trump's approval rating hit an 80-year-low
- California protests covered only a few blocks but were met with military-level response

To sum up, This isn't just about a parade or a political protest; it's a litmus test for democracy itself. Trump's actions illustrate how easily democratic norms can be twisted when power goes unchecked. Whether it's the muscle-flexing of parades or crackdowns on migrants, it's a dangerous slide toward autocracy. The backlash, however, shows that Americans aren't ready to hand over their freedoms on a silver platter. The article leaves us with a cautionary tale: when leaders forget they serve the people, the people must remind them loudly and clearly.

**Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Portentous: Ominously significant
  - Synonym: Foreboding / Antonym: Unimportant
- Martial: Military-related
  - Synonym: Warlike / Antonym: Peaceful
- Spectacle: A visually striking event
  - Synonym: Display / Antonym: Inconspicuous act
- Overkill: Excessive use of force or effort
  - Synonym: Overreaction / Antonym: Understatement

## PROTOCOL TO THE IWT?-

**AUTHOR - AHMER BILAL SOOFI**

### **Summary:**

This article unpacks Pakistan's delicate stance on the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT) and how shifting geopolitical and environmental realities demand a reevaluation of its framework. The treaty, once a hallmark of cooperation, is now under pressure due to India's recent efforts to renegotiate or modify it. Citing Article XII, India issued formal notices to begin discussions, while Pakistan, in response, opened doors to negotiations with a clear intention to safeguard its water rights. The writer emphasizes that if talks lead to a revised protocol, Pakistan must hold its ground firmly in at least four critical areas: inclusion of China in the treaty, the right to legally challenge dam construction, adapting to climate change realities, and enforcing minimum water flow for ecological and downstream needs. Each point carries strategic, legal, and environmental weight that could reshape South Asia's water politics.

Drawing on global examples like the Mekong, Nile, and Danube river systems, the writer urges Pakistan to push for multilateral cooperation, arguing that China's inclusion is both logical and strategically necessary. Additionally, the article calls for a permanent panel of climate experts, data transparency, and judicial recourse to curb India's unilateral actions. Without these reforms, the treaty risks becoming outdated and ineffective in addressing contemporary challenges like climate volatility and rising regional tensions. The overall tone blends legal insight with diplomatic urgency, urging Pakistan not to let the opportunity slip through its fingers. The stakes are high, and the writer hints that what Pakistan chooses to defend or concede now will echo in its water security for decades to come.

### **Overview:**

The article outlines how Pakistan should respond to India's proposal to modify the Indus Waters Treaty, focusing on strategic reforms that include involving China, adding climate change provisions, setting legal oversight for dam construction, and ensuring minimum river flow. The author draws parallels with international river treaties and emphasizes the need for legal tools and multilateral cooperation to adapt the IWT for the future.

### **NOTES:**

This article is relevant for aspirants preparing for topics on Pakistan-India relations, international treaties, and water diplomacy. It shares intuitions into treaty law (Article XII), international precedent (Mekong, Nile, Danube), and environmental diplomacy. The author skillfully connects legal instruments with foreign policy strategy, offering a blueprint on how lower riparian states like Pakistan can safeguard their rights. For essay and international law papers, it works as a valuable example of how multilateral engagement and legal reforms can be harmonized.

### **Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics or Subjects:**

- International Relations: Water diplomacy, regional cooperation
- Current Affairs: Pakistan-India relations
- Environmental Science: Climate change and water treaties
- International Law: Treaty modification, riparian rights

### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article discusses how Pakistan and India share river waters under a legal agreement called the Indus Waters Treaty. Pakistan is worried that India wants to change the treaty, so it's preparing to defend its water rights. The author says Pakistan should ask China to join this agreement because it also shares river systems in the region. Like how countries along the Mekong and Nile rivers created shared rules, Pakistan should push for similar teamwork. The article also says the treaty should cover climate change because old water data is no longer reliable. For example, due to rising temperatures, river flow may change, so Pakistan must have expert panels and data-sharing systems to protect its water future.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- IWT signed in 1960
- 65 years of operation without collapse
- India issued modification notices in Jan 2023 and Sept 2024
- Danube shared by 14 countries
- Mekong governed by a 1995 Framework Agreement
- Nile River Cooperative Framework signed in 2010

To wrap up, The article highlights the pressing need for Pakistan to evolve its strategy in protecting its water rights under the Indus Waters Treaty. It does not just highlight problems but proposes actionable solutions rooted in international precedent and legal frameworks. For both policymakers and students, this piece stands as a timely reminder that treaties must grow with the times, or risk becoming relics of the past.

### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Riparian: Related to riverbanks (Syn: riverine, Ant: inland)
- Abeyance: Temporary suspension (Syn: pause, Ant: continuation)
- Parleys: Formal discussions (Syn: negotiations, Ant: silence)
- Locus standi: Legal standing to bring a case (Syn: authority, Ant: irrelevance)
- Arbitrary: Based on whim, not reason (Syn: capricious, Ant: logical)
- Mala fide: In bad faith (Syn: dishonest, Ant: bona fide)
- Protocol: Supplementary agreement to a treaty (Syn: addendum, Ant: primary law)
- Precedent: An earlier example or case (Syn: model, Ant: anomaly)

## **CRISIS MANAGEMENT BALANCE\_AUTHOR - MUHAMMAD AMIR RANA**

### **Summary**

The Israeli strike on Iran's nuclear facilities has sent shockwaves across global diplomacy, leaving Pakistan in a delicate balancing act. With army chief Field Marshal Asim Munir's visit to the US coinciding with this geopolitical storm, many have begun to connect the dots, suggesting that Washington's growing praise for Pakistan might be more than just ceremonial. The Trump administration, keen to parade its peace-broker image after defusing tensions between India and Pakistan, now faces serious scrutiny as observers suspect it may have turned a blind eye to Tel Aviv's actions. This move has stirred the pot in South Asia and the Middle East alike, especially given Iran's cautious decision to pursue stronger ties with Pakistan despite lingering grievances, including the stalled gas pipeline and insurgent threats along their shared border.

What's more, the US has recently lauded Pakistan's counterterrorism efforts, calling them "phenomenal," further ruffling feathers in New Delhi, which now watches the growing Pak-US warmth with wary eyes. As Pakistan attempts to walk the tightrope between China and the West, it finds itself thrust into the center of a high-stakes chess game where every move counts. The public, meanwhile, simmers with sectarian sentiments triggered by the Israeli assault on Iran, and the state is left juggling internal stability with external expectations. Amidst all this, Pakistan's security forces remain on high alert, sensing that the fallout from this regional conflict might just spill over if not carefully managed.

### **Overview:**

This article provides a detailed analysis of how Israel's strike on Iran has unsettled global diplomacy, particularly influencing Pakistan's position in regional politics. It examines the implications of the Pak-US military relationship

in light of these developments and evaluates Iran-Pakistan relations against the backdrop of economic and counterterrorism challenges.

#### **NOTES:**

The article underlines how Israel's attack on Iran's nuclear facilities sparked a global crisis that indirectly placed Pakistan at a diplomatic crossroads. It highlights that the visit of Pakistan's army chief to Washington during this volatile period drew attention to Islamabad's growing alignment with the United States, especially in counterterrorism cooperation. It notes how the Trump administration's role in de-escalating Indo-Pak tensions coincided suspiciously with Tel Aviv's aggressive moves, leading to speculation that the US may have quietly endorsed Israel's actions. The writer points out that this could compromise the image of the US as a neutral broker and raise eyebrows in South Asia. Meanwhile, despite a historically strained relationship, Iran and Pakistan had been inching toward military and strategic cooperation, visible through mutual visits, joint exercises like Indus Shield, and discussions on long-delayed projects such as the gas pipeline. The article also emphasizes that counterterrorism remains a sticking point in Iran-Pak ties due to cross-border insurgent activities. On the other hand Pakistan has gained international credibility for targeting IS-K militants, earning praise from top US defense officials. The article wraps up with a reminder that the internal sectarian climate in Pakistan remains vulnerable to regional tensions, and managing public sentiment alongside geopolitical balancing will be a real test of Pakistan's crisis diplomacy.

#### **Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics:**

- Pakistan Affairs:
  - Pakistan's foreign relations with neighboring and major powers
    - Civil-military relations
    - Pakistan's role in the Muslim World
    - National security and internal challenges
  - International Relations:
    - Regional and global strategic alignments
    - Middle Eastern politics and conflicts
    - Foreign policy of Pakistan
    - Diplomacy and conflict resolution
  - Current Affairs:
    - Pak-US relations
    - Geopolitical developments in the Middle East
    - Counterterrorism dynamics in South Asia
    - Emerging global power equations and their implications for Pakistan

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article explains how Pakistan is trying to balance its relations between big powers like the US and China while dealing with regional tensions, especially after Israel attacked Iran. It also shows how Pakistan is working with the US on fighting terrorism, even while having security challenges along its border with Iran. For example, the US praised Pakistan for its action against IS-K. At the same time, internal issues like sectarian tensions are growing because of these international conflicts. Pakistan's careful foreign policy helps it stay out of direct conflict while still playing a role in global diplomacy.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- The Israeli strike took place in June 2025
- Pakistan Army Chief visited the US for the 250th anniversary of the US Army
- Iran's top general, Mohammad Bagheri, visited Pakistan earlier this year

To wrap up, this article highlights how a single geopolitical event like the Israel-Iran clash can ripple across regions and affect countries like Pakistan. It underlines the fine line Pakistan walks between strategic alliances, internal pressures, and regional diplomacy. For students of politics and international relations, it's a case study in real-time crisis management and balancing power in a volatile neighborhood.

### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Tacit – understood or implied without being stated (syn: implicit, ant: explicit)
- Thaw – a relaxation of tensions (syn: easing, ant: escalation)
- Convergence – coming together of ideas or interests (syn: unity, ant: divergence)
- Calibrated – carefully planned or measured (syn: precise, ant: reckless)
- Speculation – assumption or theory without firm evidence (syn: conjecture, ant: certainty)
- Arbitration – a legal method to settle disputes (syn: mediation, ant: conflict)
- Sectarian – related to religious or political sects (syn: denominational, ant: secular)
- Geopolitics – politics influenced by geographical factors (syn: international strategy, ant: domestic policy)

## **DIPLOMATIC SETBACK**

## **AUTHOR - MALEEHA LODHI**

### **Summary:**

India's diplomatic train seems to have derailed spectacularly in the aftermath of its conflict with Pakistan. Despite its military aggression and aggressive rhetoric, New Delhi found itself cornered on the international front, failing to garner any significant support even from its usual allies. Its suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty and military provocation after the Pahalgam incident drew more disapproval than applause. The global narrative quickly shifted from condemning terrorism to fearing nuclear confrontation, leaving India in a tight spot. President Trump's repeated claims of brokering the ceasefire and offering mediation on Kashmir rubbed salt in India's wounds. What's more, India's credibility took a nosedive due to its dissemination of false narratives and clumsy diplomatic efforts, while Pakistan's calculated restraint and smart diplomatic footwork put it on the front foot.

This diplomatic episode marks a rare moment where Pakistan turned the tide, earning praise globally while India scrambled to do damage control. The Modi government's hubris, combined with unrealistic foreign policy goals and an inflated sense of global influence, backfired. Their desperate move to send multiple delegations abroad to shift perceptions fell flat. Even the Western media, typically sympathetic to India, began questioning its version of events. The article highlights a dramatic role reversal: India, once dominant on the world stage, now looked isolated, while Pakistan stood firm, capitalizing on the blunders of its rival. But the article doesn't let Islamabad off the hook either, warning that diplomatic wins are short-lived unless backed by long-term vision, revised foreign policy goals, and sustained strategic engagement in a shifting global landscape.

### **Overview:**

The article critically analyzes how India's overreach in its latest conflict with Pakistan backfired diplomatically. It explores how India misjudged international appetite for escalation, mishandled the narrative, and exposed itself to global criticism, while Pakistan's measured approach reaped diplomatic dividends.

### **NOTES:**

The article presents a sharp dissection of India's diplomatic missteps during its recent standoff with Pakistan. It highlights how New Delhi failed to garner international support for any military action against Pakistan following the Pahalgam incident, with only Israel vaguely endorsing its position. The suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty backfired diplomatically, drawing global criticism. The attempt to separate India from Pakistan in global discussions also crumbled, as leaders like Donald Trump revived the "India-Pakistan" hyphenation and offered to mediate over Kashmir, frustrating Indian officials. The article emphasizes how India's aggressive stance and reliance on

misinformation severely damaged its credibility, both at home and abroad. Several Indian newspapers and analysts acknowledged this isolation, with critiques pointing to the Modi government's inability to control the international narrative and the diplomatic cost of unrealistic foreign policy goals. The author also notes that Pakistan's restraint in the conflict, contrasted with India's recklessness, allowed Islamabad to emerge as the more responsible actor on the global stage. Trump's praise for Pakistan's leadership and refusal to back India's aggressive moves further tilted diplomatic balance. Western media's growing skepticism of Indian claims and the failure of India's diplomatic delegations to influence foreign opinion underlined the strategic blunders. Finally, Lodhi urges Pakistan not to be complacent, stressing the need for a comprehensive foreign policy review to convert this momentary advantage into lasting strategic gain amid shifting global alliances.

### **Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics:**

- Pakistan Affairs
  - Pakistan's foreign policy towards neighboring countries
  - Pakistan-India relations and regional diplomacy
  - Strategic importance of Pakistan in South Asia
- Current Affairs
  - Regional conflicts and international mediation
  - Role of global powers in South Asian geopolitics
  - Media narratives and diplomatic influence
- International Relations
  - Diplomacy and foreign policy formulation
  - Conflict resolution and international mediation
  - Power politics and regional balance of power
- Political Science
  - Role of misinformation and media in political strategy
  - Impact of leadership decisions on international credibility
  - Realism and strategic miscalculations in foreign relations
- Essay and Precis Writing
  - Analytical evaluation of diplomatic strategies
  - Argumentative writing on regional peace and global diplomacy
  - Summarizing complex geopolitical developments with clarity

### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article shows that even powerful countries can lose face if they misread global mood. For instance when India reacted to a terror attack with military threats and revoked a water treaty, instead of gaining support, it drew criticism. Even allies like the US didn't back its aggressive stance. A key example is Trump claiming credit for stopping the war and offering to mediate Kashmir, which didn't sit well with India. At the same time, Pakistan remained calm, avoided provocation and ended up winning international sympathy. Another example is how India spread fake news, which global media quickly debunked, hurting its image. These real-world scenarios help us understand how important it is to manage international relations wisely.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- India's suspension of the Indus Waters Treaty after Pahalgam incident was condemned globally.
- Trump publicly offered mediation on Kashmir, upsetting India's long-held stance.
- India sent 7 multiparty delegations globally to counter Pakistan's diplomatic edge.
- Western media criticized India's handling of facts, with The Washington Post exposing disinformation.

To sum up, This article works as a timely reminder that raw power isn't enough in the arena of international diplomacy. Narrative, credibility, and calculated restraint often carry more weight than brute action. India's diplomatic misadventures show what happens when arrogance clouds judgment, while Pakistan's calm stance turned the tables, if only momentarily. But to sustain this edge, Islamabad must look beyond short-term victories and invest in a foreign policy that evolves with the global tide.

### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Hyphenation – linking two things as a single issue (syn: association, ant: separation)
- Hubristic – excessively prideful or arrogant (syn: overconfident, ant: humble)
- Disingenuous – not sincere or honest (syn: deceitful, ant: genuine)
- Reprimand – a sharp criticism or warning (syn: rebuke, ant: praise)
- Misinformation – false or misleading information (syn: fake news, ant: verified data)
- Transactional – focused on personal or short-term gain (syn: pragmatic, ant: altruistic)
- Credibility – the quality of being trusted or believed (syn: trustworthiness, ant: unreliability)
- Isolation – the state of being alone or excluded (syn: alienation, ant: inclusion)
- Delegation – a group appointed to represent (syn: envoy, ant: individual)
- Escalation – a rapid increase or rise in conflict (syn: intensification, ant: de-escalation)

## **RAMPANT DISINFORMATION**

### **Summary:**

In today's digital battlefield, truth is often the first casualty. The editorial sheds light on how information warfare has become a runaway train in the age of social media, where anyone with a smartphone can stir up a storm. The skirmish between India and Pakistan, and the ongoing Iran-Israel conflict, have laid bare a dangerous trend: weaponising misinformation to muddy the waters and tip public opinion. Particularly worrying is the way false narratives dragged Pakistan into the Iran-Israel equation, with malicious rumours about its nuclear posture circulating like wildfire. As Pakistan scrambled to set the record straight, the editorial warns us that disinformation is no longer a byproduct of war but a central weapon in modern conflict.

The rise of social media trolls and foreign actors playing puppeteers in the shadows has only made things worse. The editorial calls out xenophobic and Islamophobic accounts, many run by people far removed from the regions they pontificate on. India's disinformation network is specifically named as a repeat offender. Amid this fog of lies, Pakistan's cautious and clarified response stands out as a diplomatic must-do. With digital chaos growing louder by the day, the message is clear: in a world where fiction travels faster than fact, state actors must be swift, transparent, and strategic if they are to protect both national integrity and global credibility.

### **Overview:**

The article examines the growing menace of disinformation in digital spaces especially during geopolitical conflicts. It highlights how narrative manipulation, rumour-mongering and fake news, often fueled by social media can shape perceptions, distort realities, and even endanger national security. Pakistan's clarification regarding its nuclear posture amid the Iran-Israel conflict is used as a case study to expose the gravity of such propaganda wars.

### **NOTES:**

The article highlights the alarming spread of disinformation in the age of digital media, where the power to shape narratives no longer rests solely with states or credible institutions. It underscores how misinformation and propaganda now emerge from decentralized sources, making it increasingly difficult to distinguish between fact and fiction. The piece references recent examples, including the brief India-Pakistan skirmish and the Iran-Israel

conflict, where both sides, especially India, engaged in narrative manipulation. A particularly disturbing outcome of this disinformation surge has been the false claims linking Pakistan's armed forces and nuclear arsenal to the Iran-Israel crisis. This prompted official clarifications from Islamabad, reiterating its nuclear policy is India-specific and purely defensive. The editorial also points out that many social media accounts spreading false narratives operate from outside the regions they comment on, often with xenophobic and Islamophobic undertones. It warns of Indian networks being actively involved in such campaigns and calls for vigilance, urging Pakistan to consistently communicate its official stance. In sum, the piece draws attention to the perilous consequences of unchecked fake news, particularly during high-stakes geopolitical conflicts, and emphasizes the critical need for proactive information management and diplomatic clarity.

#### **Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics or Subjects:**

- Current Affairs: Cyber warfare, media influence on international diplomacy
- Pakistan Affairs: Pakistan's foreign policy, nuclear policy clarity
- International Relations: Disinformation in global conflicts, narrative warfare
- General Science and Ability: Role of digital media technologies in global trends
- Essay Paper: Topics like "The age of misinformation" or "Digital diplomacy and national security"

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article shows how fake news can create dangerous misunderstandings between countries. For example, rumours that Pakistan was using its nuclear weapons in the Iran-Israel conflict led to panic online, forcing Pakistani officials to explain their actual stance. In today's world, wars aren't just fought with bombs but also with tweets and videos. Anyone can spread misinformation, and sometimes it's hard to tell what's real. That's why governments need to act fast, speak clearly, and use social media wisely. International investigations even revealed that some Indian social media accounts were designed only to mislead global opinion during conflicts.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- Pakistan's official policy states its nuclear deterrent is India-specific and defensive in nature.
- India's disinformation campaigns have been highlighted in reports by EU DisinfoLab and other international watchdogs.
- Social media platforms like X (formerly Twitter) host millions of anonymous accounts capable of rapidly spreading falsehoods.
- The Iran-Israel conflict has triggered a new wave of regional narrative warfare affecting even uninvolved states like Pakistan.

In a nutshell, In a time when digital storms rage louder than battlefield artillery, the pen, or rather the post has indeed become mightier than the sword. This editorial is a stark reminder that safeguarding national interest is no longer just about borders but also about bytes. Governments must brace up, speak out and fight fire with facts before they're drowned in a flood of fiction.

#### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Proliferation – rapid increase (Synonym: spread, Antonym: decline)
- Subterfuge – deception or trick (Synonym: deceit, Antonym: honesty)
- Narrative warfare – strategic control of storytelling to influence perception
- Rumour-mongering – spreading false or unverified information (Synonym: gossiping, Antonym: fact-reporting)
- Xenophobic – fearful or hateful of foreigners (Synonym: prejudiced, Antonym: tolerant)

## MERCHANTS OF WAR: WHY DID ISRAEL ATTACK IRAN?

### Summary:

This article lays bare the twisted choreography behind Israel's assault on Iran, unmasking the coordinated deceit that unfolded under the guise of diplomacy. President Trump's earlier assurance of a peaceful deal turned out to be smoke and mirrors, as Israel went full throttle with its strikes, exploiting cancelled negotiations as a smokescreen. Meanwhile, the West tiptoes around justice, sending weapons with one hand while offering hollow calls for de-escalation with the other. Iran, left out in the cold and cornered, now finds itself fighting not just for survival but dignity. The article goes deep into the unlikely historical alliance between Iran and Israel, revealing a rivalry not rooted in ideology but mutual recognition of power and ambition. What once was strategic cooperation has now turned into a fierce contest for regional dominance, with both nations believing they stand alone in a hostile neighborhood.

The author boldly argues that Iran's pursuit of nuclear capability is no longer about posturing but a matter of survival. While Israel continues its unlawful preventive strikes and targeted assassinations, protected by America's shielding veto, Iran is urged to arm itself not with rhetoric, but real deterrence. History is revisited with chilling clarity—the rejection of Iran's most compromising nuclear deal proposal in 2003, the ongoing sanctions that choke its progress, and a Western agenda that seeks regime change by any means necessary. The narrative suggests two paths forward: either Iran sustains resistance and forces a negotiated peace or collapses under pressure, paving the way for Israel and its Gulf allies to dictate a future wrapped in illusion. Until then, Iran fights on, battered but not broken.

### Overview:

The article provides a sharply analytical and politically charged examination of the Israel-Iran conflict, unraveling the deeper geopolitical motives behind Israel's aggression. It challenges mainstream narratives by revealing the duplicity of Western powers and the calculated marginalization of Iran, while making a strong case for Iran's right to self-defense through nuclear deterrence.

### NOTES:

This article gives deep understanding of Middle Eastern geopolitics, nuclear diplomacy, regime change strategies and international law violations. It also highlights the shifts in alliance dynamics, realpolitik, and media manipulation that can be integrated into long-form essays or debates on global power politics. The article helps develop critical thinking and provides a clear example of how international legal norms are selectively applied, a theme often asked in CSS exams.

### Relevant CSS subjects:

- International Relations
- Current Affairs
- Pakistan Affairs (due to regional implications)
- Governance and Public Policies
- US Foreign Policy
- Global Security Studies

### Notes for beginners:

The article simplifies a very complex issue by showing how global powers often say one thing and do another. For example while America talks about peace, it sends missiles to Israel. Israel which already has nuclear weapons attacks Iran over fears it might develop them someday. This double standard is called "preventive self-defense," which is illegal under international law. Iran once offered to give up its nuclear program entirely in 2003 in exchange

for peace and end to sanctions, but the US refused to talk. Today, Iran feels it needs nuclear weapons to defend itself, especially as it sees other countries like Iraq and Libya attacked after disarming.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- Israel and Iran were once allies during the Iran-Iraq war.
- Israel bombed Iraq's Osirak nuclear reactor in 1981 with Iran's indirect support.
- In 2003, Iran offered a comprehensive peace deal, including abandoning its nuclear program, which the US rejected.
- Israel is believed to have nuclear weapons, though it has never officially confirmed them.
- Iran has been under US-led sanctions for decades, crippling its economy.

To wrap up, This article is a searing reminder that in the theatre of global politics, power often trumps principle. Iran's isolation in this unfolding saga serves as a symbol of resistance, but also a warning. Until the world learns to treat all nations by the same rules, wars like these will keep finding fuel. The writer's voice stands firm, urging readers to see through the smokescreen and question the narratives handed down by those in power.

#### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Platitudes – meaningless, overused statements (syn: clichés, ant: insights)
- Feigned – pretended, fake (syn: simulated, ant: genuine)
- Animosity – strong hostility (syn: enmity, ant: friendship)
- Deterrence – prevention by fear of consequence (syn: hindrance, ant: encouragement)
- Emasculated – weakened or deprived of strength (syn: weakened, ant: empowered)
- Subversive – intended to overthrow or undermine (syn: rebellious, ant: loyal)
- Conflagration – a large destructive conflict or fire (syn: inferno, ant: peace)
- Rhetoric – persuasive or insincere speech (syn: oratory, ant: silence)
- Stymied – hindered or blocked (syn: obstructed, ant: facilitated)
- Veto – official power to block decisions (syn: rejection, ant: approval)

## **A CATASTROPHE CALLED ISRAEL**

## **AUTHOR - ABBAS NASIR**

#### **Summary:**

In a firestorm of bombs and bluster, Israel's latest campaign against Iran is cloaked under the veil of nuclear disarmament but reeks of deeper, darker motives. The writer pulls back the curtain on Israel's military aggression, suggesting that regime change and distraction from the blood-soaked tragedy in Gaza are the real endgames. With Western allies turning a blind eye and the US offering not just tacit approval but logistical cover, Tel Aviv appears emboldened. The so-called Gaza Riviera Plan, visualising beachside luxury at the expense of displaced Palestinians, paints a grotesque picture of imperial ambition dressed up as diplomacy. Meanwhile, former Israeli PM Ehud Barak candidly admits that even a full-blown US-Israeli air campaign could only delay Iran's nuclear progress for a matter of months. It's a chilling revelation, exposing the futility of endless strikes and highlighting the fact that many of Iran's key facilities lie buried deep underground, beyond the reach of bombs.

As the fog of war thickens, questions multiply. Can Iran's missile stockpile, reportedly 2,000 strong, hold out in a war of attrition? Will the defiant Islamic Republic lash out further, risking regional mayhem to halt its isolation? And most importantly, will the United States risk boots on Iranian soil to fulfill Israel's ambitions, knowing well its past disasters in Vietnam, Iraq and Afghanistan? The article masterfully weaves geopolitical fact with the looming specter of catastrophe, reminding readers that this isn't just another border skirmish, it's a simmering pot that could

scald the entire Middle East and beyond. With no clear off-ramp and global silence enabling the chaos, this war risks becoming a disaster wrapped in denial, sustained by firepower, and fuelled by arrogance.

### **Overview:**

This article critically unpacks the Israel-Iran conflict and the unspoken ambitions behind Israel's airstrikes. It examines how these attacks serve as both a military and psychological tactic aimed not just at delaying Iran's nuclear ambitions but potentially toppling the regime. It also explores US complicity, Iran's retaliatory capacity, and the strategic futility of escalating a war whose fallout could reverberate globally.

### **NOTES:**

The article highlights Israel's ongoing military campaign against Iran, presenting it as a smokescreen for broader strategic aims beyond mere nuclear non-proliferation. While the stated purpose is to halt Iran's nuclear ambitions, the hidden agenda appears to be regime change, aligning Iran with other Middle Eastern nations that have normalized relations with Israel. The writer highlights how the Gaza crisis and ethnic cleansing of Palestinians are being overshadowed by a wider regional war, further enabled by Western and especially American backing. The so-called Gaza Riviera Plan, aimed at displacing Palestinians and converting Gaza into a resort zone, underscores the cruel long-term vision behind the current violence. Former Israeli PM Ehud Barak's candid admission that the airstrikes will only delay Iran's nuclear progress by weeks or months raises serious questions about the efficacy and real motive of such military aggression. He stresses that without US logistical and ground support, Israel's reach is limited, and any hope for regime change in Iran remains a fantasy. The article questions how long Iran can withstand this pressure, given its missile arsenal and limited air defence capabilities, and whether it might eventually retaliate by targeting US regional assets. It also examines how the fallout could destabilize the entire region and shake the global economy, especially if the conflict escalates or draws in other powers. With historical comparisons to America's failures in Vietnam and Afghanistan, the writer paints a sobering picture of yet another misadventure driven by hubris, misinformation, and brute force, all under the guise of global security.

### **Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics:**

- International Relations: Middle Eastern conflicts, nuclear diplomacy, proxy warfare, US foreign policy
- Current Affairs: Israel-Iran conflict, regional instability, international diplomacy
- Pakistan Affairs: Regional implications of Middle Eastern wars for Pakistan's foreign policy
- Strategic and Defence Studies: War doctrines, regime change tactics, deterrence theory, missile and air defence systems
- Essay: Themes of global injustice, media manipulation, ethical warfare, and humanitarian consequences of conflict

### **Notes for Beginners:**

The article shows how powerful nations can use war as a smokescreen to hide other motives. Israel claims it's hitting Iran to stop nuclear weapons, but the writer argues it's also trying to change Iran's government and distract from what's happening in Gaza. For example instead of rescuing hostages, Israeli envoys have walked away from possible deals. Former PM Barak admits their bombs won't destroy Iran's nuclear sites they're too deep. This shows that wars often continue even when they can't win anything clearly. Israel is better armed, but Iran, despite being hit hard, is still fighting back. It's like pushing a wall hoping it'll fall, not realizing it's made of steel. The US hasn't joined the war directly, but it's giving support behind the scenes. This reflects the politics of influence and power that often shape world events, especially in the Middle East.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- Iran has around 2,000 ballistic missiles
- Israeli strikes aim at both nuclear and military targets
- Israel's "Gaza Riviera Plan" proposes beach resorts after forced displacement

- Iran's uranium stockpile reportedly includes 400kg enriched to 60%
- Former PM Ehud Barak believes even with US help, Iran's program may only be delayed by months
- Key nuclear facilities are located hundreds of yards underground

To sum up, this article is not just a war commentary but it's a searing indictment of militarism dressed as diplomacy. With a sharp eye on hypocrisy, unspoken agendas and brutal consequences, it warns that wars like these rarely achieve their stated aims. Instead they leave behind a trail of human misery, global instability, and moral erosion. As the guns roar and diplomats play their cards, the real casualty might be not just a country, but humanity's collective conscience.

### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Tacit: Unspoken or implied; synonym: implicit; antonym: explicit
- Perfunctory: Carried out with minimum effort or reflection; synonym: superficial; antonym: thorough
- Genocide: Deliberate killing of a large number of people from a particular nation or ethnic group; synonym: mass killing; antonym: preservation
- Attrition: Gradual reduction of strength through sustained attack; synonym: weakening; antonym: reinforcement
- Apartheid: Systematic segregation based on race or ethnicity; synonym: racial discrimination; antonym: equality
- Scuppered: Ruined or destroyed; synonym: sabotaged; antonym: rescued
- Embattled: Involved in or prepared for war; synonym: besieged; antonym: peaceful
- Manifestation: Clear display or demonstration of a quality or feeling; synonym: expression; antonym: concealment

## **DEEPENING CONFLICT**

### **Summary:**

As tensions snowball between Iran and Israel, the conflict now treads on dangerously thin ice. The article underlines how Israel's airstrikes, backed by American hardware and tacit nods, have stirred the hornet's nest, resulting in a swift and bold Iranian response. Missiles flew, drones buzzed, and the skies bore witness to a tit-for-tat that could quickly spiral out of control, especially if the United States decides to dip its toes into the fire. The editorial doesn't mince words in questioning President Trump's lack of resolve to halt Israel's aggression, labelling the justification of "pre-emptive strikes" as a paper-thin excuse by a nuclear-armed state notorious for bulldozing international norms. At the heart of it lies a sobering truth: while Washington looks the other way and Tel Aviv fans the flames, millions across the region brace for impact.

On the other end, the article paints a grim picture of hypocrisy and geopolitical theatre. Netanyahu's plea to the Iranian people for "freedom" is branded dark comedy when juxtaposed with the brutal Israeli siege of Gaza. The editorial calls out the selective morality of Western allies, who stay mum on Palestinian suffering but fret over Iran's retaliation. The war clouds hanging over the Middle East threaten to unleash not only more bloodshed but also rattle global energy corridors and trade routes. Pakistan, seated next door to Iran, finds itself walking a tightrope, trying to ensure the safety of its citizens while keeping an eye on the brewing storm. As the drums of war grow louder, the call for peace is drowned in the noise of missiles, raising the spectre of long-term instability for a region already on edge.

**Overview:**

This editorial dissects the current Israel-Iran conflict, calling out the disproportionate aggression, strategic doublespeak, and the dangers of a potential American intervention. It analyzes the muted global reaction to Israeli belligerence and reflects on the far-reaching consequences of the widening war, especially for regional neighbors like Pakistan.

**NOTES:**

The article presents a critical account of the rapidly escalating Israel-Iran conflict, sparked by Tel Aviv's airstrikes that killed senior Iranian officials and prompted Tehran's retaliatory missile and drone attacks. It warns that the conflict risks snowballing into a full-blown regional war, especially if the United States becomes militarily involved. The editorial points out that the US had preemptively supplied Israel with missile systems and may have actively supported Israel during the attacks, prompting Tehran to warn that it will strike US, British, and French bases if they intervene. The writer questions President Donald Trump's passive stance, contrasting his self-image as a "man of peace" with his silence during what appears to be an unprovoked act of aggression. The editorial lambasts Israel's justification of "pre-emptive strikes" that highlights the irony of a nuclear-armed state accusing another of nuclear ambitions while disregarding international norms. Prime Minister Netanyahu's calls for Iranians to overthrow their regime are labeled darkly ironic, especially given Israel's simultaneous brutality in Gaza. The article warns of far-reaching consequences, including regional instability, economic tremors and humanitarian crises. It concludes by stressing the need for regional states, particularly Pakistan, to prepare for possible spillover effects and ensure the safety of their citizens currently in Iran.

**Related CSS Syllabus Topics:**

- International Relations: Middle Eastern conflict, US foreign policy, nuclear diplomacy
- Pakistan Affairs: Strategic vulnerabilities of Pakistan in the Middle East
- Current Affairs: Global power play, US-Israel relations, Iran's geopolitical stance
- Strategic Studies: Impact of warfare on global peace and energy corridors

**Notes for Beginners:**

The article explains that Israel's military aggression is not just a reaction to security threats but also part of a broader plan supported by powerful allies like the US. For example, the US supplied missiles to Israel before the attack, showing prior knowledge or support. Iran's retaliation shows it won't sit idle, and now tensions could involve other global players. For Pakistan, the conflict could create serious challenges, like securing its citizens visiting Iran or dealing with economic ripples due to disturbed trade routes. This editorial teaches that war is never limited to two countries, it casts a long shadow across borders.

**Facts and Figures:**

- Iran responded with drone and missile attacks after Israeli strikes
- US reportedly shipped hundreds of missiles to Israel
- Iran warned of hitting US, UK, and French bases if they defend Israel
- Gaza genocide continues under Israel's military operations
- Pakistan is arranging safe return of pilgrims from Iran amid the conflict

To sum up, this editorial peels back the layers of strategic deception to reveal the grim realities of war-driven politics. It provides an unflinching look at how global powers manipulate regional fires for their own ends and how nations like Pakistan must brace for shocks from storms they didn't start.

**Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Barrages: A concentrated artillery bombardment (Synonym: onslaught, Antonym: ceasefire)
- Onslaught: A fierce or destructive attack (Synonym: assault, Antonym: defense)

- Tacit: Understood without being openly expressed (Synonym: implicit, Antonym: explicit)
- Rings hollow: Sounds false or insincere (Synonym: unconvincing, Antonym: credible)
- Genocide: Systematic killing of a large group of people (Synonym: mass slaughter, Antonym: protection)
- Tremors: Small movements or shakes, metaphorically used for instability (Synonym: shocks, Antonym: stability)
- Geopolitical: Relating to politics influenced by geography (Synonym: strategic, Antonym: apolitical)

## TEHRAN UNDER FIRE

## AUTHOR - MAHIR ALI

### Summary:

The article lays bare the deep-rooted hypocrisy, historical manipulation and power politics behind Israel's unprovoked assault on Iran. With echoes of colonial scheming from a century ago, this war is more than a military standoff; it's the manifestation of long-held ambitions for dominance. Israel possessing nuclear weapons for decades under Western silence, now cries foul over Iran's unverified intentions. The West, as ever, turns a blind eye to Israel's aggressions, painting Iran as the villain. This entire saga reeks of double standards, as the US, under Trump's erratic leadership, flip-flops between distancing itself and claiming superiority through its military gear. While pizza orders near the Pentagon and empty bars hint at inside knowledge, Trump's contradictory statements only fan the flames. Netanyahu finds in this war a golden ticket to sweep domestic crises under the rug and silence criticism of the Gaza genocide.

This editorial doesn't just hold a mirror to geopolitical mischief but exposes the West's convenient moral compass. Israel's aggression, backed implicitly or explicitly by Washington, isn't just about security but it's about shifting narratives, regime changes and tightening its grip on the region. Meanwhile, Iran, despite its own internal flaws, stands isolated, with no powerful voice in its corner. The West's selective outrage, its silence over the deaths of hundreds of Iranians, and its complicity in shielding a belligerent Zionist state paints a bleak picture of global justice. The real question that looms large: will Iran meet the same fate as Iraq, Libya or Syria? Or will this blatant bullying mark a new era of resistance against Western hegemony?

### Overview:

This article critically evaluates Israel's recent military offensive against Iran and questions its moral justification, historical motives and the West's blatant double standards. It highlights how both Trump and Netanyahu are using war for political leverage, while the civilians of Iran pay the price. The article links the ongoing aggression to decades of manipulation and failed diplomacy, warning of dire consequences.

### NOTES:

This article explores historical precedents such as the 1953 coup in Iran, the nuclear arms debate, the JCPOA agreement, and US-Israel relations. It reflects themes of power imbalance, neo-imperialism, global hypocrisy and the failure of diplomacy. It also indirectly addresses implications for Pakistan's strategic posture and regional security.

### Related CSS Syllabus Topics or Subjects:

- International Relations: Global conflicts, role of superpowers, regional security
- Current Affairs: US foreign policy, Middle East crisis
- Political Science: Regime change, diplomacy vs. militarism
- Pakistan Affairs: Implications of regional instability on Pakistan
- Essay: Double standards in international politics, decline of diplomacy

### Notes for Beginners:

This article explains how Israel attacked Iran, claiming it feared Iran might make nuclear weapons. But Israel already has nuclear weapons, and no one questions it. The West especially the US supports Israel even when it kills innocent people. Trump says different things at different times sometimes saying the US didn't help Israel, then saying the US makes the best weapons for Israel. This is confusing and dangerous. The writer says this war is not only about Iran and Israel but also about power, history and controlling the Middle East. For example, Iran was ready to talk peacefully, but Israel attacked before the meeting. The article shows how big countries say one thing but do the opposite when their friends are involved.

### Facts and Figures:

- Israel launched an unprovoked strike on Iran on Friday the 13th
- The 2015 Iran nuclear deal (JCPOA) was cancelled by Trump in his first term
- US military buildup observed near the Pentagon prior to the strike
- Trump turned 79 days before issuing war-supportive statements
- Hundreds of Iranian civilians have been killed in recent attacks
- US refused to sign the G7's de-escalation statement
- Israel used the war to shift focus from the genocide in Gaza
- Mossadegh was deposed by US-UK intervention in 1953, paving the way for the 1979 Iranian Revolution

To sum up, This article isn't just a commentary on current events; it's a stinging rebuke of international hypocrisy, political deceit and the weaponization of global narratives. It urges readers to question the selective morality of global powers and reminds us that in war, truth is the first casualty and the innocent are the ones who bleed.

### Difficult Words and Meanings:

- Belligerence – aggressive or warlike behavior (Syn: hostility, Ant: peace)
- Connivance – secret approval of wrongdoing (Syn: collusion, Ant: condemnation)
- Subdue – bring under control (Syn: suppress, Ant: liberate)
- Atrocious – extremely bad or cruel (Syn: brutal, Ant: kind)
- Squib – a short and disappointing result (Syn: anticlimax, Ant: climax)
- Regime – government in power (Syn: administration, Ant: anarchy)
- Complicit – involved in wrongdoing (Syn: guilty, Ant: innocent)
- Transcend – go beyond limits (Syn: surpass, Ant: fall behind)
- Hypocrisy – claiming high standards while behaving oppositely (Syn: insincerity, Ant: honesty)
- Mortified – deeply ashamed or embarrassed (Syn: humiliated, Ant: proud)

## AMERICA'S NEW WAR

## AUTHOR - ZAHID HUSSAIN

### Summary:

The article lays bare the calculated and long-anticipated military aggression by Israel against Iran, triggered with the tacit approval of the Trump administration. This sudden turn of events has set the region ablaze, dragging the United States deeper into yet another war it cannot fully control. Despite earlier peace talks between Tehran and Washington showing some promise, Israel's preemptive strikes derailed the negotiations. Trump's contradictory stance of declaring himself anti-war while practically fanning the flames which reflects a dangerous disconnect between rhetoric and action. Meanwhile, the West's blind support for Israel has once again exposed its moral bankruptcy, as it stands united in silence over the civilian bloodshed and blatant violations of international norms.

As Iran retaliates with unexpected strength, the conflict has spiraled into the most severe face-off between the two nations in decades. With hundreds of ballistic missiles fired and critical infrastructure damaged, Israel has realized that its military edge cannot guarantee a knockout blow. Fears of nuclear contamination have surfaced, further complicating an already explosive situation. The article sounds a grim warning: this war may redraw the Middle East's political map, but not in Washington's favor. If America decides to put boots on the ground, it risks lighting the entire region on fire, unleashing consequences that could haunt global stability for years to come.

#### **Overview:**

The article critically analyzes the Israel-Iran war triggered by Israeli strikes on Iranian nuclear facilities. It reveals how American involvement and Israeli ambitions have sabotaged diplomacy, risking nuclear catastrophe and regional collapse. The article underlines the West's double standards and questions the future of Middle Eastern geopolitics.

#### **NOTES:**

The article shares a gripping account of the sudden eruption of war between Israel and Iran, initiated by a series of premeditated Israeli strikes on Iran's nuclear facilities with silent approval from the Trump administration. It highlights how this attack sabotaged the scheduled nuclear negotiations in Oman, which could have been the first major breakthrough since Trump abandoned the 2015 nuclear deal. The author underlines that while Trump publicly claimed interest in diplomacy, the actual decisions made by his administration reflect a tilt towards military aggression. Israel's motive, rooted in its long-standing rejection of any peaceful nuclear agreement is presented as a key reason for the derailment of talks. The West's double standards are starkly exposed as it unites behind Israel despite its aggressive, unlawful actions that have led to the deaths of hundreds of Iranian civilians. The article further describes how Iran retaliated with ballistic missile strikes that reveal its military capability and resilience, which have prevented Israel from achieving its main goal of halting Iran's nuclear program. The article warns of looming nuclear contamination due to damaged facilities and portrays the ongoing conflict as one with no clear end in sight. It closes by stressing that if America escalates its involvement, the conflict could spill over across the entire region, triggering another long, disastrous war with severe consequences for global peace and security.

#### **Relevant to CSS syllabus or subjects:**

- International Relations: Regional security, diplomacy, superpower interventions
- Current Affairs: Middle East conflict, role of G7, nuclear risk
- Political Science: State sovereignty, regime change, use of force
- Pakistan Affairs: Strategic impacts on regional security
- Essay: Global power politics, ethics in foreign policy

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article discusses how Israel launched attacks on Iran, claiming it was stopping Iran from building nuclear weapons. Iran said its nuclear program is only for energy, not bombs. Before this war started, Iran and America were planning to talk and maybe make peace, but Israel attacked just before the meeting. America's President Trump had promised not to involve the US in more wars, but now America is part of this war. Many Western countries support Israel and don't care about how many innocent people are killed. Iran responded with powerful missiles, and now both countries are fighting a very dangerous war. For example, Israel used big bombs to destroy Iran's nuclear plants, and now people are scared of nuclear pollution. The article warns that if America sends its soldiers, the whole Middle East could be affected badly.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- Israel launched coordinated strikes on Iran's nuclear sites with Trump's consent
- US may provide Israel with 13,600 kg bunker-buster bombs
- Trump withdrew from the 2015 Iran nuclear deal during his first presidency

- Negotiations were to resume in Oman but were sabotaged by Israeli strikes
- G7 leaders expressed full support for Israel and blamed Iran for instability
- Iran responded with hundreds of ballistic missiles targeting Israel
- Israel's air and cyber strikes failed to destroy Iran's full nuclear potential
- IAEA warned of radiological contamination from damaged nuclear sites
- Hundreds of civilians in Iran have been killed in recent attacks

To sum up, this article pulls no punches in exposing the perilous path America and Israel are treading. It reflects how peace talks are often sacrificed at the altar of military ambitions and how innocent lives bear the brunt of geopolitical power games. As history threatens to repeat itself, this war may not just change borders but fracture trust in international diplomacy forever.

## CLOSE THE GAP

### Summary:

The Global Gender Gap Report 2025 has dealt Pakistan a humiliating blow, dragging it down to 148th place with a parity score of just 56.7 percent. It's more than just numbers on a report card; it's a mirror to the rot within our institutions and mindsets that continue to sideline women from the mainstream. The editorial paints a bleak picture of a country where successive governments have shrugged off their responsibilities, where women's presence in the formal economy remains a feeble 25 percent, and where a rape occurs every two minutes yet only three percent of cases result in conviction. Even the slight progress in education is a mirage, partly attributed to fewer men enrolling, not better access for women. The state's reluctance to tackle misogynistic power dynamics head-on has left women shackled by a system that works more like a cage than a constitution.

What's more damning is how the leadership's half-hearted promises and data blind spots add insult to injury. The editorial raises valid concerns about the report's methodology, particularly Pakistan's placement below war-torn countries like Yemen and Sudan, where women face near-complete deprivation. Still, it's hard to argue when the ground realities are so grim. From political empowerment to criminal justice, from health access to workplace equity, Pakistan seems to be going round in circles, chasing shadows instead of delivering justice. Without serious political will, transparent reforms and proper recognition of the informal sector's contribution, the country will remain caught in a vicious cycle of gender injustice and global embarrassment.

### Overview:

This article discusses Pakistan's sharp fall in the Global Gender Gap Report 2025, placing it at the bottom globally. It exposes the country's ongoing failure in addressing gender inequality across employment, education, health and political participation. The editorial also questions the report's methodology but concludes that the harsh rankings reflect deeper societal and structural dysfunctions.

### NOTES:

This article highlights measurable failures in economic participation, justice Delivery and governance concerning women's rights. The article provides case-based examples such as low conviction rates and skewed labour force representation. It can also support critical perspectives on global indices and how data gaps affect developing nations' rankings.

### Relevant to CSS syllabus or subjects:

- 1. Pakistan Affairs      The article deeply aligns with Pakistan Affairs, particularly under the themes of social structure, issues of national integration, and development. It addresses how gender inequality

undermines national progress and development indicators, reflecting weak institutional responses and governance failures within Pakistan.

- 2. Gender Studies This is the most directly connected subject. The article discusses gender parity, women's participation in the economy, education, politics, and health. It critiques patriarchal norms and institutional barriers that limit women's empowerment, all of which are core themes in Gender Studies.
- 3. Governance and Public Policies The failure of governments to ensure protective mechanisms for women, weak implementation of laws, and ineffective justice systems directly link with governance and public policy failures. This article critically assesses how public institutions have failed to deliver gender equity and justice.
- 4. Current Affairs Since the article is based on the 2025 Global Gender Gap Report, it connects to contemporary global assessments and Pakistan's standing in international rankings. Understanding this article prepares candidates to discuss Pakistan's current socio-economic image on global platforms.

### Notes for Beginners:

This article talks about how women in Pakistan are being left behind in important areas of life. For example in jobs only one out of four women is part of the formal workforce. In education girls have made little progress, but only because fewer boys are going to college. The justice system also fails women badly, with only three out of every hundred rape cases ending in punishment. Even when leaders promise change, the actual results are disappointing. Some countries like Sudan and Yemen, which are at war, still ranked better than Pakistan. This shows how serious the problem is and how much effort is needed to improve.

### Facts and Figures:

- Pakistan ranks 148th in the Global Gender Gap Report 2025
- Gender parity dropped from 57 percent to 56.7 percent
- Only 25 percent of women are part of the formal workforce
- Rape conviction rate stands at a shocking 3 percent
- Punjab recorded 60,217 abuse cases in 2024 with only 924 convictions
- Education parity rose by 1.5 percent, mainly due to male dropout
- Pakistan ranks 147 in economic participation, 137 in education, 131 in health and 118 in political empowerment

To sum up, this editorial is a loud siren blaring through the chambers of power. If Pakistan wants to lift itself from this abyss, cosmetic statements and weak policies won't cut it. What's needed is a complete overhaul in thinking, law enforcement, and leadership accountability. Until women are treated not as statistical liabilities but as equal citizens, the road to progress will remain nothing more than a broken promise.

### Difficult Words and Meanings:

- Parity – equal status or condition (syn: equality, ant: imbalance)
- Descent – a decline or drop (syn: fall, ant: rise)
- Mores – established customs or traditions (syn: norms, ant: disobedience)
- Dismal – very bad or depressing (syn: bleak, ant: hopeful)
- Void – an empty space or lack of something (syn: gap, ant: presence)
- Timid – lacking courage or confidence (syn: hesitant, ant: bold)
- Misogynistic – showing hatred or mistrust towards women (syn: sexist, ant: feminist)
- Acquitted – freed from criminal charge (syn: released, ant: convicted)
- Imbalanced – lacking proportion or equality (syn: unequal, ant: balanced)

## POWER LUNCH

### Summary:

This editorial unpacks a highly unusual diplomatic spectacle where Donald Trump rolled out the red carpet for Pakistan's military chief, Field Marshal Asim Munir, bypassing civilian leadership altogether. Over a working lunch at the White House, Trump showered praise on Pakistan, crediting it for averting a full-blown war with India, all while discussing critical issues like counterterrorism, rare earth trade and cryptocurrencies. The fact that such a high-profile meeting occurred without any civilian oversight raises eyebrows and speaks volumes about how the US continues to prefer dealing with the military brass in Rawalpindi rather than Islamabad's elected officials. Beneath all the diplomatic niceties, it's crystal clear that the US interest hinges on transactional deals, with Pakistan's strategic leverage being front and center, especially amid the growing chaos in the Middle East.

The conversation inevitably shifted towards the boiling Iran-Israel conflict, where Trump subtly hinted at his temptation to jump into Israel's corner but also recognised the stakes. With Pakistan being Iran's neighbour and a long-standing US military partner, the stakes couldn't be higher. Pakistan's unanimous parliamentary resolution condemning Israel's aggression reflects where the nation's heart lies. But here's the catch — while warming up ties with Washington is tempting, Pakistan must tread carefully. Trump's track record of erratic U-turns means today's handshake could easily become tomorrow's cold shoulder. The editorial underscores that Pakistan's civilian and military leadership must strike a delicate balance, guarding national interests without being sucked into reckless foreign adventures.

### Overview:

This article highlights the evolving dynamics of Pakistan-US relations, the influence of military diplomacy over civilian leadership and how regional conflicts like the Iran-Israel war are reshaping Pakistan's foreign policy priorities. It highlights both the opportunities and risks that come with deeper engagement with the US under an unpredictable Trump administration.

### NOTES:

The article highlights a significant diplomatic shift where Donald Trump hosted Pakistan's military chief Field Marshal Asim Munir for a working lunch at the White House without involving Pakistan's civilian leadership, indicating Washington's continued preference for dealing directly with Rawalpindi rather than Islamabad. The meeting described as unusually cordial focused on counterterrorism cooperation, trade in rare earth minerals and even cryptocurrencies, with Trump also praising Pakistan for preventing recent tensions with India from escalating into a full-scale war. Additionally the discussion touched on the escalating Iran-Israel conflict where Trump seemed inclined towards supporting Israel but remained cautious about direct US involvement. Pakistan's official stance, reflected in a unanimous parliamentary resolution, condemned Israeli aggression and expressed solidarity with Iran. The article stresses that while improving ties with the US offers economic and strategic benefits, Pakistan must tread carefully due to Trump's unpredictable nature and the risk of being entangled in Middle Eastern conflicts. The piece further underscores the importance of Pakistan balancing its foreign policy between long-standing regional loyalties and the pursuit of international partnerships, particularly given the volatile geopolitical environment.

### Relevant CSS Syllabus or Subject:

- International Relations (Pakistan-US Relations, Middle East Politics)
- Pakistan Affairs (Civil-Military Relations, Foreign Policy Challenges)
- Current Affairs (Iran-Israel Conflict, Global Diplomacy)
- Essay Writing (Civil-Military Influence, Global Power Shifts)

### Notes for Beginners:

This article talks about a meeting where Donald Trump invited Pakistan's military chief for lunch at the White House, without involving Pakistan's government leaders. They discussed big issues like preventing war with India, fighting terrorism, and doing business in rare earth materials. But the meeting also raised questions because it shows the US trusts Pakistan's army more than its government. They also talked about the war between Iran and Israel. Pakistan supports Iran against Israel's attacks, but it still wants to stay friendly with the US. The article warns that Pakistan should be careful because the US, especially under Trump, can suddenly change its mind anytime.

### Facts and Figures:

- The meeting took place at the White House between Trump and Field Marshal Asim Munir
- Trump credited Pakistan for preventing a major conflict with India
- Parliament of Pakistan passed a resolution against Israeli aggression on Iran
- Main topics included counterterrorism, rare earth trade, and cryptocurrency

To sum up, this article throws light on the tightrope Pakistan must walk between its regional commitments and global diplomacy. While closer ties with the US can open economic and security doors, the risks of being dragged into unpredictable foreign conflicts loom large. It is a call for policymakers to play their cards wisely, keeping national interests front and center without falling prey to shifting global power games.

### Difficult Words and Meanings:

- Unprecedented – never done before (Syn: unparalleled | Ant: common)
- Cordiality – warmth and friendliness (Syn: amiability | Ant: hostility)
- Transactional – based on mutual benefits (Syn: pragmatic | Ant: emotional)
- Avert – prevent from happening (Syn: avoid | Ant: cause)
- Bypass – avoid or go around (Syn: sidestep | Ant: engage)
- Conflagration – intense conflict or fire (Syn: turmoil | Ant: peace)
- Reckless – without thinking of consequences (Syn: careless | Ant: cautious)
- Leverage – strategic advantage (Syn: influence | Ant: disadvantage)
- Temptation – desire to do something risky (Syn: urge | Ant: aversion)
- Niceties – polite social behavior (Syn: courtesies | Ant: rudeness)

## PETTY BEHAVIOUR

### Summary:

India's stubborn pursuit to malign Pakistan at global platforms hit a wall yet again at the recent SCO Defence Ministers' Meeting in Qingdao. Despite repeated efforts to drag Pakistan's name into the Pahalgam incident without credible proof, the international community saw through the façade. India's attempt to include veiled accusations in the joint communiqué was shot down, resulting in no final statement being issued. This failure speaks volumes about India's petty diplomacy which has now become a hallmark of its foreign policy. Even during recent regional tensions like the Iran-Israel conflict, India distanced itself from collective condemnation, clearly choosing political one-upmanship over regional harmony. Its past actions, such as derailing the SAARC summit, further demonstrate a pattern of behaviour driven more by bitterness than by vision.

While New Delhi plays the blame game and raises dust for political optics, it's clear that such conduct is doing no one any favours. The editorial lays bare India's strategy of exploiting multilateral forums to isolate Pakistan, but this boomerangs, weakening regional trust and collective aspirations. Instead of burying the hatchet and sitting across the table to resolve differences, the Indian government continues to puff itself up with arrogance and belligerence. Regional integration and diplomatic maturity remain collateral damage in this tug-of-war. Until the

Modi-led establishment chooses dialogue over denial, the dream of South Asian unity will continue to be a castle in the air.

**Overview:**

This editorial addresses India's repeated and unconstructive efforts to diplomatically isolate Pakistan particularly highlighting its conduct during the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation's (SCO) Defence Ministers' Meeting. India's politicisation of multilateral forums is criticized, exposing its failure to gather global support for its claims against Pakistan. The article underscores the negative impact of such behaviour on regional cooperation and integration.

**NOTES:**

This editorial not only provides insight into Pakistan-India tensions but also demonstrates how multilateral platforms like the SCO and SAARC are affected by regional rivalries. Aspirants should focus on the diplomatic tools used by India, the reaction of global Powers and Pakistan's stance. Also pay attention to the broader implications for regional peace, bilateralism versus multilateralism and strategic alliances.

**Related CSS Subjects and Topics:**

- Pakistan Affairs: Regional politics, foreign policy dynamics, SAARC and SCO relevance
- International Relations: Diplomacy, multilateralism, regional conflicts
- Current Affairs: India-Pakistan relations, recent international summits and outcomes
- Political Science (optional): Role of diplomacy, political narratives in international relations

**Notes for Beginners:**

This article is about how India tried but failed to blame Pakistan for a terror incident at a global meeting. It shows how India tries to use international platforms to defame Pakistan, but other countries did not support this move. Pakistan stood its ground and stopped India's statements from being included in the official record. The article says such behaviour from India is childish and harmful to peace in South Asia.

**Facts and Figures:**

- SAARC last met in 2014; the 2016 summit was cancelled due to India's refusal to attend.
- SCO is a significant regional bloc aiming for cooperation among member states like China, Russia, Pakistan, and India.

To sum up, India's relentless bid to corner Pakistan at global stages reveals a pattern of diplomatic immaturity and misplaced priorities. Such petty moves not only undermine the spirit of regional forums but also show how bilateral conflicts can cast long shadows over multilateral ambitions. The road to regional peace demands open dialogue and mutual respect, not backdoor blame games.

**Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Moot – A formal meeting or assembly; debate (Syn: gathering, assembly | Ant: silence)
- Intransigence – Refusal to change views or agree (Syn: stubbornness | Ant: flexibility)
- Communiqué – An official announcement or statement (Syn: bulletin | Ant: silence)
- Vindictive – Having a strong desire for revenge (Syn: spiteful | Ant: forgiving)
- Bilateral – Involving two parties, especially countries (Syn: mutual | Ant: multilateral)

**LIVES IN LIMBO      AUTHOR - SHAHZAD SHARJEEL****Summary:**

This article strikes a deep chord, reminding us that success, often flaunted as an end goal, can quietly trap individuals and societies in a state of emotional and structural limbo. Through the lens of two viral incidents, a veteran actor dying in solitude and a TV guest degrading a journalist by likening him to a toilet cleaner. The article compels us

to reflect on societal hypocrisy. It lays bare how we've become quick to pass judgment while losing our grip on empathy. The writer pokes holes in our collective conscience, arguing that independence, mobility, and the nuclear family are natural offshoots of modern life and not signs of moral decay. The crux of the matter is not in whether someone lives alone or migrates abroad, but in how society fails to evolve systems to support the elderly and respect all forms of honest labor.

In its second arc, the article lays into how society dehumanizes professions like sanitation work while celebrating empty slogans of dignity. It calls out the glaring silence when it comes to honouring real service, like that rendered by figures such as Mother Teresa and Gandhi. Meanwhile, a dysfunctional state-market dynamic adds salt to the wound, with both refusing to shoulder responsibility for elder care and inclusive infrastructure. The piece hits the nail on the head: until we embrace every dignified trade and build systems that support our evolving societal needs, we will keep dancing around in circles—stuck in limbo, emotionally barren, and morally adrift.

**Overview:**

The article is a satirical and reflective take on societal contradictions surrounding success, independence, elder neglect and the dignity of labor. It explores how viral incidents reveal a society caught between traditional values and modern realities, struggling with judgment, empathy and structural gaps.

**NOTES:**

This PIECE of writing provides critical material for CSS aspirants to understand how sociology intersects with media ethics, shifting family structures and socio-economic transformation. It encourages nuanced opinion-building on state responsibility, social decay, labor dignity and moral judgement. In essay papers or current affairs, such arguments can lend weight to topics about cultural evolution, urbanization or social justice.

**Relevant CSS syllabus or subjects:**

- Sociology: Changing family systems, elderly neglect, dignity of labor
- Pakistan Affairs: Social transitions, lack of welfare structure
- Current Affairs: Media sensationalism, moral judgment in society
- Essay: Cultural evolution, urban alienation, state-market roles in welfare

**Notes for beginners:**

The article points out that living alone or having kids abroad is not shameful it's part of today's independent life. The real problem is not being alone, but having no support from society when you're old or sick. It also says we shouldn't insult people for doing honest jobs like cleaning toilets. Famous leaders like Gandhi and Mother Teresa did such work with pride. So we must build a system that helps the elderly and respects all kinds of work equally.

**Facts and figures:**

- No specific numbers provided, but references include social neglect, the failure of elder support systems, and economic transition.
- The concept of nuclear families and urban migration trends are supported by global demographic patterns, especially in developing countries.
- Examples of moral leadership include Mother Teresa and Gandhi's stance on labor dignity.

To wrap up, this article throws a splash of cold water on our selective morality. It nudges us to reevaluate what we value as a society—success, independence, and status—versus what truly builds a humane, supportive, and empathetic social fabric. It's a wake-up call for policymakers, individuals, and media to bridge the widening gap between modern life and moral responsibility.

# The International News –

## INVISIBLE WOMEN

### Summary:

The editorial throws a glaring spotlight on the grim reality of being a woman in Pakistan in 2025, as the country sinks to rock bottom in the Global Gender Gap Report, ranked 148 out of 148. While some may boast about rising female university enrolment and health survival rates, these achievements barely scratch the surface. The truth is far more bitter. Once a woman steps out of her educational institution, she's up against a rigged game—riddled with patriarchal landmines, a job market that slams doors in her face, and public spaces that aren't just unwelcoming but downright dangerous. Even within political corridors, where decisions about her fate are made, she finds herself grossly underrepresented and often silenced, harassed, or discredited. It's not just about climbing the ladder; the ladder itself is missing a few rungs.

What makes the situation even more disheartening is the state's deafening silence in the face of such oppression. The editorial rightly argues that empowerment isn't merely about access—it's about equity, security and respect. A degree without dignity, a job without safety, and a vote without a voice are hollow victories. When a woman's life is reduced to navigating minefields just to earn, speak or exist freely, the promise of progress becomes a cruel joke. Until policymakers treat women's rights not as fringe demands but as foundational principles, Pakistan will keep spiralling in global rankings and moral standing alike. This isn't just a report card failure, it's a national shame.

### Overview:

The editorial analyzes Pakistan's abysmal standing in global gender parity rankings, shedding light on the institutional and social barriers that continue to suppress women's progress. Despite pockets of educational success, the lack of economic inclusion, political representation, and public safety signals systemic failure, where symbolic progress often masks deeper issues of exclusion and vulnerability.

### NOTES:

This article touches on issues like gender inequality, women's rights, education, governance, social justice, and human development. The data from the Global Gender Gap Report can be quoted as evidence in gender studies, sociology, or essay questions. The critique of state apathy and the demand for structural reform provides analytical ground for opinion-based answers.

### Relevance to CSS syllabus or subjects:

- Gender Studies (Gender Inequality, Empowerment, Patriarchy)
- Pakistan Affairs (Social Development, Governance Issues)
- Sociology (Social Institutions, Gender Roles)
- Essay Writing (Women Empowerment, Human Rights)
- Governance and Public Policy (Policy Gaps, Representation)

### Notes for beginners:

The article focuses on how women in Pakistan, despite achieving academic success, struggle to find equal footing in workplaces, politics, and society at large. For example, while 52% of university students are female, only one out of 31 federal ministers is a woman, showing that education doesn't automatically translate into empowerment. Many women face harassment in public, workplace bias, and are expected to abide by restrictive family roles. The Global Gender Gap Report placed Pakistan at the bottom 148th out of 148 countries which indicates that women here suffer the most in terms of opportunities and safety compared to the rest of the world. The article also notes that gains made by women are often erased or belittled due to societal attitudes and lack of supportive policies.

### Facts and Figures:

- Pakistan ranked 148th out of 148 in the Global Gender Gap Report 2025
- Economic participation score: 34.7%
- Female university enrolment: 52%
- Only 1 woman in the 31-member federal cabinet
- Highest subindex: Health and survival at 95.9%, yet maternal health is still poor

To sum up, this editorial doesn't mince words, it draws a hard line under the state's failure to lift women up. It captures the pain of a society that prides itself on progress but stumbles when it comes to half its population. The message is loud and clear: real change won't come through token gestures. It must be stitched into the nation's policy, culture, and conscience. Until then Pakistan's daughters will keep walking a tightrope, balancing ambition with fear, and hope with heartbreak.

### Difficult Words and Meanings:

1. Parity – equality in status or amount (Syn: balance, equality | Ant: disparity)
2. Apathy – lack of interest or concern (Syn: indifference | Ant: concern)
3. Disgraceful – shameful or dishonorable (Syn: shameful | Ant: honorable)
4. Substantive – having a firm basis in reality (Syn: concrete, factual | Ant: superficial)
5. Hostile – unfriendly or antagonistic (Syn: aggressive | Ant: friendly)
6. Misogyny – dislike of or prejudice against women (Syn: sexism | Ant: egalitarianism)
7. Indictment – a statement showing strong disapproval (Syn: condemnation | Ant: praise)
8. Onslaught – a fierce or destructive attack (Syn: assault | Ant: retreat)
9. Guise – external form or appearance concealing the true nature (Syn: disguise | Ant: reality)
10. Symbolic – serving as a representation (Syn: representative | Ant: literal)

## BREWING CATASTROPHE

### Summary:

This editorial is a reflection of the Middle East teetering on the edge of a catastrophic war, ignited by Israel's reckless assault on Iran. What started as a sudden barrage from Tel Aviv has quickly snowballed into a fierce exchange, with Iran striking back hard, leaving Israeli cities battered. The situation has gone from bad to worse with the United States looming on the sidelines, ready to dive headfirst into the conflict at Israel's request. Trump's hardline stance of demanding Iran's unconditional surrender has poured fuel on the fire, pushing the region dangerously close to a full-blown war that could engulf not just the Middle East but send shockwaves across the global economy. The article doesn't mince words in pointing fingers, holding Israel responsible for derailing nuclear talks and dragging the world toward the brink.

The editorial also lashes out at the hypocrisy of Western powers, particularly the G7, for their blatant double standards, painting Iran as the villain while turning a blind eye to Israel's long history of occupation, aggression, and mass murder. It argues that unless Israel is restrained immediately, the world risks plunging into a disaster of unimaginable proportions. Iran may not match the US-Israel axis militarily, but it stands ready to fight tooth and nail if pushed into a corner. The piece calls for the global community to wake up, hold Tel Aviv accountable, and steer the situation away from the abyss before the war machine spirals out of control.

### Overview:

The article focuses on the rapidly escalating Israel-Iran conflict, sparked by Israel's aggression and fueled by US support. It highlights the dangers of a wider regional war, criticizes Western double standards, and urges the

international community to step in and prevent further escalation. The editorial argues that Israel's unchecked military behavior, backed by Western hypocrisy, has become the root cause of instability in the Middle East.

#### **NOTES:**

The article highlights the rapidly worsening conflict between Israel and Iran, triggered by Israel's unprovoked attack that escalated into a fierce exchange of strikes across hundreds of kilometers. Iran has retaliated with significant damage to Israeli Cities while both sides remain unwilling to de-escalate. The editorial underlines how the United States instead of acting as a mediator is pouring fuel on the fire by deploying military assets and threatening further attacks on Iran's nuclear sites. Trump's demand for Iran's unconditional surrender has further aggravated the crisis. The writer firmly blames Israel for derailing the US-Iran nuclear negotiations, accusing it of exploiting the situation to fulfill its long-held desire for war against Iran. The article also strongly criticizes the blatant double standards of the G7 and other Western powers, who label Iran as the source of instability while ignoring Israel's brutal occupation, state terrorism, and continued atrocities against Palestinians. The editorial warns that if Israel is not restrained immediately, the situation could spiral into a wider regional war, pushing the entire Middle East towards a disaster with devastating global repercussions. It stresses that Iran, though militarily weaker compared to the US-Israel alliance, will defend itself vigorously if pushed into an existential corner. The article ends with a loud call for the global community to hold Israel accountable and prevent this dangerous conflict from spiraling out of control.

#### **Relevant CSS syllabus topics:**

- International Relations (Middle East Conflict, Proxy Wars, US Foreign Policy, Global Diplomacy)
- Current Affairs (Geopolitical Conflicts, Israel-Iran Tensions, Role of Superpowers)
- Pakistan Affairs (Impact of Middle East Conflicts on Pakistan's Foreign Policy and Neutrality Challenges)
- Essay (Global Peace, Power Politics, Western Hypocrisy, War and Diplomacy)

#### **Notes for beginners:**

The article explains that the Middle East is facing a dangerous war because Israel attacked Iran without any real reason. Iran fought back, causing serious damage and now both sides are refusing to stop. The US is also getting ready to join the fight to help Israel. The writer blames Israel for starting this problem by ruining peace talks. It also says Western countries like the US and G7 unfairly blame Iran while ignoring Israel's crimes against Palestinians. The article warns that if this war continues, it could affect the whole world, including fuel prices, peace, and global security.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- Over 200 Israeli cities hit by Iran in retaliation
- US deployed additional military hardware to the Middle East
- Trump demanded Iran's unconditional surrender
- G7 declared Iran as the main source of instability
- Iran rejected both an imposed war and an imposed peace

In a nutshell, this editorial is a call for the world to stop turning a blind eye to Israel's reckless warmongering and the West's double standards. It captures the madness of a conflict driven by arrogance, hypocrisy and unchecked power. If the global community fails to pull the brakes now, this brewing catastrophe could spiral into a nightmare not just for the Middle East but for the entire world.

## TAXMAN'S POWERS OF ARREST - AUTHOR - KHURRAM HUSAIN

### Summary:

The article throws a harsh spotlight on Pakistan's 2025 budget, stirring widespread outrage over the government's decision to empower the Federal Board of Revenue with sweeping arrest powers. While the finance minister boasts about generating Rs600 billion in additional revenue, a staggering Rs400 billion is expected to come from enforcement, not from widening the tax net but squeezing those already compliant. This approach reeks of injustice, hitting law-abiding taxpayers while letting the real tax evaders slip through the cracks. The editorial digs deep into the legal complexities, recalling how the Lahore High Court had previously curtailed such arrest powers, demanding that tax fraud be proven and quantified before turning taxpayers into criminals. Yet, the new law seeks to bulldoze those safeguards, raising serious concerns about fundamental rights and fair trials.

Beyond the legal chaos, the editorial lambasts the regressive tax measures peppered throughout the budget. A glaring example is the proposed tax on solar panels, which will disproportionately punish those who turned to solar to escape unreliable electricity supply. Worse still, the government's move to withdraw tax rebates for teachers and professors is not just shortsighted but downright disgraceful, breaking prior commitments made to the National Assembly. The piece paints a picture of a tax regime that is less about economic reform and more about cornering the soft targets, while structural issues in tax collection remain untouched. In sum, it warns that unless lawmakers push back, these measures will not just burden citizens but also chip away at constitutional protections.

### Overview:

This article critically examines Pakistan's 2025 budget, focusing on the controversial powers granted to tax authorities, particularly the authority to arrest without following due assessment procedures. It highlights the judiciary's earlier stance restricting such powers and raises alarms about how the new finance bill undermines those legal protections. Furthermore the article critiques the regressive tax measures such as taxing solar panels and withdrawing rebates for educators, showcasing the government's failure to implement fair and sustainable tax reforms.

### NOTES:

This article is an excellent resource to understand the complexities of Pakistan's taxation system, legal challenges surrounding tax enforcement and the broader implications of regressive tax policies. It highlights how tax policy intersects with governance, and economic justice. The debate over arrest powers links directly to constitutional rights, due process, and judicial oversight. Moreover the example of taxing solar panels ties directly to energy policies and sustainable development discussions. The withdrawal of tax rebates from teachers and professors opens a window into the state's misplaced priorities in education policy.

### Relevant CSS Syllabus or Subject:

- Governance and Public Policy (Policy-making, Taxation Reforms)
- Pakistan Affairs (Economic Issues, Governance Challenges)
- Current Affairs (Budget Analysis, Economic Governance)
- Law and Constitution (Legal Framework, Fundamental Rights)
- Essay Writing (Economic Reforms, Governance Failures)

### Notes for Beginners:

This article explains how the government of Pakistan instead of going after those who don't pay taxes at all has come up with a plan to collect money from people who are already paying. It wants to give tax officers the power to arrest taxpayers even before proving how much tax they owe, which raises big questions about fairness and the legal system. For example if someone is wrongly accused, they could be jailed before it's even proven that they owe taxes. On top of that the government is planning to tax solar panels which will hurt poor households who

depend on them due to unreliable electricity. Another bad move is taking away tax benefits from teachers and professors, breaking earlier promises. This shows the government is targeting easy groups instead of fixing the bigger problem of tax evasion.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- Rs600 billion is targeted to be raised through new tax measures
- Rs400 billion of that will come from enforcement actions
- A Lahore High Court judgment in 2013 limited tax authorities' arrest powers
- 134 individuals were once arrested for tax invoice fraud causing Rs7.5 billion loss

To wrap up, this article strikes at the heart of a broken tax system that punishes the rule-followers while letting the real evaders off the hook. It exposes how poorly thought-out policies can wreck public trust, undermine justice and burden ordinary citizens instead of fixing the actual cracks in the tax machinery. Unless lawmakers stand their ground, this budget could set a dangerous precedent where taxation becomes not just a civic duty but a legal minefield.

## **PAKISTAN'S FATF STORY**

**AUTHOR - MUHAMMAD AMIR RANA**

#### **Summary**

The article throws light on Pakistan's long, uphill battle with the FATF where diplomacy, resilience and smart maneuvering finally paid off. Despite India's aggressive push to corner Pakistan following the recent stand-off, Islamabad managed to stave off the threat of landing back on the grey list. Thanks to a favourable shift in Pakistan-US ties, with Trump's public endorsement of Pakistan's anti-terror efforts, and backed by strong allies like China, Turkiye, Saudi Arabia and the GCC, Pakistan managed to hold its ground. The writer uncovers how FATF, like other global financial and diplomatic bodies, isn't immune to the pressure of global power politics. Pakistan's success wasn't handed on a silver platter but earned through backbreaking reforms, introducing new laws, freezing illicit assets and setting up powerful institutions like the AML/CTF Authority, which played a pivotal role in compliance.

Zooming out, this article is a wake-up call about the ever-evolving challenges tied to global financial scrutiny, counter-terrorism and money laundering. FATF's role is no longer purely technical but deeply entrenched in geopolitical tussles. The writer warns that Pakistan cannot afford to rest on its laurels because staying FATF-compliant is not a one-time achievement but an ongoing battle. The transformation of the FATF Secretariat into a full-fledged authority shows the seriousness of the matter. The article also raises an eyebrow over how FATF rules, though meant for transparency, often end up being misused by states to muzzle NGOs and civil society under the garb of financial security. If Pakistan slips into operational mismanagement within its institutions, the fate could mirror that of NACTA, which lost its autonomy over time. The bottom line is crystal clear: in a world where financial oversight is a tool of diplomacy, Pakistan must stay one step ahead.

#### **Overview:**

This article provides an in-depth analysis of Pakistan's journey with FATF. It highlights how Pakistan countered diplomatic pressure especially from India and navigated through complex financial and geopolitical challenges. It shows how global forums are often influenced by the power dynamics of world politics rather than purely technical standards. It further stresses the importance of sustaining compliance through strong oversight mechanisms, institutional resilience and continuous adaptation to evolving global norms.

#### **NOTES:**

This article shows how financial diplomacy works hand in hand with geopolitics. It underscores how Pakistan's foreign policy, internal legislation and economic security are all deeply intertwined with international watchdogs

like FATF. The article highlights the importance of institutional development, legislative reforms and strategic alliances in shielding national interests. It also teaches that global financial regulations are often used as political tools to pressure nations which makes it important for future policymakers to master the art of diplomatic negotiation backed by solid technical compliance. The article walks aspirants through how Pakistan has successfully tackled such global pressures in the past and why constant vigilance is the only way forward.

#### **Relevant CSS Subjects or Topics:**

- International Relations – Global financial diplomacy, strategic alliances, FATF influence in global politics
- Pakistan Affairs – Pakistan’s internal security, counterterrorism policies, financial governance
- Current Affairs – India-Pakistan diplomatic tensions, FATF proceedings, global financial watchdogs
- Governance and Public Policies – Institutional reforms, anti-money laundering frameworks, policy implementation
- International Law – FATF’s legal frameworks and their impact on national sovereignty

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article explains how FATF is an international body that monitors countries to prevent money laundering and terrorism financing. Pakistan was placed on FATF’s grey list in 2018 due to deficiencies in laws and monitoring financial transactions linked to terror financing. To come off the grey list Pakistan introduced over a dozen new laws such as the Anti-Terrorism (Amendment) Act and the UNSC (Amendment) Act, which made it mandatory to freeze the assets of banned groups. Institutions like the Financial Monitoring Unit and the Anti-Money Laundering Authority were established to ensure compliance. Despite political pressure especially from India Pakistan succeeded in exiting the grey list in 2022 by meeting all action plan points. However, the article warns that the rules of FATF are constantly evolving and staying compliant is an ongoing responsibility requiring strong institutional vigilance.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- Pakistan was placed on the FATF grey list in 2018 and successfully exited in 2022.
- Pakistan passed more than a dozen laws to meet FATF requirements.
- Key stakeholders involved include the State Bank, FIA, FBR, SECP, Nacta and the newly formed AML/CFT Authority.
- Mutual evaluation cycles happen every four years under FATF.
- India attempted to use the post-May 9 standoff to diplomatically pressure Pakistan at the FATF plenary but failed.

To wrap up, this article is an eye-opener for how financial scrutiny is more than just about numbers. It is a chessboard where diplomacy, geopolitics and national resilience are tested side by side. Pakistan’s story with FATF is a lesson in how nations must blend legal reforms, diplomatic maneuvering and institutional strength to protect their sovereignty and economic stability in a world where rules are often bent to favor the powerful.

#### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Plenary – A complete meeting attended by all members (Synonym: Full session, Antonym: Partial meeting)
- Vigilance – Careful attention to avoid danger (Synonym: Alertness, Antonym: Negligence)
- Proclaimed offender – Someone officially declared as wanted for a crime (Synonym: Wanted criminal)
- Oversight – Supervisory control (Synonym: Supervision, Antonym: Carelessness)
- Proliferation – Rapid increase, especially in harmful things (Synonym: Expansion, Antonym: Reduction)
- Diplomatic offensive – Strategic efforts to influence others (Synonym: Diplomatic campaign)
- Maneuvering – Skilled planning to achieve something (Synonym: Strategizing, Antonym: Blundering)

- Compliance – The act of obeying rules (Synonym: Adherence, Antonym: Violation)
- Conducive – Providing the right conditions (Synonym: Favorable, Antonym: Unfavorable)
- Tussle – A vigorous struggle (Synonym: Scuffle, Antonym: Agreement)

## LIES, DECEPTION AND ESCALATION

**AUTHOR - MALEEHA LODHI**

### Summary:

This article unravels the murky web of deception, broken promises and dangerous brinkmanship that led to the US joining hands with Israel to strike Iran's nuclear facilities. Despite Trump's hollow vows of avoiding new wars, he went full throttle into military aggression, tossing aside international law and leaving diplomacy in tatters. What was paraded as a possible diplomatic solution turned out to be nothing but smoke and mirrors. With US warplanes pounding Iranian sites at Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan, Trump declared a so-called spectacular victory threatened Tehran with even graver consequences if it dared retaliate. Meanwhile, though outraged Iran seems to be weighing its options carefully, knowing full well that escalating into a full-blown war might be a costly gamble. Still it has not shied away from hitting back at Israel with intensified missile strikes, while warning the US through diplomatic channels.

At the heart of this dangerous game lies a tragic collapse of faith in diplomacy. The US, under the guise of peace talks, was already complicit in Israel's aggression. Trump's brazen admission of working hand-in-glove with Netanyahu shattered any illusions about Washington's intentions. This betrayal has left Iran contemplating whether the only way to protect its sovereignty is to walk down the nuclear path itself. The piece echoes a grim warning: this reckless escalation could spiral into a catastrophic quagmire, dragging not just the Middle East but global powers into an abyss of instability. As things stand, Iran's restrained military response, coupled with economic and diplomatic maneuvers like threatening to choke off the Strait of Hormuz, seems to be its calculated strategy to avoid feeding Trump's war machine while signaling that it won't back down.

### Overview:

This article provides an analysis of the rising tensions between the US, Israel and Iran. It exposes how the facade of diplomacy was merely a cover for military aggression and how global powers are weaponizing diplomacy to serve their strategic interests. This piece of writing looks into how the latest US-Israeli strikes have pushed Iran to reconsider its nuclear stance, potentially triggering a dangerous arms race in the Middle East while unraveling the credibility of international law and the UN.

### NOTES:

This article provides analysis into how modern geopolitics often operates behind the smokescreen of diplomacy. It highlights the collapse of trust in international conflict resolution mechanisms when global powers flout the UN Charter for their strategic gains. This article also underlines the interconnectedness of international relations, global security, international law and diplomatic negotiation. Aspirants can focus on how military interventions often stem from broader geopolitical calculations rather than just security concerns. Moreover, the article highlights how diplomacy can be weaponized and how weak adherence to international law can create a domino effect, threatening global stability.

### Relevant CSS Subjects or Topics:

- International Relations – Middle East conflicts, diplomacy versus military action, global power rivalry
- Pakistan Affairs – Regional security dynamics, impact on Pakistan's foreign policy
- Current Affairs – US-Iran-Israel conflict, global escalation risks
- International Law – Violations of UN Charter, legality of military strikes without UNSC approval
- Global Issues – Nuclear proliferation, regional security threats, energy security via Strait of Hormuz

### **Notes for beginners:**

This article revolves around the recent military strikes by the US and Israel on Iran's nuclear facilities, which were justified under the false pretense of diplomacy. While the US claimed it wanted peace but it secretly coordinated with Israel for the attack. Iran reacted by launching missile strikes against Israel but avoided directly targeting the US to prevent the conflict from spiraling out of control. The article explains that Iran may consider closing the Strait of Hormuz, a key passage for global oil, which would cause an energy crisis worldwide. This situation highlights how world powers sometimes manipulate international law for their own benefit. The writer explains that broken diplomatic promises and military aggression can lead countries like Iran to seriously consider developing nuclear weapons for self-defense.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- US bombed Iranian nuclear facilities at Fordow, Natanz and Isfahan.
- Trump called the strikes a “spectacular success” while threatening further attacks.
- Iran's parliament recommended closing the Strait of Hormuz, which could disrupt 20% of global oil supply.
- Israel launched fresh missile assaults immediately after the US strikes.
- UN Secretary-General condemned the strikes as a serious threat to global peace and security.

To wrap up, this article is a reminder of how fragile global peace can be when diplomacy is reduced to mere window dressing for military aggression. It underlines how global powers play dangerous games at the expense of regional stability and international law. The situation also offers a sobering lesson for nations like Pakistan, emphasizing the importance of a strong foreign policy, diplomatic foresight and the ability to navigate the treacherous waters of global power politics without compromising sovereignty or security.

## **UNEASY CALM**

### **Summary:**

The article highlights ceasefire between the US, Israel and Iran which seems more like walking on eggshells than a genuine step toward peace. After Iran struck a major US airbase in Qatar in retaliation for America's bombing of its nuclear sites, tensions seemed poised to spiral out of control. However, in an unexpected twist, Trump hurriedly declared a ceasefire, echoed reluctantly by both Iran and Israel. Yet the ink wasn't even dry on the truce before Israel cried foul, accusing Iran of violating it, while Iran insisted its attacks happened before the ceasefire kicked in. Despite Trump's fiery social media plea telling Israel to hold its fire, Tel Aviv went ahead with another round of strikes, proving yet again that its thirst for escalation knows no bounds.

This uneasy calm reeks of temporary Relief with everyone holding their breath over how long it will last. The article spares no punches in calling out Israel's belligerence and America's double standards, pointing out that mere tweets won't stop Tel Aviv's war machine. Adding salt to the wound, Israel's relentless butchery in Gaza continues unabated, leaving over 56,000 Palestinians dead since 2023 alongside 600 Iranian lives lost in the latest aggression. The writer drives home the message that unless the US pulls the plug on funding and arming Israel, any dream of lasting peace in the Middle East is nothing but a mirage. This situation demands more than symbolic gestures; it calls for real action and accountability.

### **Overview:**

The article throws light on the deceptive nature of the Middle East ceasefire. It reveals how fragile and superficial it is. It highlights the pattern of Israel's aggressive violations and America's inconsistent stance, wrapped in diplomacy but fueled by strategic interests. The editorial underscores that without meaningful intervention particularly by the US, this region will remain stuck in an endless loop of violence, broken truces and human suffering.

**NOTES:**

This article explores topics like international diplomacy, conflict resolution and Middle Eastern geopolitics. It underlines the failure of ceasefires when enforcement mechanisms are weak and when global powers pursue vested interests over global peace. The article's analysis equips aspirants with a deeper understanding of how international conflicts are manipulated through narratives of diplomacy while hiding military ambitions.

**Relevant CSS Subjects or Topics:**

- International Relations – Middle East conflicts, ceasefire diplomacy, power politics
- Current Affairs – US-Iran-Israel conflict, Gaza humanitarian crisis
- Pakistan Affairs – Regional security implications for Pakistan and the Muslim world
- International Law – Violation of ceasefires, breach of international humanitarian laws
- Global Issues – War crimes, human rights violations, arms trade and foreign policy dilemmas

**Notes for Beginners:**

This article talks about a ceasefire between the US, Israel and Iran after a series of military attacks. Iran had hit a US airbase in Qatar in response to America bombing its nuclear facilities. Although a ceasefire was announced, Israel quickly broke it by attacking Iran again, accusing Tehran of violating the truce. Iran denied this claim and said its attack came before the ceasefire started. The article also highlights how Israel continues its brutal attacks on Gaza, killing over 56,000 people since 2023. This situation shows how ceasefires can be very weak if the countries involved do not genuinely want peace and continue to act in their own interests. It teaches that powerful nations often control whether peace holds or not.

**Facts and Figures**

- Over 600 Iranians killed in the recent Israeli attacks.
- More than 56,000 Palestinians killed in Gaza since October 7, 2023.
- Iran's missile attack targeted a major US airbase in Qatar.
- The ceasefire was declared shortly after Iran's retaliatory strike.
- Despite the ceasefire, Israel carried out further attacks on Iran.

To sum up, this article brutally exposes the hollow nature of ceasefires in conflict zones when power politics takes the front seat over humanitarian concerns. It clearly signals that without firm and meaningful action particularly from the US to curb Israel's aggression, peace will remain a distant dream. The editorial not only mirrors the ongoing tragedy in Gaza and Iran but also works as a grim reminder of how fragile global peace truly is when driven by hypocrisy, selective justice and unchecked militarism.

**Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Escalation – Rise or intensification of conflict (Synonym: Intensification, Antonym: Reduction)
- Ceasefire – Temporary suspension of fighting (Synonym: Truce, Antonym: Hostility)
- Belligerent – Aggressive or warlike (Synonym: Hostile, Antonym: Peaceful)
- Salvo – Sudden burst of gunfire or missiles (Synonym: Barrage, Antonym: Silence)
- Substantive – Meaningful and significant (Synonym: Important, Antonym: Insignificant)
- Truce – Agreement to stop fighting (Synonym: Ceasefire, Antonym: War)
- Pretext – A false reason to justify an action (Synonym: Excuse, Antonym: Reality)
- Genocidal – Involving mass killing of a particular group (Synonym: Exterminatory, Antonym: Protective)
- Flare-up – Sudden burst of violence (Synonym: Outburst, Antonym: Calm)
- Scuttles – Deliberately ruin or destroy (Synonym: Undermines, Antonym: Supports)

## BRINKMANSHIP IN ME

## AUTHOR - ZAHID HUSSAIN

### Summary:

The article masterfully unwraps the chaotic drama unfolding in the Middle East where Trump's wild swing from war cries to peacemaker chants leaves the world utterly baffled. After pounding Iran's nuclear sites with bunker-busting bombs, Trump wasted no time boasting about a so-called "complete and total ceasefire" between Israel and Iran, even thanking Tehran for giving a heads-up before launching a symbolic missile strike on a US airbase in Qatar. But beneath this shaky truce lies a bigger game of brinkmanship where neither side truly backs down. While Israel flexed its military might with US support, Iran's missiles punched holes in Israel's air defense narrative, proving the Zionist state's supposed invincibility is nothing but smoke and mirrors. Despite America's direct involvement, Iran stood its ground and refused to kneel to Trump's demands for surrender, exposing the hollowness of Washington's claims about obliterating Iran's nuclear capabilities.

Digging deeper, the article lays bare how this whole ceasefire circus is less about peace and more about face-saving theatrics. Israel's thirst for regime change in Iran still simmers under the surface, now emboldened by Trump's reckless tweets hinting at overthrowing Tehran's leadership. History acts as a reminder that America's regime change adventures from Iraq to Libya have left behind nothing but rubble and chaos. The current ceasefire brokered with Qatar's help, looks more like a band-aid on a bullet wound as long as Israel's hawkish ambitions remain unchecked. While talks are expected to resume, the writer warns that unless Washington reins in Tel Aviv's belligerence, the region is merely one misstep away from plunging headfirst into another catastrophe.

### Overview:

This article pulls the curtain on the dangerous gamble of power politics playing out between the US, Israel and Iran. It highlights how superficial ceasefires and photo-op diplomacy do little to fix deeply rooted conflicts when one side remains obsessed with military domination and the other refuses to bow to unjust demands. The article underscores the fragility of Middle East peace, which hangs by a thread stitched together by deception, coercion and opportunism.

### NOTES:

This article is very important for CSS aspirants when it comes to understanding international relations, particularly conflict resolution, power politics and Middle Eastern geopolitics. It shows how superpowers exploit diplomatic talks as a smokescreen while advancing military agendas. The article helps candidates build strong arguments for essays and papers on international conflicts, foreign policy failures, regime change strategies and their global consequences. It also provides a clear picture of how international law gets trampled when might overtakes right.

### Relevant CSS Subjects or Topics:

- International Relations – Conflict diplomacy, power politics, Middle East crises
- Current Affairs – US-Iran-Israel tensions, Gulf security, global peace threats
- International Law – Violation of sovereignty, regime change doctrines, war ethics
- Pakistan Affairs – Regional stability impacts, Muslim world diplomacy
- Global Issues – Arms race, international security, humanitarian disasters

### Notes for Beginners:

The article explains how after attacking Iran's nuclear sites, the US declared a sudden ceasefire between Iran and Israel. Iran had fired missiles at a US base in Qatar but had informed the US in advance which makes it more symbolic than harmful. This shows that both sides were looking for a way to save face rather than continue the fight. However, the real danger is not over because Israel still wants to remove Iran's government and history shows that such attempts often lead to chaos like in Iraq and Libya. This teaches us how international conflicts are not just about fighting but also about political games, hidden motives and power struggles.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- Iran fired missiles at a US airbase in Qatar after US bombed its nuclear facilities.
- Hundreds were killed in the 12-day war between Israel and Iran.
- Over 56,000 people have been killed in Gaza since 2023.
- Iran's missiles penetrated Israel's advanced air defense systems.
- UN nuclear experts could not confirm the destruction of Iran's nuclear sites despite US claims.

To sum up, this article throws a spotlight on the fragile fabric of Middle East peace, stitched together with threads of hypocrisy, deception and brute force. It warns that unless the US curbs Israel's aggressive ambitions and steps away from regime change fantasies, the region will stay trapped in a vicious cycle of war and instability. The article stands as a powerful reminder that real diplomacy requires more than tweets and military bravado; it demands sincerity, restraint and respect for international law.

## **TREATY OF TENSIONS: THE NPT'S ROLE IN A DIVIDED NUCLEAR WORLD**

### **AUTHOR - MAJID NABI BURFAT**

#### **Summary:**

This article throws a harsh spotlight on the glaring cracks within the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty, a pact once celebrated as a bulwark against nuclear catastrophe but now hanging by a thread. What was meant to be a fair deal between nuclear and non-nuclear states has morphed into a lopsided arrangement where the powerful hold all the cards while the rest are shackled by restrictions. The NPT legitimizes the arsenals of five nuclear-armed nations yet clamps down on others, fueling resentment, mistrust, and geopolitical friction. Nowhere is this double standard more visible than in the Middle East, where Israel armed to the teeth yet outside the NPT is protected by the West, while Iran despite being a signatory is boxed in by sanctions, sabotage and diplomatic isolation. The treaty's disarmament promise rings hollow, as the nuclear giants mainly the US and Russia continue upgrading their arsenals, proving that the so-called commitment to a nuclear-free world is more lip service than a real goal.

As tensions spiral between Israel and Iran, the treaty's flaws stand fully exposed, serving as a grim reminder that selective justice in global security is a ticking time bomb. The ease with which North Korea walked out of the NPT and openly built nuclear weapons showcases just how toothless this agreement has become. With great powers hijacking the treaty to suit their strategic whims, the world teeters on the edge of a renewed arms race. The author argues that unless the global community overhauls the NPT—making disarmament legally binding, enforcing nuclear transparency even on non-signatories like Israel and India, and introducing independent monitoring mechanisms—the dream of nuclear restraint will stay a pipe dream. The clock is ticking, and without urgent reforms, humanity might soon wake up to a world where nuclear deterrence collapses into nuclear disaster.

#### **Overview:**

This article is an attentive call about the crumbling global nuclear order. It highlights how power politics, hypocrisy and selective enforcement have turned the NPT from a symbol of peace into a badge of discrimination. It demands that the world rethink how nuclear governance works before the fragile status quo explodes into an uncontrollable crisis.

#### **NOTES:**

The article shows the reality of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). It highlights how it has devolved into a tool of power politics rather than a shield against nuclear catastrophe. It was originally designed to prevent the spread of nuclear weapons while promoting peaceful use of nuclear energy, but over time it has institutionalized a global double standard. The treaty allows five nuclear-armed states to maintain and even modernize their arsenals while imposing strict restrictions on others, particularly non-Western nations. This imbalance is glaringly visible in

the Middle East, where Israel despite being a non-signatory maintains a clandestine nuclear arsenal without facing international repercussions, whereas Iran, a signatory is subjected to relentless sanctions, inspections and diplomatic isolation. The disarmament clause under Article VI remains toothless as major powers like the US and Russia not only avoid disarmament but actively invest in upgrading their nuclear capabilities, with the US alone committing over \$1.5 trillion for modernization. The article also points out how North Korea's withdrawal from the NPT in 2003 followed by its successful development of nuclear weapons, exposed the treaty's glaring enforcement flaws. Legal loopholes, vague commitments, and the reliance on the UN Security Council which itself is dominated by nuclear-armed members have further paralyzed the treaty's ability to ensure fairness and security. The ongoing hostilities between Israel and Iran act as a sharp reminder of how these systemic failures amplify regional tensions and global risks. The author stresses that unless the NPT is reformed with concrete enforcement mechanisms, transparent accountability, and binding disarmament schedules, the world could soon spiral into a dangerous new nuclear arms race, far more chaotic and fragmented than before.

#### **Relevant CSS Subjects or Topics:**

- International Relations – Arms control, nuclear diplomacy, global governance
- Current Affairs – Israel-Iran conflict, global security threats
- International Law – Treaty obligations, disarmament laws, legal loopholes
- Pakistan Affairs – Nuclear policy, global non-proliferation impacts on Pakistan
- Global Issues – Arms race, regional conflicts, proliferation risks

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article explains that the NPT was meant to stop countries from building nuclear weapons and promote peaceful uses of nuclear energy. But in reality it only favors a few powerful nations like the US, Russia and their allies, letting them keep huge nuclear arsenals while restricting others like Iran and Pakistan. For example Israel never signed the NPT but secretly holds hundreds of nuclear bombs, yet faces no punishment. Meanwhile, Iran which signed the treaty and allows inspections faces constant sanctions. Another example is North Korea which left the treaty in 2003 and built nuclear weapons without any serious consequences. This imbalance shows that the NPT is failing to create fairness and security in the world.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- The USA and Russia hold over 90 percent of the world's nuclear warheads.
- The USA has pledged over \$1.5 trillion for nuclear arsenal upgrades.
- Israel is estimated to possess 80 to 400 nuclear warheads despite not being an NPT member.
- North Korea left the NPT in 2003 and successfully developed nuclear weapons.
- The Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons (TPNW) was signed by over 90 countries in 2017 as an alternative to the NPT.

To sum up, This article shows the reality on how the NPT once a symbol of global unity against nuclear war, now stands battered by double standards, loopholes and political manipulation. Without urgent reforms to enforce fairness, transparency and real disarmament, the world risks sleepwalking into a new and far deadlier nuclear age. It's high time the global community ditches hollow promises and starts walking the talk before the cracks in this fragile system lead to irreversible disaster.

#### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Brinkmanship – Risky tactics pushing situations to the verge of disaster (Synonym: Provocation, Antonym: Caution)
- Annihilation – Complete destruction (Synonym: Obliteration, Antonym: Preservation)
- Ambiguity – Uncertainty or vagueness (Synonym: Obscurity, Antonym: Clarity)

# The Express Tribune –

## ISLAMIC STATE AND THE MUSLIM WORLD JAVED BURKI

**AUTHOR - SHAHID**

### Summary:

In this reflective piece of work, I look into the age-old and often-contested question: what constitutes an Islamic state? Drawing from historical accounts and political realities, I retrace Muhammad Ali Jinnah's vision for Pakistan. Jinnah was crystal clear in distinguishing between a theocratic Islamic state and a Muslim-majority state founded to safeguard the cultural and religious rights of Muslims within the subcontinent. He stood his ground during talks with British authorities, arguing for separate nationhood to resolve the deep-seated cultural and religious fissures between Hindus and Muslims. His remark on the cow—worshipped by Hindus and consumed by Muslims—illustrates the wide chasm in lifestyle and belief systems. For Jinnah, Pakistan was never meant to be a theocratic entity but rather a homeland where Muslims could breathe freely without fearing cultural dilution or political subjugation.

As history unfolded, the post-independence landscape revealed the layers of Jinnah's foresight. The disjointed geography of East and West Pakistan, separated by a thousand miles of Indian land, proved untenable, culminating in the birth of Bangladesh in 1971. Fast-forward to modern-day India, where Narendra Modi's rise and the BJP's agenda to transform India into a Hindu state have cast a long shadow over its secular façade. Modi's drive to rename India as Bharat signifies not just a political shift but a cultural reimagination of the Indian identity, one that excludes its sizable Muslim minority. Ironically, the Indus River—after which India was named—flows entirely through Pakistan, further unmasking the symbolic disconnect. All said and done, Jinnah's warning about the irreconcilable cultural divide now rings louder than ever.

### Overview:

This article explores the concept of an Islamic state through the lens of Jinnah's vision for Pakistan and contrasts it with the trajectory India has taken under Hindu nationalist leadership. It highlights how the idea of statehood was historically shaped not by religious dogma but by the need to preserve cultural identity and ensure communal safety. It also reflects on the geopolitical ramifications and how the religious fault lines continue to widen.

### NOTES:

This article shares vision into Jinnah's political philosophy, partition politics, communal tensions, and modern India's shift toward Hindu nationalism. Quotes from Jinnah can be directly cited in essays and questions on the ideological foundations of Pakistan. The reference to the Indus River and India's naming gives a symbolic angle useful for argumentation.

### Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics:

- Pakistan Affairs (Paper-II)
  - Ideology of Pakistan: The article directly addresses Jinnah's vision and the ideological basis for the creation of Pakistan.
  - Historical Developments (1947–1971): It discusses partition, cultural divides, and the creation of Bangladesh.
  - Contemporary Issues in Pakistan: The article links historical perspectives to present-day identity challenges in Pakistan and the Muslim world.

- Current Affairs
  - India-Pakistan Relations: The article refers to Modi's Hindu nationalist agenda and its impact on Muslims in India.
  - Religious Extremism and Identity Politics: It touches upon religious nationalism in India and the debate over Islamic states in the Muslim world.
- International Relations
  - Muslim World Politics: The article references Syria's state-building efforts and connects them to broader Islamic political thought.
  - Cultural and Religious Diplomacy: It shows how religious identities influence domestic and foreign policies in South Asia.
- History of Indo-Pak Subcontinent
  - Partition and its Aftermath: The discussion of communal differences, partition logic, and the consequences of British withdrawal falls under this domain.
  - Role of Muhammad Ali Jinnah: A central focus of the article, this ties directly into key topics from the history syllabus.
- Political Science (Optional)
  - Theories of State and Nation: The distinction between a theocratic Islamic state and a culturally Islamic state connects with theoretical perspectives on nationhood.
  - Secularism vs Theocracy: The article offers a real-world case study on the tension between secular governance and religious identity.

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

Jinnah did not want Pakistan to become a religious theocracy but a safe space for Muslims to live freely. For example, he said Muslims eat cows, but Hindus worship them—showing the vast difference in lifestyle. The partition created two separate nations, but the geographical gap between East and West Pakistan led to Bangladesh's creation in 1971. Today, India's Hindu-led government aims to rename the country to Bharat and prioritize Hindu culture, sidelining the 200 million Muslims living there. The Indus River, which gave India its name, doesn't even flow through India now, showing a mismatch between name and geography.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- At partition in 1947, British India had 400 million people; 100 million were Muslims
- 75 million Muslims became Pakistanis; 25 million stayed in India
- In 2025, India's Muslim population is estimated at 200 million
- East and West Pakistan were separated by 1,000 miles of Indian territory
- Bangladesh emerged as an independent country in 1971

To sum up, This article sheds light on the ideological roots of Pakistan and questions the evolving identity politics of South Asia. It draws compelling parallels between Jinnah's warnings and today's realities, using both historical detail and current political developments. It urges readers to reflect on what kind of state best preserves the rights of its people—not just in form, but in spirit.

## **SLUGFEST IN THE MIDDLE EAST -AUTHOR - SHAHZAD CHAUDHRY**

### **Summary:**

This article shows the escalating conflict between Israel and Iran, a slugfest with no ordinary consequences. It takes the reader behind the scenes of how the US, particularly under Trump's administration, played both ends against the middle. Trump initially sought a deal with Iran to rein in its nuclear ambitions, largely to secure his legacy as a dealmaker, but Israel was never on board with negotiations. As Iran dragged its feet, Trump imposed a sixty-day ultimatum, but before it could bear fruit, Israel struck Iran's nuclear facilities, igniting a firestorm. What followed was an all-out missile exchange threatening to spiral out of control, pushing the entire Middle East to the brink. The writer draws a compelling analogy to Muhammad Ali's rope-a-dope strategy, highlighting how resilience and the ability to absorb pain might decide the victor, not brute force.

At the heart of this geopolitical boxing match lies a clash of national psyche and civilisational endurance. Iran, with its long-standing history and larger population, appears more resilient than Israel's relatively younger national identity. The article warns that should the US throw its hat into the ring by attacking Iran directly, the repercussions would be catastrophic. The Middle East would be plunged into chaos far worse than the aftermath of Iraq, Libya or Syria. The writer argues that while Israel's military might is formidable, it falls short of dismantling Iran's nuclear capabilities alone, leading Tel Aviv to scream for US intervention. Yet, Iran's fiery response has exposed Israel's vulnerabilities, turning the tables in a way no one saw coming. The piece closes with the hope that sanity will prevail before the entire region is engulfed in fire.

### **Overview:**

This article dissects the roots and dangerous escalation of the Israel-Iran conflict. It explores how US foreign policy, Israeli ambitions, and Iran's nuclear aspirations collided. It sheds light on Trump's failed diplomacy, Israel's unilateral military moves, and the broader consequences for regional stability. The article also examines the psychological, historical, and political dimensions shaping the resilience of both nations.

### **NOTES:**

This article is a vital read for understanding Middle Eastern geopolitics, nuclear diplomacy and the interplay of global powers in regional conflicts. It provides deep insights into how proxy wars, direct military interventions, and strategic diplomacy shape modern international relations. It also gives a deep perspective on how civilisational identity and national psyche influence military strategy and diplomatic negotiations.

### **Relevant CSS Syllabus or Subject:**

- International Relations (Middle East Politics, US Foreign Policy, Nuclear Diplomacy)
- Pakistan Affairs (Geopolitical Challenges, Regional Stability)
- Current Affairs (Israel-Iran Conflict, Global Diplomacy)
- Essay Writing (Middle East Crises, Global Power Politics)

### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article discusses how the fight between Israel and Iran is not just about missiles but also about political power, national pride and survival. The US initially wanted Iran to agree to stop enriching uranium, but instead of negotiating, Israel launched attacks on Iran's nuclear sites, starting a dangerous war. Iran hit back hard, showing that it won't bow down easily. The article explains how Iran's ancient history gives its people the strength to endure hardship, while Israel being a younger country relies more on gaining global sympathy. If the US directly joins the fight, the entire Middle East could become as chaotic as Iraq or Syria after wars there. The writer warns that such decisions can lead to years of destruction.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- Trump withdrew from the JCPOA nuclear deal in 2018

- Iran reportedly enriched uranium up to 83 percent by 2023
- Israel attacked Iran's Natanz facility and targeted Fordow near Qom
- Trump imposed a 60-day negotiation window before Israel attacked on day 61
- Five rounds of negotiations had taken place before the attack

To sum up, this article is a reminder that wars are not just fought with bombs but also with strategies, mind games and sheer willpower. It exposes how reckless decisions and failed diplomacy can drag entire regions into chaos. The article calls for wisdom over warfare, urging global players to pull back before the Middle East becomes another graveyard of failed interventions and broken nations.

#### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Slugfest – a fierce, prolonged fight (Syn: brawl, scuffle | Ant: truce)
- Conflagration – a large destructive fire or conflict (Syn: blaze, turmoil | Ant: calm)
- Acquiesce – accept reluctantly without protest (Syn: yield, comply | Ant: resist)
- Pliable – easily influenced (Syn: flexible, malleable | Ant: rigid)
- Envelop – surround completely (Syn: engulf, cover | Ant: uncover)
- Leeway – freedom to act within limits (Syn: latitude, flexibility | Ant: restriction)
- Anvil – a critical point where pressure peaks (Syn: crunch point | Ant: triviality)
- Engorge – swell with fluid or emotions (Syn: overflow, flood | Ant: shrink)
- Breach – break or violate (Syn: rupture, violation | Ant: uphold)
- Moot – debatable or irrelevant (Syn: questionable, uncertain | Ant: settled)

## **BANGLADESH'S GROWING PREDICAMENT -AUTHOR - DR MOONIS AHMAR**

#### **Summary:**

Bangladesh finds itself in a deepening political quagmire under the interim leadership of Dr Mohammad Yunus, whose regime has triggered controversy by sidelining the Awami League—the very party that led the nation to freedom. With Sheikh Hasina fleeing to India and the Supreme Court allowing Yunus to take over as caretaker Chief Adviser, his tenure has been marked by political repression, failed reforms, and controversial alliances. Despite promises of institutional reforms, the so-called reform commissions fizzled out, casting a shadow over his intent. Adding fuel to the fire, Dr Yunus stirred public resentment by removing symbols of national identity and leaning heavily on Islamist parties and Chinese support, all while neglecting core governance and economic priorities. Meanwhile, BNP, once a beneficiary of Hasina's ouster, has turned hostile, accusing Yunus of playing for time and manipulating public sentiment through polarizing decisions.

As if the domestic mess weren't enough, the Army Chief's neutral stance and call for early elections by December 2025 has further cornered the Yunus regime, signaling a potential military shift away from support. India, watching with hawk eyes, is pressuring Dhaka to abandon its anti-Indian leanings, condemning Yunus's growing ties with China, his alleged collaboration with Pakistan, and the rise of Islamist forces. Bangladesh now stands at a crossroads, with April 2026 elections announced, yet uncertainty looms large over their transparency and credibility. The road ahead is bumpy, and if Yunus doesn't recalibrate fast, he may lose both domestic ground and international patience. What unfolds in the next ten months will either be a triumph of democratic will or the descent into deeper instability.

**Overview:**

This article paints a grim picture of Bangladesh's current political climate under the unelected and controversial caretaker government led by Dr Mohammad Yunus. It explores the consequences of his undemocratic measures, weak reform efforts, mounting opposition pressure, military discontent, and strained relations with India—all contributing to the country's growing political crisis. With elections looming in April 2026, the article questions whether true democratic recovery is even possible.

**NOTES:**

This article provides in depth insight into South Asian regional politics, democratic transitions, civil-military relations, and foreign policy dynamics—particularly relevant to Pakistan due to its own historical parallels. For CSS aspirants, this piece serves as a solid case study for topics like "Politics of South Asia," "Role of Judiciary and Military in Politics," and "Foreign Policy of South Asian States." It looks the influence of major powers like India and China in smaller neighboring states, which is crucial in understanding geopolitical rivalries in International Relations.

**Relevant CSS Subjects and Topics:**

- International Relations: South Asia's regional dynamics, Bangladesh-India-China triangle, foreign influence in domestic politics
- Political Science: Authoritarianism vs. democracy, electoral integrity, role of political parties
- Current Affairs: Bangladesh's domestic turmoil, implications for regional security
- Governance and Public Policy: Institutional reforms, corruption, civil-military relations

**Notes for beginners:**

This article highlights how an unelected leader can throw a country into turmoil if political legitimacy and public trust are missing. For instance, Dr Yunus, who took over without an election, removed historical references like Mujib's image and banned the ruling party. Imagine if in Pakistan, the government suddenly erased Quaid-e-Azam's legacy—how disruptive that would be. The article also shows how foreign countries like India and China try to steer smaller nations for their own gain. For example, India is unhappy with Yunus because he is cozying up to China. These foreign pressures, coupled with internal unrest and military unease, create a perfect storm of instability.

**Facts and Figures:**

- Sheikh Hasina fled to India after losing power in 2024
- Reform commissions were announced in February 2025
- Army Chief warned of civil collapse in May 2025
- Over 1,400 protestors killed during earlier student unrest
- General elections are scheduled for April 2026

To put it simply, Bangladesh today stands on shaky ground, caught between domestic unrest, military skepticism, and foreign interference. The Yunus regime, despite its promises, has so far failed to win trust or deliver real reform. As April 2026 draws nearer, the big question remains: will these elections pave the way for democratic healing, or push the nation further into chaos? This article reminds us that democracy, once derailed, is hard to steer back—and the world is watching.

# MILITARY NOTES OF INDO-PAK CONFLICT — THE RUNDOWN

Author - Inam Ul Haque

## Summary:

This gripping piece walks us through the most intense Indo-Pak military flare-up in recent memory, where both sides pushed the envelope like never before. For the first time, India fired cruise missiles deep into Pakistani territory, prompting a calculated and sharp retaliation using Pakistan's short-range Fatah ballistic missiles and a swarm of drones. The article doesn't beat around the bush; it presents how the situation spiraled out of control from April 22 to May 10, starting with the Pahalgam terror incident and moving swiftly through visa bans, border closures, and escalating military strikes. What makes this account stand out is its step-by-step dissection of events, from tactical skirmishes to full-blown aerial assaults, backed by high-level diplomacy and last-minute foreign mediation. The conflict not only brought missiles out of the woodwork but also dragged world powers to the front row, with the US, Iran, and Saudi Arabia all scrambling to calm the storm.

As the dust began to settle it became clear that Pakistan's response wasn't just military muscle-flexing but a well-thought-out strategy under its 'quid-pro-quo plus' doctrine. India on the other hand was described as trying to draw blood with precision strikes aimed at vital airbases. But Pakistan didn't take the bait quietly. It hit back with even more intensity, and that's when the world took notice. The article lays bare how close both nations came to crossing the nuclear threshold, and how deft diplomacy, especially by the US and Gulf states, helped pull them back from the edge. Underneath the fiery exchanges, a silent war of narratives also raged, with both nations attempting to win global sympathy and legitimacy. The author leaves readers on edge, hinting that though the guns may have fallen silent, the story is far from over.

## Overview:

The article details the timeline and escalation of a major Indo-Pak military conflict in 2025, triggered by the Pahalgam attack and followed by missile exchanges, drone warfare, airbase strikes, and international mediation. It highlights a dangerous shift from limited skirmishes to strategic operations that nearly reached the brink of nuclear confrontation, revealing both nations' military doctrines and diplomatic playbooks.

## NOTES:

The article delivers a blow-by-blow account of the recent Indo-Pak military standoff, mapping its evolution from the April 22 attack in Pahalgam to the dramatic events that unfolded till mid-May. It highlights India's use of BrahMos and SCALP cruise missiles for the first time and Pakistan's unprecedented retaliation using Fatah-I and II ballistic missiles and advanced drone technology. Border skirmishes quickly escalated into full-fledged aerial strikes, with India conducting "Operation Sindoor" and targeting key Pakistani locations. Pakistan responded decisively with "Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos", launching strikes on 26 Indian military sites. The article also touches on diplomatic fallout like airspace bans, visa suspensions, trade halts, and SAARC-related exclusions. It underscores the rising global anxiety, particularly in Washington, after observing Pakistan's tactical missile deployment and the potential nuclear spillover. The piece also reveals how major international players including the US, Saudi Arabia, and Iran scrambled to step in and diffuse tensions when the situation hung by a thread. The narrative wraps up by showing how Pakistan absorbed the blows, pushed back, and redrew the battlefield while maintaining diplomatic poise, offering a vivid picture of military strategy layered with political maneuvering.

## Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics or Subjects:

- International Relations: Conflict resolution, regional diplomacy, nuclear deterrence
- Current Affairs: Indo-Pak tensions, role of world powers in South Asia
- Pakistan Affairs: National security, foreign policy under crisis

### **Notes for Beginners:**

The article explains how tensions between India and Pakistan got out of hand in May 2025. It started when a deadly attack happened in Kashmir, and India blamed Pakistan. Both countries started banning each other's visas and closing borders. Soon after, they fired missiles at each other and even used drones. For example, India used cruise missiles while Pakistan used short-range ballistic missiles like Fatah-I and II. Many countries like the US and Saudi Arabia tried to stop the fight. These events show how dangerous things can get between two nuclear-armed countries and why diplomacy is so important. Terms like "quid-pro-quo" mean Pakistan fought back equally when attacked.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- Attack on Pahalgam on April 22 killed 26 tourists
- India suspended IWT and expelled diplomats on April 23
- Pakistan test-fired Abdali missile on May 3
- India stopped Chenab water flow on May 4
- Pakistan shot down 29 Indian drones on May 6
- India launched Operation Sindoor on May 7
- Pakistan retaliated with Operation Bunyan-un-Marsoos on May 10
- Ceasefire mediated by US announced on May 11

To wrap up, this article brings to light how a single spark can ignite a chain reaction in a region as volatile as South Asia. It is a call for diplomats, military strategists, and common citizens alike, reminding us that peace is fragile and needs constant nurturing. With high-stakes military moves and global attention, the episode is a fresh case study in modern conflict management and the enduring dangers of unresolved disputes.

## **INSTANT CEASEFIRE A MUST**

### **Summary:**

As I look into the heated battleground of rhetoric and rockets between Iran and Israel, it's clear the region is teetering on a knife's edge. While missiles fly and cities burn, a glimmer of hope lies in the diplomatic overtures by Russia and Turkiye, who have stepped forward to douse the flames. The article strongly pushes for an immediate ceasefire, viewing it as the only lifeline left to rein in a conflict that threatens to spiral beyond repair. The writer lays bare the alarming resolve on both sides to push the fight to the bitter end—Israel threatening to incinerate Tehran, and Iran vowing to wipe Israel off the map. Yet amidst this toxic tit-for-tat, there's an eerie silence from the Arab League and OIC, underscoring a vacuum in regional leadership that could cost the Middle East dearly.

The editorial also throws shade at the G7 leadership, especially Donald Trump, whose hard-nosed attitude is seen as adding fuel to the fire. With President Pezeshkian of Iran clarifying that Tehran has no ambitions for nuclear weapons, the article suggests this point should serve as a springboard for negotiations. The suggestion for Iran to store its uranium with Russia as a confidence-building measure is floated as a way out of the quagmire. The piece wraps up with a call for genuine global leadership at the G7 summit—one that doesn't just pay lip service but takes the bull by the horns to prevent this blazing conflict from torching the global order.

### **Overview:**

This editorial urging global powers to push for an immediate ceasefire in the Iran-Israel conflict. It outlines the scale of destruction, critiques the role of the US, and recommends a multi-pronged diplomatic strategy to avert a larger regional disaster. It underlines the responsibility of international forums, especially the UN and G7, while lamenting the absence of Muslim world leadership.

**NOTES:**

The article opens with the grim reality of escalating warfare between Iran and Israel, pointing to the widespread destruction of cities, Ports and military installations. Despite the rising tension, there's a flicker of hope as Russia and Turkiye step forward to mediate, offering a diplomatic off-ramp from this dangerous confrontation. The writer emphasizes the urgent need for an immediate ceasefire which must be monitored by the United Nations and supported by confidence-building mechanisms to prevent the conflict from further spiraling out of control. It is lamented that regional organizations like the Arab League and the OIC are conspicuously absent at a time when their involvement is crucial. The editorial underscores the mutual threats exchanged by both sides Tel Aviv's vow to "burn" Tehran and Iran's retaliatory strikes on Haifa and other key Israeli targets which highlights the grave threat to regional stability. President Trump's rigid stance is criticized as a contributing factor in igniting the conflict, while Iran's assurance that it does not seek nuclear weapons is presented as a potential foundation for renewed peace talks. Suggestions include reviving past arrangements like storing Iran's uranium in Russia.

**Relevant CSS Syllabus Topics:**

- International Relations (Middle East conflicts, diplomacy, nuclear politics)
- Current Affairs (Global powers and conflict resolution, Pakistan's regional context)
- Pakistan Affairs (Impacts of regional wars on Pakistan)
- Essay/Precis (Peace and conflict, global diplomacy, leadership failures)

**Notes for Beginners:**

The article talks about a dangerous war between Israel and Iran. Both are attacking each other with missiles and airstrikes, and innocent people are suffering. The writer is asking the powerful countries, like those in the G7 meeting, to stop this fight quickly. He also says that Iran has said it doesn't want to make nuclear bombs, so peace talks should begin. The writer believes that international organizations like the United Nations should get involved and stop the destruction before it affects the whole world, including countries like Pakistan.

**Facts and Figures:**

- Conflict spread to major cities and ports
- Haifa and Tehran heavily affected
- G7 summit mentioned as a possible peace forum
- Iran confirmed no nuclear ambitions in parliament
- Regional groups like Arab League and OIC are inactive

To wrap up, this editorial calls for diplomacy to outpace destruction. Its tone is both urgent and solution-oriented, shedding light on the critical role global and regional actors must play to steer the region away from catastrophe. A compelling reminder that when wars rage, silence from peacemakers becomes a crime of omission.

**Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Escalates – increases in intensity (Syn: intensifies; Ant: deescalates)
- Conflagration – large-scale conflict or war (Syn: blaze; Ant: peace)
- Volatile – unstable, likely to change suddenly (Syn: unpredictable; Ant: stable)
- Buoyed – encouraged or lifted (Syn: uplifted; Ant: discouraged)
- Consoled – comforted or reassured (Syn: soothed; Ant: agitated)

## A SHARED HORIZON: WHY PAK-AFGHAN TIES MATTER

Author - Durdana Najam

### Summary:

This editorial paints a broad yet intimate picture of the Pakistan-Afghanistan relationship, describing it as more than just a diplomatic connection. It's a historical, cultural, and humanitarian bond that has stood the test of time, turbulence, and shifting geopolitics. From hosting over four million refugees for decades to nurturing future Afghan professionals through education and healthcare initiatives, Pakistan has time and again proven itself to be a steady neighbor, one that stands by Afghanistan not out of transactional interest, but from shared roots and regional responsibility. The article rightly points out that Pakistan's unwavering engagement despite internal strains and external pressures shows that peace in Kabul echoes stability in Islamabad.

More than charity or rhetoric Pakistan's commitment is carved into real investments like hospitals, schools and transport corridors linking Afghanistan to the region. Yet the road has been bumpy, marred by mistrust, hostile narratives and geopolitical chess games particularly with India's interference. Still the author argues that Pakistan hasn't walked away from the table even when the world turned its back after the 2021 regime change. Now the ball lies in both courts: if these two nations can foster trust, deepen academic and cultural exchanges, and rise above petty politics, they can turn their shared geography into a shared future. In a region teetering between chaos and cooperation, their partnership could be the linchpin of lasting peace.

### Overview:

The article underlines Pakistan's long-standing commitment to Afghanistan's peace and development, highlighting shared ethnic, cultural and geographic bonds. It explains how Pakistan has remained a consistent regional partner in Afghanistan's rebuilding process through infrastructure, education, diplomacy, and refugee integration. It also stresses that mutual trust and regional connectivity are the keys to lasting bilateral and regional stability.

### NOTES:

Pakistan's unwavering commitment to Afghanistan emerges as the heart of the article where the bond between the two nations is described not as a political formality but as a shared historical and cultural reality. The article highlights Pakistan's strategic belief that peace in Afghanistan directly affects its own stability, driving its consistent diplomatic engagement with all Afghan governments, regardless of political leanings. A key feature is Pakistan's humanitarian support: over four million Afghan refugees have been hosted for over four decades, and more than 100,000 Afghan students have graduated from Pakistani institutions. The country has also launched several education initiatives, including the Allama Iqbal Scholarship, with particular emphasis on Afghan girls. Infrastructure projects such as the Torkham-Jalalabad highway, Chaman-Spin Boldak link, and health and educational facilities like Jinnah Hospital and Rehman Baba School signify Pakistan's long-term investments inside Afghanistan. The article acknowledges strains in the relationship, particularly due to historical tensions and India's influence, but praises Pakistan's decision to stay engaged even after the 2021 political transition in Kabul. It concludes that true regional integration, trade connectivity, and peace can only be achieved through sustained trust-building, people-to-people diplomacy, and a rejection of short-sighted geopolitical calculations.

### Relevance to CSS Syllabus or Subjects:

- Pakistan Affairs – Regional relations, foreign policy with Afghanistan
- International Relations – Regional cooperation, soft power diplomacy
- Current Affairs – Geopolitics post-2021 Afghan regime change
- Governance and Public Policy – Refugee policy, education diplomacy
- Essay Writing – Regional integration, peacebuilding, neighborly diplomacy

### Notes for Beginners:

This article tells us how Pakistan and Afghanistan are not just neighbors, but have deep ties of culture, ethnicity and history. For example many Afghan ethnic groups also live in Pakistan. Pakistan has helped by giving homes to Afghan refugees and educating thousands of Afghan students. Even after the Afghan government collapsed in 2021, Pakistan continued its support. Projects like hospitals, schools and highways are examples of how Pakistan helps Afghanistan develop. But trust is still a problem. The article says that for true peace both sides must build trust, work together in trade and education and not just depend on politics.

### Facts and Figures:

- Over 4 million Afghan refugees hosted by Pakistan over 40 years
- More than 100,000 Afghan students graduated from Pakistani institutions
- 7,000 Afghan students currently enrolled in Pakistani universities
- Key development projects: Jinnah Hospital, Rehman Baba School, Torkham-Jalalabad highway
- Pakistan continued engagement post-2021 Afghan regime collapse

To wrap up, this article doesn't just argue for diplomacy, it breathes life into it by showing that real partnership is built on empathy, trust and consistency. It captures a story of two nations bound by bloodlines and shared battles, struggling to rise above suspicion and seize a collective future.

## ESCALATION HOTSPOT

### Summary:

The article highlights Kashmir dispute, labelling it one of the world's most dangerous escalation hotspots. The Global Peace Index has sounded alarm bells after the brutal four-day Indo-Pak clash in May 2025, the deadliest in years laid bare how quickly tensions over Kashmir could spiral into full-blown nuclear catastrophe. Advanced weaponry filled the skies from BrahMos missiles to Rafale jets and J-10Cs with Pakistan's successful downing of Indian fighter jets shattering any illusions of a limited skirmish. The conflict spilled well beyond Kashmir, tugging the global community toward the edge of crisis. India's reckless threat to cut off Pakistan's water supply, an act that amounts to a war crime, further highlights the extent to which India's far-right leadership is willing to trample international norms just to stroke the flames of hyper-nationalism.

The piece doesn't mince words in calling out India's dangerous political theatrics, describing how New Delhi hides behind the false narrative that Kashmir is merely a bilateral issue. The editorial draws a haunting parallel with 1914, warning that unchecked jingoism, disinformation, and mistrust could very well turn the Kashmir conflict into the trigger for a wider war just as a regional spat once sparked World War I. Modi's regime, obsessed with its strongman image, continues to weaponize conflict for domestic political gains. Without immediate and meaningful international intervention, the region risks being dragged into an uncontrollable inferno.

### Overview:

The article highlights the dangerous escalation in the Kashmir conflict. It underscores how nuclear-armed India and Pakistan are standing on the brink of disaster. It shares the May 2025 conflict the risks of rapid escalation, the weaponization of water and India's historical distortion regarding the Kashmir dispute. The article draws a clear comparison between this crisis and the events that triggered the First World War, emphasizing the dire consequences of unchecked militarism and political brinkmanship.

### NOTES:

This article provides critical thoughts into regional security dynamics, nuclear deterrence, water diplomacy and conflict resolution. It is highly relevant for topics like Pakistan-India Relations, Kashmir Dispute, Regional and Global Security and International Law violations such as water warfare. It also touches on historical parallels and the role of misinformation in international conflicts. The role of international organizations like the UN and the

diplomatic failures that exacerbate the Kashmir issue are also central to the discussion. Furthermore, the editorial underscores the importance of crisis management mechanisms in South Asia, nuclear stability and the need for diplomatic engagement to avert catastrophe.

### **Relevant CSS syllabus and subjects:**

- Pakistan Affairs
  - It studies Pakistan's internal and external affairs, including history, foreign policy, regional disputes, and socio-political dynamics.
- Current Affairs
  - It covers recent national and international events, focusing on political, economic, and security developments impacting Pakistan and the world.
- International Relations
  - It examines the interactions, conflicts, and cooperation between states, international organizations, and non-state actors in the global system.

### **Notes for Beginners:**

The Kashmir dispute is an old conflict between India and Pakistan, both nuclear-armed nations. In May 2025 a four-day war broke out involving advanced military technology like Rafale jets, drones and cruise missiles. Pakistan managed to shoot down some Indian aircraft and proved that even small conflicts can turn deadly very quickly. India also threatened to block Pakistan's water which international law sees as a war crime. This shows how dangerous things can get when one country uses basic needs like water as a weapon. The article reminds us how World War I started from a small regional issue and turned into a world War. It hints that something similar could happen if the Kashmir issue is not solved. Facts like the Global Peace Index calling Kashmir one of the world's worst conflict zones highlight how serious the situation is.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- The May 2025 conflict was the deadliest in years between India and Pakistan.
- Modern weapons used included BrahMos cruise missiles, Rafale jets, and J-10Cs.
- Pakistan downed advanced Indian Rafale fighter jets during the conflict.
- The Global Peace Index has ranked Kashmir as a critical escalation hotspot in 2025.
- Threatening to block Pakistan's water supply is recognized internationally as a war crime.

To sum up, this article sounds the alarm on how dangerously close India and Pakistan are to lighting the fuse of a catastrophic war over Kashmir. It drives home the fact that political adventurism, historical ignorance and reckless military provocations can easily trigger disasters that neither side can control. The international community must step in before the situation snowballs into a nuclear nightmare that would engulf not just South Asia but potentially the entire world.

### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Escalation – A rapid increase in tension or conflict (Syn: intensification, Ant: de-escalation)
- Perilously – Dangerously, in a risky way (Syn: hazardously, Ant: safely)
- Brinkmanship – The practice of pushing dangerous situations to the edge of disaster (Syn: provocation, Ant: compromise)
- Catastrophic – Causing sudden and great damage (Syn: disastrous, Ant: beneficial)
- Rogue state – A nation behaving dangerously outside international norms (Syn: outlaw nation, Ant: law-abiding state)
- Jingoism – Extreme patriotism, often aggressive (Syn: chauvinism, Ant: diplomacy)

- Tainted – Contaminated or polluted (Syn: corrupted, Ant: purified)
- Provocation – An action that causes someone to react angrily (Syn: incitement, Ant: pacification)
- Diplomatic isolation – Being cut off from international cooperation (Syn: alienation, Ant: engagement)
- Grandiose – Excessively grand or ambitious (Syn: pompous, Ant: modest)

## **LESSONS FOR INDIA, ISRAEL AND PAKISTAN AUTHOR - IMTIAZ GUL**

### **Summary:**

India and Israel, in their recent regional misadventures, bit off more than they could chew, underestimating the deep-rooted national resolve of Iran and Pakistan. While India flexed its muscles by breaching the Indus Waters Treaty and launching missile strikes, it was met with both internal skepticism and external resistance. Israel too overplayed its hand in its attack on Iran, believing its technological dominance could overpower centuries-old resilience fused with ideological unity. The result? Both nations faced diplomatic cold shoulders. India's posturing led to isolation at the SCO forum, while Iran openly appreciated Pakistan's solidarity and ignored India's silence, sending a loud and clear message about regional loyalties and diplomatic maturity.

○The article goes on to lay bare the strategic blunders of relying solely on military tech and arrogance while dismissing national spirit and alliances. The unraveling of an Israeli spy network further exposes the perils of modern warfare, which is no longer just about bombs and bullets but data and deception. In trying to play big, both India and Israel have drawn fresh fault lines, forcing realignments across South and West Asia. If anything, the saga reinforces one timeless lesson: military might may shake buildings, but it rarely crushes collective resolve or historic identity, especially when it's anchored in faith, culture and global alliances.

### **Overview:**

The article draws parallels between India's and Israel's recent actions that attempted to assert dominance through military means and political arrogance. It shows how both underestimated the strength of national unity in Iran and Pakistan, resulting in strategic and diplomatic setbacks. The piece highlights the shifting regional alliances and warns about future threats from espionage and cyberwarfare.

### **NOTES:**

The article highlights the recent geopolitical tensions involving India, Israel, Pakistan and Iran. It also highlights how overreliance on military might and political arrogance can backfire in today's interconnected world. It discusses how India's aggressive move to suspend the Indus Waters Treaty and launch missile strikes into Pakistan not only drew international criticism but also failed to gain support from its own allies. Similarly Israel's misjudged attack on Iran underestimated the Iranian nation's collective resolve, deeply rooted in historical pride and religious unity. Both countries, despite their technological edge, stumbled on the diplomatic front, especially at the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) summit, where India faced backlash and isolation due to its posturing. Iran's visible tilt toward Pakistan was demonstrated through public gratitude, while India's refusal to sign off on statements that favored Iran further widened the diplomatic gap. The article also highlights India's move to renegotiate the Ganga Waters Treaty with Bangladesh, raising concerns about its consistent use of regional dominance. In contrast, Pakistan emerged diplomatically poised and supported, backed by China and recognized by Iran. The piece concludes by warning of the dangers posed by espionage and cyber-infiltration, stressing the urgency for SCO members to enhance collective defense strategies.

### **Related CSS Subjects and Topics:**

- International Relations: Regional conflicts, diplomacy, multilateral organizations, strategic alliances
- Pakistan Affairs: Indo-Pak relations, foreign policy challenges, strategic positioning

- Current Affairs: Recent geopolitical events, role of SCO, water disputes
- Political Science: Foreign policy behavior, national interest vs. global alignment

**Notes for Beginners:**

This article compares India and Israel's aggressive actions with how Pakistan and Iran responded with unity and strength. India tried to act tough by attacking Pakistan and changing water agreements. But it backfired, and other countries didn't support it. Iran also faced Israeli attacks but stayed strong and even got support from Pakistan. The message is simple: having advanced weapons is not enough if you don't have strong national unity and good relations with neighbors.

**Facts and Figures:**

- India suspended the Indus Waters Treaty unilaterally in May 2025.
- Israel's attack on Iran happened during the aftermath of the October 2023 Hamas-Israel conflict.
- The SCO Summit held in Qingdao, China, on June 26, 2025, showed regional disapproval of India's stance.
- Iran publicly thanked Pakistan but made no mention of India, revealing diplomatic friction.

To put it simply, the unfolding scenarios reveal how overconfidence and isolationist strategies can backfire on regional powers. India and Israel's miscalculations didn't just fail militarily but also cost them diplomatic ground. In contrast Pakistan and Iran displayed composure, unity and resilience that shifts the regional chessboard in their favor. The lesson is unmistakable: power without prudence only deepens the chasm of conflict.

**Difficult Words and Meaning:**

- Fiasco – A complete failure, especially humiliating (Syn: disaster | Ant: success)
- Duplicious – Deceitful or dishonest (Syn: deceptive | Ant: honest)
- Belligerence – Aggressive behavior or warlike conduct (Syn: hostility | Ant: diplomacy)
- Carte-blanche – Complete freedom to act (Syn: full authority | Ant: restriction)
- Realignment – Strategic reorganization or shift (Syn: repositioning | Ant: status quo)

## The Nation –

### **PAK-AFGHAN RELATIONS -AUTHOR - DR. TEHMINA ASLAM RANJHA**

#### **Summary:**

The recent appointment of ambassadors between Pakistan and Afghanistan marks a diplomatic leap forward, nudged by China's strategic persuasion. This move isn't just a formality—it's a clear signal of mutual intent to mend fences and pave a stable path ahead. Behind this gesture lies China's broader vision to expand the Belt and Road Initiative through Afghanistan, tying it into regional growth through CPEC. Kabul sees this as a lifeline, desperately needing investment and recognition, especially as Western aid remains a shaky crutch. Yet, this charm offensive is not without strings attached. China wants Kabul to shut its doors to Uyghur militants, and Pakistan expects the Taliban to curb the TTP's cross-border havoc—a thorny issue that will ultimately make or break this so-called thaw in relations.

At the heart of this diplomatic dance lies a stark reality: if Kabul doesn't rein in the TTP, all good intentions may fizzle out. Pakistan's elevation to key roles in the UN Security Council's counterterrorism committees gives it leverage—but it also puts the spotlight squarely on Islamabad's own conduct. With India breathing down its neck with accusations, and Afghanistan fretting over sanctions, Pakistan finds itself at the intersection of opportunity and scrutiny. The current détente is a give-and-take: recognition and aid in exchange for security cooperation. If played wisely, this can be a win-win for all; if mishandled, the dream of regional integration may go up in smoke.

#### **Overview:**

This article analyzes the evolving dynamics of Pak-Afghan diplomatic relations, highlighting China's mediating role and the larger geopolitical motivations behind recent ambassadorial appointments. It stresses the importance of mutual security assurances, particularly concerning the TTP, and discusses Pakistan's emerging role on the global counter-terrorism stage via its positions at the United Nations.

#### **NOTES:**

This article touches upon regional diplomacy, strategic alliances (like CPEC and BRI), Pakistan's foreign policy shifts, and counter-terrorism. The interplay between bilateral diplomacy and global platforms like the UNSC offers insights into how Pakistan navigates complex regional and international tensions. Aspirants should especially note how multilateral diplomacy and trilateral mediation (via China) influence regional peace and security—a recurring theme in past CSS papers.

#### **Related CSS Syllabus Topics:**

- Pakistan Affairs: Pak-Afghan relations, Terrorism in Pakistan, CPEC
- Current Affairs: Regional integration, China's BRI, UNSC roles
- International Relations: Diplomacy, Role of China in South Asia, Geopolitics of Central Asia

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

This article discusses the recent improvement in relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan, mainly influenced by China. Both countries have agreed to exchange ambassadors—this is like opening an official line of communication. China wants to include Afghanistan in its economic projects, while Afghanistan hopes to benefit from Chinese investment to reduce dependence on American aid. For example, China's Belt and Road Initiative and Pakistan's CPEC can bring jobs and trade to Afghanistan. However, Pakistan is worried because the TTP (a terrorist group hiding in Afghanistan) keeps attacking Pakistani soil. To ensure trust, Pakistan wants the Taliban to take action

against these militants. On a global level, Pakistan's recent appointments in the UN's anti-terrorism committees give it a louder voice on terrorism policies.

#### **Facts and Figures:**

- On 30 May 2025, Pakistan upgraded its chargé d'affaires in Kabul to ambassadorial rank.
- China was the first country to accept Taliban-appointed envoys (January 2024).
- Pakistan now chairs the UNSC committee on Afghan Taliban sanctions and is Vice Chair of its Counter-Terrorism Committee.
- Afghanistan's economy is heavily dependent on US dollar aid.
- The TTP claims its support helped the Taliban regain power from 2001–2021.

To sum up, This article unravels the tightrope walk Pakistan and Afghanistan must navigate as they attempt to mend fences under China's watchful eye. While diplomacy may have opened a new door, real peace hinges on tackling the elephant in the room—the TTP. With Pakistan stepping onto the global counter-terrorism stage and China pulling the strings of regional cooperation, both Kabul and Islamabad must rise to the occasion or risk watching this fragile harmony go up in smoke.

## **UNLOCKING REKO DIQ**

#### **Summary:**

This editorial throws the spotlight on Reko Diq, a mining jackpot buried in Balochistan's rugged hills, waiting to be tapped into. The Prime Minister's push to connect this mineral-rich site with the national railway by 2028 is about laying the groundwork for Pakistan to stake its claim in the global minerals market. With gold, copper, lithium, and rare earth elements up for grabs, and Saudi interest already knocking at the door, the potential windfall is massive. But a mine without a way to move the minerals is like a locked vault with no key. Without solid infrastructure and smooth access to ports like Gwadar and Karachi, this treasure trove may stay hidden under layers of logistical neglect.

Yet the road to riches runs through a minefield—literally and metaphorically. The shadow of terrorism still looms large over Balochistan, where militants routinely target national infrastructure to disrupt development. The editorial warns that unless the state walks and chews gum at the same time—building rails while rooting out threats—the promise of Reko Diq could derail. Security, policy, and investment must go hand in hand. It's not just a question of digging deep into the earth, but also of digging out the rot above it. Only then can Pakistan truly unearth prosperity and transform Balochistan into a cornerstone of its economic future.

#### **Overview:**

The article highlights Pakistan's strategic move to link the Reko Diq mining project with the national railway to boost mineral exports. It discusses foreign investment interest, the need for infrastructure, and the crucial role of internal security in ensuring the project's success.

#### **NOTES:**

This article provides a comprehensive view of economic development through resource extraction, strategic infrastructure planning and national security concerns. It is useful for preparing questions on federal development projects, center-province integration, foreign investment in natural Resources and terrorism's impact on economic growth.

#### **Relevance to CSS Syllabus or Subjects:**

- Pakistan Affairs – Regional development, Balochistan, natural resources
- Current Affairs – Strategic projects, Saudi-Pak ties
- Governance and Public Policy – Infrastructure policy, investment management

- Security and Strategic Studies – Internal security, terrorism
- International Relations – Economic diplomacy, foreign investment

**Notes for Beginners:**

This article talks about a mining project called Reko Diq in Balochistan, where valuable minerals like gold and copper are found. The government plans to connect this place with railway tracks so minerals can be easily transported to major ports like Gwadar. Foreign countries like Saudi Arabia are interested in investing. But there are challenges especially terrorist attacks that make the area unsafe. So, the government must improve both transport and security. If both things work together, this project can bring huge benefits to Pakistan's economy.

**Facts and Figures:**

- Reko Diq will be connected to the national railway by 2028
- Manara Minerals (Saudi Arabia) may buy 10–20% of the project
- Minerals include gold, copper, lithium, and rare earth elements
- Terrorist groups have targeted infrastructure, including Jaffer Express
- Gwadar and Karachi are the key ports for mineral export

To wrap up, the editorial draws a clear line between potential and paralysis. Without swift, secure, and strategic action, Reko Diq risks being another missed opportunity buried under political delays and militant threats. But if handled wisely, it could become the jewel in Pakistan's economic crown, a turning point for Balochistan's future and the nation's progress. The message is firm: dig deep, but stay guarded.

## Arab News Pakistan –

### **PEOPLE MUST SEE THEMSELVES IN THE AI REVOLUTION** **AUTHORS - ALI NAQVI AND MOHAMMED AL-QARNI**

#### **Summary:**

In a world racing toward artificial intelligence, we must ensure that this revolution doesn't slip into the hands of a select few. As I see it, AI can't just be the playground of coders, engineers, and Silicon Valley elites. It must reach the common man — the teacher, the nurse, the policymaker, the shop owner — anyone who will ultimately live with its impact. The real game-changer is not code but context, not algorithms but awareness. Just as the internet became ubiquitous when people found a way to make it part of their daily lives, AI must be demystified and humanized. We need not a nation of programmers, but a society of critical thinkers who can speak the language of machine cognition without having to write it.

The article strikes a chord by reminding us that AI adoption isn't about flashy tech or sovereign data centers; it's about human capital — minds that can interpret, challenge, and shape this new cognitive order. Sovereignty in the AI era won't come from the size of your server farms but from how wisely your society can adapt and lead. That's the heartbeat of real transformation. Saudi Arabia's strategic pivot, aligned with global AI leaders like the US, isn't about who dominates the digital landscape — it's about who understands it best. Because in the end, AI is not just about machines thinking faster; it's about people thinking deeper.

#### **Overview:**

This article emphasizes the necessity of democratizing AI and warns against allowing it to remain the domain of a technical elite. It presents the case that nations, particularly Saudi Arabia, should prioritize building public understanding and human capital over technical infrastructure alone. The authors stress that real sovereignty in AI lies in education, civic engagement, and moral awareness. AI is portrayed not as a product, but as a cultural shift requiring collective adaptation.

#### **NOTES:**

This article provides critical perspectives on how technological revolutions shape geopolitical alignments and social structures. You should link this to themes like technology's impact on society, education reform, public policy, and diplomatic cooperation in the digital age. The example of Saudi Arabia's AI goals can be quoted in current affairs or essay papers. The philosophical angle on AI as a social, moral, and political challenge is also helpful for the ethics paper.

#### **CSS Relevant Topics or Subjects:**

- Governance and Public Policy
- International Relations
- Current Affairs (Saudi Arabia-US relations)
- Science and technology

#### **Notes for beginners:**

The article is an attention call about AI not being just for tech experts. For instance, when smartphones came out, only a few tech-savvy people could use them efficiently. Now, even kids and elders are using them daily. Similarly, AI tools like ChatGPT or voice assistants must also become understandable and useful to everyone. Saudi Arabia, for example, is not just building data centers but also focusing on training its people to understand and use AI responsibly. The article also compares this moment to when cars were first introduced — people resisted at first, but over time, society adapted and transformed around it.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- AIAIQ was launched in the US in 2016.
- Saudi Arabia is building sovereign AI models and platforms.
- Emphasis on developing national AI strategies across Gulf countries.
- Historical parallel with automobile adoption in the early 20th century.

To wrap up, this article gives a message — the AI revolution won't succeed unless the average citizen feels they have a stake in it. It advocates a bottom-up approach where AI isn't just implemented but lived and understood. The heart of progress lies not in lines of code but in the minds of people. If societies fail to bring everyone on board, AI will remain an elite phenomenon rather than a shared future.

## **AN UNUSUAL MEETING IN WASHINGTON\_AUTHOR - JAVED HAFEEZ**

### **Summary:**

The article highlights an extraordinary diplomatic move where President Trump hosted Pakistan's Army Chief Field Marshal Asim Munir at the White House, a gesture typically reserved for heads of state. This high-profile meeting held against the backdrop of the escalating Israel-Iran conflict wasn't just about exchanging pleasantries but carried weighty undertones of strategic diplomacy. Trump didn't mince words when he credited Munir for cooling down the heated tensions between India and Pakistan, two nuclear-armed rivals teetering on the brink. Alongside that, the Iran-Israel slugfest also took center stage, with Trump acknowledging Pakistan's deep understanding of Iran's political fabric. The conversation went far beyond bilateral ties, touching on global peace, counterterrorism, rare earth trade, and even cryptocurrencies, signaling a shift in Washington's approach towards Islamabad.

The article further highlights how Pakistan's role in capturing key Daesh-Khorasan operatives has bolstered its standing as a crucial security partner for the US, particularly as the Kabul government struggles to assert control over its borders. Meanwhile, the Kashmir issue once again surfaced on the global radar, with Trump offering mediation, only to be snubbed by India. This rare diplomatic engagement also points towards Pakistan's growing stature following its restraint during recent hostilities with India. As the world grapples with rising conflicts and a crumbling rules-based order, the piece underlines how Pakistan is walking a diplomatic tightrope, juggling its strategic partnership with China while cautiously exploring new opportunities with the US, all amid growing global instability, soaring oil prices, and the looming specter of wider regional chaos.

### **Overview:**

The article revolves around a rare and significant meeting between Pakistan's military chief and US President Donald Trump, discussing pressing issues like the Israel-Iran war, India-Pakistan tensions, counterterrorism, and future bilateral cooperation. It also looks into how Pakistan is navigating its foreign policy amid shifting global alliances and conflicts.

### **NOTES:**

This article provides in-depth analysis of the evolving dynamics of Pakistan's foreign policy, highlighting its strategic balancing act between the US, China, and regional powers. It emphasizes the significance of military diplomacy in shaping international relations, particularly in crisis scenarios like the Israel-Iran conflict and Indo-Pak tensions. Moreover it provides a real-world case study on how global powers influence regional disputes such as Kashmir and why diplomatic negotiations often run into brick walls due to larger geopolitical interests. Aspirants can use this example to understand how defense diplomacy, counterterrorism collaboration and energy security shape bilateral ties.

### **Related CSS Subjects or Topics**

- International Relations
- Current Affairs

- Pakistan Affairs
- Global Issues (Middle East Conflict, US Foreign Policy)

### Notes for Beginners:

This article explains how global politics works behind the curtains. It shows that countries often hold secret or unusual meetings to discuss big issues like wars or conflicts. For example the US usually talks to Pakistan's elected leaders, but this time it directly involves the army chief which shows that sometimes military diplomacy holds more power. The Israel-Iran war and the Kashmir issue were also hot topics. It tells us that while the US wants Pakistan's help in controlling terrorism, it also expects support in other matters like Middle East stability. This is how countries build relations not just on friendships but on shared interests like security, trade, and regional influence.

### Facts and Figures:

- The meeting lasted two hours, unusually long for such diplomatic engagements.
- Pakistan captured high-value Daesh-Khorasan militants including the Kabul airport attack suspect Sharifullah Khan.
- Global Peace Index 2025 listed Kashmir among the world's most critical escalation points.
- Oil prices surged significantly due to the ongoing Middle East tensions.

To wrap up, the article perfectly captures how diplomacy, military strategy and geopolitics intertwine in today's world. It sends a clear message that Pakistan is no longer a passive observer but an active player in global affairs. Yet it also warns that Pakistan must tread carefully, balancing its ties with major powers like the US and China while staying true to its regional responsibilities and strategic interests.

### Difficult Words and Meanings

- Unprecedented – Never done or known before (Synonym: Exceptional, Antonym: Common)
- Conflagration – A large destructive conflict or fire (Synonym: Inferno, Antonym: Calm)
- Poised – Positioned or ready for action (Synonym: Ready, Antonym: Unprepared)
- Lopsided – One-sided or biased (Synonym: Unequal, Antonym: Balanced)
- Abhors – Strongly hates or detests (Synonym: Loathes, Antonym: Likes)
- Escalation – A rapid increase or intensification (Synonym: Amplification, Antonym: Reduction)
- Obviate – Remove or avoid (Synonym: Prevent, Antonym: Allow)
- Hegemon – A dominant power or leader (Synonym: Superpower, Antonym: Subordinate)
- Echelons – Levels or ranks in an organization or system (Synonym: Hierarchies, Antonym: Inferiors)
- Tentative – Uncertain or hesitant (Synonym: Cautious, Antonym: Definite)

## AI FOR SMARTER INDUSTRY: PAKISTAN'S PATH TO GLOBAL MARKETS

**AUTHOR - PROF DR SAUD ALTAF**

### Summary:

In an era where industries are racing against time to modernise, Pakistan stands at a crucial crossroads. The article throws light on how Artificial Intelligence is no longer just a buzzword but a lifeline for Pakistan's struggling industrial sector. With global giants like the USA and EU setting the gold standard, Pakistan's reliance on outdated manufacturing practices threatens its competitiveness on the world stage. AI-powered predictive maintenance is being touted as a game-changer, capable of saving factories from sudden breakdowns and hefty losses. From textile mills in Faisalabad to rice processors in Punjab and sports goods manufacturers in Sialkot, embracing AI means

fewer disruptions, better product quality, and timely deliveries. Without this digital leap, Pakistani exports risk falling flat, failing to meet the ever-stringent demands of international markets.

The article further paints a clear picture of how AI-driven technologies like machine learning and optical sorters are elevating production standards by detecting defects in real-time and ensuring compliance with global certifications like ISO and CE. With a nominal GDP hovering around \$371 billion in 2024, Pakistan simply cannot afford to drag its feet. As the West keeps raising the bar, industries here must either shape up or ship out. The writer underscores that for Pakistan to break into high-value markets, government policies, academia, and industry must work hand-in-hand. Training in AI, fostering innovation, and offering incentives for automation aren't just options anymore; they are a necessity. If Pakistan wants to play with the big boys, the era of manual guesswork must give way to the precision of artificial intelligence.

#### **Overview:**

This article highlights how Pakistan's manufacturing sector must urgently adopt AI technologies to stay competitive globally. It explains how AI-driven predictive maintenance, real-time defect detection and compliance tracking can boost production quality, meet international standards and expand export markets. The writer calls for collaborative efforts between the government, academia and industries to transform Pakistan's manufacturing landscape.

#### **NOTES:**

The article suggests how digital transformation particularly AI intersects with Pakistan's economy, industrial development and global competitiveness. It discusses the risk of economic stagnation if Pakistan fails to modernize its industries. The emphasis on AI adoption for achieving ISO certifications, maintaining product traceability and securing global contracts aligns with economic diplomacy and technological advancement. This article equips aspirants with knowledge about Pakistan's industrial vulnerabilities, the significance of economic reforms and how global market dynamics influence national policy. Furthermore it sharpens the understanding of how digital infrastructure impacts economic growth, exports and industrial sustainability.

#### **Relevance to CSS Syllabus:**

- Pakistan Affairs
  - This article is highly relevant to Pakistan Affairs as it discusses Pakistan's industrial challenges, economic growth targets, and the role of AI in enhancing exports and competitiveness.
- Current Affairs
  - It aligns with Current Affairs by addressing Pakistan's need for digital transformation to cope with global economic trends, technological shifts, and international trade standards.
- International Relations
  - The article touches on trade relationships with major global economies like the USA and EU, emphasizing how meeting international standards strengthens diplomatic and economic ties.
- Governance and Public Policies
  - It connects with this subject by highlighting the importance of government policies in fostering AI adoption, industrial innovation, and strengthening public-private partnerships.
- Economics
  - The article is deeply tied to Economics, as it delves into GDP growth, industrial efficiency, production costs, and how AI contributes to sustainable economic development.

#### **Notes for Beginners:**

Artificial Intelligence is like giving brains to machines. In industries it helps factories know in advance when a machine might break, so they fix it before it happens. For example if a rice mill uses AI, sensors can detect a machine's problem before it stops working. It saving time and money. Similarly in textile factories AI cameras can spot problems in cloth patterns automatically. This way factories make better-quality products faster and with fewer

errors. In international markets like the USA and EU buyers demand perfect products with certifications like ISO which means products meet high standards. AI helps factories meet these standards by tracking every production step with data. If Pakistan uses AI properly, its factories can compete with big countries and sell more products abroad.

### **Facts and Figures:**

- Pakistan's GDP reached \$371 billion in 2024 with 2.5% annual growth.
- USA's GDP is \$29 trillion and EU's is \$19.4 trillion, together making 44% of the world's GDP.
- The textile, rice, and sports goods sectors are Pakistan's major export industries targeted for AI transformation.
- AI reduces unplanned downtime in industries, improving delivery timelines and product quality.
- The government aims for 2.7% GDP growth in FY 2024–25, achievable through digital transformation.

To sum up, this article strikes at the heart of Pakistan's industrial future, ringing loud alarm bells that standing still is no longer an option. Either Pakistan embraces AI and leaps into the future or risks being left behind in the dust of global competition. The path forward is crystal clear: invest in AI, equip the workforce, reform outdated systems, and align with global standards to carve a sustainable and competitive place in the world market.

### **Difficult Words and Meanings:**

- Predictive Maintenance – Maintenance based on predicting failures before they occur (Synonym: Preventive care | Antonym: Reactive repair)
- Anomalies – Irregularities or abnormalities (Synonym: Deviations | Antonym: Normalities)
- Throughput – The amount of material or items passing through a process (Synonym: Output | Antonym: Blockage)
- Traceability – Ability to track the history or location of something (Synonym: Trackability | Antonym: Obscurity)
- Stringent – Strict, precise, and demanding (Synonym: Rigorous | Antonym: Lenient)
- Infrastructure – The fundamental systems serving a country or area (Synonym: Framework | Antonym: Disorganisation)
- Retrofitting – Adding new technology to old systems (Synonym: Upgrading | Antonym: Downgrading)
- Compliance – Following rules and standards (Synonym: Adherence | Antonym: Violation)
- Ecosystem (industrial) – A network of interconnected industries and services (Synonym: Network | Antonym: Isolation)
- Downstream Effects – Secondary impacts resulting from an initial action (Synonym: Consequences | Antonym: Causes)

# CSS PLATFORM NEXUS

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