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Reshaping Generations



Topic Area A: RESHAPING THE FOREIGN POLICY

Introduction

A country's foreign policy, also called the foreign relations policy, consists of self-interest strategies chosen by the state to safeguard its national interests and to achieve its goals within international relations milieu. No country today can think of a life independent of other nations. Every country has to develop relations with other countries so as to meet its requirements in economical, industrial and technological fields. It is thus necessary for every country to formulate a sound foreign policy. Pakistan is an important third world country, in its developmental stage. It also has formulated her foreign policy keeping in mind her geography, politics and economics.

Quaid-e-Azam defined Foreign Policy towards other countries of the world in 1948, as follows:

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

Basic Goals of Pakistan's Foreign Policy

1. Maintenance of territorial integrity.
2. Maintenance of its political independence.
3. Acceleration of social and economic development.
4. Strengthening its place on the globe.
5. Keeping cordial and friendly relations with all countries.

It is therefore essential for the committee to keep in mind these aims while the committee proceeds. The dais will be looking for all of this in the final resolutions.

Abstract

External factors, particularly the USA, are blamed for having adverse effects

in shaping Pakistan's foreign policy, but there are many internal factors pose challenges to Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan is an ideological state hence ideology has a special place in its foreign policy and it has been a central focus in the foreign policy for a long time. There is a famous U-turn in Pakistan's foreign policy in recent era and this shift in policy has provoked an intense debate at home and abroad. Territorial integrity is the foremost foreign policy goal of any country and it deals with the security that may be external or internal or both. Similarly, most important issue in Pakistan's foreign policy is security concerns because Pakistan has one of the most complex threat analyses of any state in the world. There are many problems at home related to grievances against foreign policy particularly on the issue and pattern of war on terrorism. Historian Paul Kennedy named Pakistan as one of the nine pivotal states whose future evolution would not only determine the fate of their region, but also affect international stability. He maintains in his article in the Foreign Affairs Quarterly that "progress by a pivotal state such as Pakistan would help not only the region but also promote US interests in trade and in investment"⁶. Pakistan has developed as a principal actor and a vital personality of its own. Now it is supposed to secure and protect all its vital interests at all cost. These interests are considered to be above individual morality and any other factors. Pakistan should demonstrate and follow an independent and principled foreign policy in the pursuit of its national interests. Being an ideological state, Pakistan did not only seek to promote closer links with Islamic countries but also played a leading role in championing the rights of the developing countries in general and Muslim countries in particular. In the economic development, Pakistan should not compromise on Islamic ideology in making its foreign relations. In the current phase of rapidly globalizing world, Pakistan's foreign policy is in drastic need of a fresh look.

History

Pakistan's history is filled with drastic changes in its foreign policy. In its early years its foreign policy was the only thing which had kept it going. For example, in the famines of 1949-1950, Pakistan was able to import large quantities of wheat from western states and received their help in other matters such as the construction of hydroelectric dams and barrages. Yet in the years that followed, Pakistan was exploited to some extent by these countries to make it support them in international affairs and in the Cold-War as well. USSR had close relations with East-Pakistan, India and Afghanistan. Pakistan on the other hand had ties with USA. This is the reason Soviet aid was given to India on the issue of Kashmir. During the 1960s, Pakistan's relations with East Pakistan and the neighboring Afghanistan have also been extremely difficult due to the two latter's contest over the Durand Line. The foreign relations with Iran, Saudi Arabia and China remains extremely important and based on the extensive cooperation in national security and economic interests in the Persian Gulf and wide-ranging bilateral relations with the United States and other Western countries. With the growing influence of USSR in the region, Pakistan cemented close security relations with China in Asia and Poland in Europe during most of the Cold War. While Pakistan's had "on-off relations" with the United States, Pakistan assisted President Nixon re-approach with China and other East Asian countries.

The Cold War

The period between 1947 to late 1990's has been filled with the infamous Cold War between USA and USSR. Pakistan played a major role in this war siding with USA on most occasions. Yet it was not the West that helped Pakistan in its efforts against India, rather Russia had supported India quite often on different grounds. The USSR even backed the politicians of East Pakistan in accomplishing their goal of separating from Pakistan. It seemed as if Pakistan had formally made an enemy.

It is known that Pakistan had a 'Up and Down' relation with USA and this is quite visible in the Period between 1965 to 1980. The following is a list of Pakistan's foreign policies that have changed during this period

- 1) Withdrawal from the Commonwealth. (Jan 1972) Recognition of East Germany, Democratic Republics of Korea and Vietnam, and East Germany (Nov 1972) Withdrawal from SEATO (Feb 1972)
- 2) Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's government created the 'Afghan Cell' within Pakistan's foreign office and assigned it a policy that included strengthening ties with and empowering Islamists in exile in Pakistan, and improving Pakistan's influence over governments in Kabul.

- 3) In 1976, Pakistan ran into trouble with the US over the issue of acquisition of a nuclear processing plant. Kissinger (an American diplomat/ political scientist) had told Bhutto; 'If you do not cancel, modify or postpone the Processing Plant

Agreement, we will make a horrible example of you' After Pakistan's nuclear deal with France, the relations between the Bhutto regime and the US deteriorated and military aid from USA was again suspended. In 1976 Pakistan was negotiating to buy 110 US A-7 fighter bombers and they appeared to have made the sale conditions upon Pakistan when the US tried to block the deal by suspending new economic assistance and military sales and withdrawal of A-7 aircraft offer (1977)

4) In December 1974, Rafi Raza went to Moscow and brought back word of a Soviet agreement to advance 4.5 billion rupees, in foreign exchange, to help Pakistan build a Steel Mill near Karachi. By 1976 a medium-wave broadcasting radio station had been erected in the vicinities of Islamabad with the USSR's assistance. In June 30, 1977, the Soviet Union had, over the years, committed a total of \$517.64 million in loans to Pakistan. The USSR continued to assist in searching oil, gas and other natural resources in Pakistan's territory. It is worth mentioning that nowadays there are quite a number of oil and gas fields under operation discovered by Soviet geologists. The fairly warm Pak-Soviet ties were under Bhutto.

5) For the first time in history of the country, the relationship with United States was at a low point and relations even severed when the United States opposed Pakistan's nuclear deterrence program. The leftists and Bhutto's policy towards Soviet Union was seen sympathetic and had built a bridge for Soviet Union to gain access in Pakistan's warm water ports, that both United States and Soviet Union had lacked. It is clear that during this time Pakistan had improved its relations with the USSR and cooled its relations with USA. Also one of the major causes of these changes was Pakistan's nuclear problem, one which would be a significant factor in Pakistan's future foreign policies.

Pakistan-China Relations

The relations between Pakistan and China are marked by deep rooted strategic harmony that reflects at every level individual, national, and international. The recent visit by the Chinese premier to Pakistan symbolizes the level of importance the Chinese leadership keeps for Pakistan. But unfortunately these relations are not properly translated into a workable mechanism where both could exploit the opportunities equally and sufficiently. Pakistan and China are two different countries having different cultures, values and ideas. Over the years the mutual trust and understanding between these two neighbours has nurtured the relationship and enriched it day by day to the level of complete mutual harmony. Besides this, both countries are maintaining the relationship at diplomatic level as well as people to people level. China is Pakistan's largest trade partner in the world and Pakistan is China's second largest trade partner in South Asia, after India. Pakistan's exports to China were worth US\$ 3.1 billion and imports worth US\$ 9.2 billion in 2012. Bilateral trade between the two countries has reached \$12 billion, and both sides are committed to bring it up to \$15 billion over the next two to three years. However, there is trade imbalance which is mostly tilted towards China. It needs to be overcome to make the trade flow harmonious. Pakistan needs to chalk out policies which can promote Pakistani exports to Chinese market so that the Pakistani local business community can benefit more. Another aspect of Pak-China economic and trade relation is that the economic exchange is mainly at governmental level which should be rather at micro level. The non-government commerce has been far below its potential which is needed to augment further. There are multiple factors which are directly or indirectly impinging upon Pakistan's export to China which are detrimental in some ways to further development of bilateral economic co-operation. In this backdrop, it would be a thaw in these bad economic times to have persistent Chinese economic assistance and support to sustain economic and trade activities in Pakistan.

History with India

Pakistan has had numerous conflicts with India since 1947. The two are globally known as rivals and competitors. After partition India refused to pay the amount which was to be given to Pakistan as an initial amount for starting different economic activities. It also took control of princely states which should have been given to Pakistan (Hyderabad, Calcutta, etc.) The two countries have also contested the waters of the rivers flowing in Punjab which has oft caused a blow to Pakistan's economy as Pakistan's agriculture greatly depends on these rivers. India played a major role in the formation of Bangladesh. Pakistan has fought three wars with India over Kashmir. To this date, Pakistan sees India as a constant threat and vice versa. Over the years, the two countries have tried to better their relations. Whether these attempts were sincere or merely for diplomacy are for the committee to decide.

Afghanistan-Pakistan Relations

Both the countries have a long sustained relationship for sharing not only one of the world's longest and most porous borders but also the Pashtun heritage and its tribal culture that has facilitated the jihadists from both the countries to get into a seamless relationship. Pak-Afghan relations go back to the times of the early Mughals. Since then the two have had disputes and bad relations. The biggest factor in the deterioration of their relations is due to the involvement of USA and NATO in Afghanistan and the infamous drone strikes. Though NATO forces are pulling out of Afghanistan, there remain the problems of supplying the troops that remain. The other major problem is the continuation of aid to Afghanistan once the NATO forces are out of the state. Afghanistan is a neighboring state. At the moment Pakistan has good and friendly relations with Afghanistan but if we go back especially to the early years of independence we do find problems in the relationship. It was mainly because of the government of that time questioned the legitimacy of the Durand Line that is the border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, and laid claim Pakistani territory on the name of Pakhunistan. It sided with the 'Pakhtunistan' issue and created problems for Pakistan, but as this issue was pushed to the background with the passage of time, relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan improved. No matter what the relationship between the government of Pakistan and Afghanistan in the early years, the relationship at the individual level has always been cordial. There is continual cross-migration of people between the two states. During the Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979, Pakistan opposed the Soviet intervention and supported the resistance against the Soviet Union which gave birth to the Mujahideen groups, Taliban. Pakistan supported the Taliban government in Afghanistan but in Sept 11, 2001 when the regional and international environment changed Pakistan withdrew support to the Taliban, because the incident in America had major effects on world diplomacy. Pakistan got involved in global efforts to contain terrorism. Pakistan extended all kinds of economic and technological assistance to the Karzai government for reconstruction and rehabilitation of Afghanistan. The interest of Pakistan is that a friendly neighboring country should stabilize, overcome its problems so that the refugees there can no longer be a problem for Pakistan.

Pakistan and Bangladesh

The creation of Bangladesh caused grief to Pakistan. In the initial years there was a lot of bitterness between the two countries. Bangladesh was East Pakistan but the internal instability and external conspiracies gave birth to this new country. Pakistan initially had bitter relations but recognized it in February 1974 and from that time its relation with Bangladesh has gradually improved, despite the fact that in the initial years both the countries had complaints against each other. In the present day context the countries have cordial relations, trade has improved and the visits of senior official and political leaders have been there. Both worked together within the framework of SAARC and OIC. With the passage of time the relations of both these countries are going to expand.

Pakistan's Relation with Iran

Iran was the first country to internationally recognize the sovereign status of Pakistan. Currently, both countries are economic partners. This cooperation lasted throughout the Cold war, with Iran supporting Pakistan in its conflicts with arch-rival, India. In return, Pakistan supported Iran militarily during the Iran–Iraq War in the 1980s. Since 2000, relations between the two states have been good, and economic and military collaboration has strengthened the relationship. Recent difficulties have included disputes over trade, and political position. While Pakistan's foreign policy maintains balanced relations with Saudi Arabia, the United States, and the European Union, Iran tends to warn against it, and raised concerns about Pakistan's absolute backing of the Taliban during the fourth phase of civil war in Afghanistan in the last years of the 20th century. Nevertheless, economic and trade relations continued to expand in both absolute and relative terms, leading to the signing of a Free Trade Agreement between the two countries in 1999. At present, both countries are cooperating and forming alliances in a number of areas of mutual interest, such as fighting the drug trade along their common border and combating Afghan supported tribal insurgency along their border. Iran has been a respected, popular, and favored nation among Pakistanis, with 76% of Pakistanis viewing their western neighbor positively, making Pakistan the most pro-Iran nation in the world. In 2005, Iran and Pakistan had conducted US\$500 million of trade. The land border at Taftan is the conduit for trade in electricity and oil. Iran is extending its railway network towards Taftan. The Iran-Pakistan-India pipeline (IPI Pipeline) is currently under discussion; though India backed out from the project. The Indian government was under pressure by the United States against the IPI pipeline project, and appears to have heeded American policy after India and the United States proceeded to sign the nuclear deal. In addition, the international sanctions on Iran due to its controversial nuclear program could also become a factor in derailing IPI pipeline project altogether. Trade between the two countries has increased by £1.4 billion in 2009.

Pakistan's Relation with the Islamic World

If you look at the constitution of Pakistan you find that one of the principles of policy urges the government to maintain and pursue close and cordial relations with the Muslim World. So in other words it is imperative from constitutional perspective for the government of Pakistan to maintain and pursue close and friendly relations with the Muslim World. It's not simply in the post-independence period that Pakistan started pursuing cordial relations with the Muslim World, Pakistan heritage shows that Muslims of this region had great interest in and concern for Muslims living in any part of the World. You could find in the pre-independence period that the Muslims of this region and the Muslim League that led the independence movement always supported the Muslim cause elsewhere. After independence this became a permanent and regular aspect of Pakistan's foreign policy. So, we can say that the principles of policy in all the constitutions carry special attachment for Muslims and their heritage. The love for Muslim brotherhood continued during and after the independence. Second issue that can be raised here is the Pakistan's support for the Palestinian cause. Pakistan, being a Muslim state, always sided with the national rights of the Palestinian people. It strongly supported the independent Palestinian state. This support goes back to the pre-independence period when Muslim League passed resolution after resolution in support of the Palestine issue and after independence the state of Pakistan has been an ardent and an active supporter of the Palestinian cause at all levels. Sharing grievous concern over the atrocities inflicted on the Muslims, it condemned the Israeli policies. And Pakistan has criticized time and again quite bitterly the atrocities that Israel commits against the Palestinians from time to time. Organization of Islamic Conference is the largest Muslim forum in the world. Pakistan was very active in creating this forum and it had remained associated with the OIC right from the beginning of this organization Pakistan was among the 51 Muslim nations which attended the inaugural session in Rabat (1969). Its second conference was held at Lahore in 1974, its session held at the city chambers in the city of Lahore which was a matter of great honour and pride for Pakistan that the heads of states, governments and the top leaders of the Muslim World were present in Pakistan for some time.

Pakistan and Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia and Pakistan have an extensive economic relationship that expanded rapidly after 1972. Saudis have always provided economic assistance and loans to Pakistan and it had also invested capital in Pakistan in various projects. An important aspect of relationship is oil supply to Pakistan from Saudi Arabia. Since 1998 SA had been supplying crude oil to Pakistan on deferred payment basis which means that you get the oil now but you make the payment of its price later on gradually. This has help to ease economic pressure on Pakistan and Pakistan has been able to obtain oil. SA is the biggest oil supplier to Pakistan at the moment. This relationship is going to expand over the years because both have been expanding the area of cooperation for example latest addition to this cooperation is counter terrorism that is both are cooperating to contain terrorism in the region.

Pakistan and Turkey

Turkey is another Muslim country with a long history of close and cordial relations with Pakistan. Turkey had stood by Pakistan in all kinds of situations in wars or in peace Turkey has supported Pakistan. On Kashmir, Turkey has supported Pakistan and called for a peaceful resolution. If Turkey had been supportive of Pakistan then Pakistan has also supported it in all kinds of situations especially on the Cyprus issue. In Cyprus people of Turkish origin or you can say that Turkish Cypriotes were a minority and there was a problem of their rights and interests in Cyprus. In 1974 Turkey landed its troops in Northern Cyprus and Turkish Cypriotes established their own separate entity. Pakistan has been supportive of Turkey and Turkish Cypriotes for this problem and Turkey had appreciated that gesture. There have been high level civil and military visits, in fact their top military leaders visited Pakistan and Pakistani top military leaders responded to that and go back to Turkey for similar visits. Both have great contribution in the multilateral arrangements of CENTO, RCD, ECO, etc.

Pakistan's Relations with the European Union

Since the start of its cooperation with Pakistan in 1976, the European Commission has committed more than €500 million to projects and programs. During the 1980s the Commission launched a mix of infrastructure and social development projects which focused on development of roads, bridges, a fishing harbor facility, rural electricity infrastructure, livestock, education, vocational training and integrated rural development. In the 1990s the Commission streamlined and consolidated its portfolio and reoriented its activities towards policy-based social sector investment programs, placing greater emphasis on human development and environmental management in line with shifts in government policy. In addition, the Commission provided support to smaller-scale operations with NGOs in areas such as population welfare, child labor, income generation, drug demand reduction and rural health. Under the previous CSP, the EC cooperation in Pakistan focused on human development, in particular basic education programs at provincial level. To further strengthen the ties between Islamabad, Berlin and Brussels, a conference entitled 'EU-Pakistan Strategic Dialogue: Challenges and Prospects', was held in Islamabad in January 2012. The project was jointly organized by the Konrad- Adenauer-Stiftung (KAS) and the Center for International Strategic Studies (CISS). The idea of the conference is that the EU and some of its major member countries like Germany can play a key role in assisting and supporting as well as leading Pakistan in the right direction to become a stable state in South Asia. The two days conference included presentations and brainstorming sessions in working groups. The target group of the conference consisted of political decision makers, parliamentarians, academics, researchers, opinion leaders, and practitioners. The conference work plan will consist of the following components:

1. Conceptual integrated analyses of the evolving concepts of security, media, trade and the regional perspectives in the EU-Pakistan relationship.
2. The EU's approach to a number of specific security issues (regional conflict; terrorism; WMD proliferation); economic development; energy and climate change; and socio-cultural issues and Pakistani thinking on the subjects.
3. A publication, wrapping-up the project's findings in order to envisage scenarios

for the future of Pakistan and the EU policy towards external security issues and multilateral approaches to threats and challenges.

History

The European Union (EU) and Pakistan have strong relations, especially when it comes to trade. The EU and Pakistan made a commitment to strengthening their relationship under a Cooperation Agreement on Partnership and Development, which entered into force in 2004. Going back to the initial cooperation agreement with Pakistan in 1976, the importance of the EU's relationship with Pakistan has grown substantially in importance over time, culminating in the first EU-Pakistan summit held in Brussels on 17 June 2009. Germany as one of the most important stakeholder of the EU has established a closely cordial relation with Pakistan as well. Commercial trade between Islamabad and Berlin became very essential in recent years, with Germany being Pakistan's fourth largest trade partner. Challenges of Pakistan's Foreign Policy First of all, Pakistan is faced with the challenge of the way it should preserve its sovereignty. The post-9/11 world opened a new era of challenges to Pakistan. The violation of its sovereignty by US drones is a recent phenomenon. Though the breach of sovereignty has existed since 2004, major escalation was witnessed after March 2009 when US President Barack Obama announced the Af-Pak strategy. From the Salala check post attack to the Abbottabad raid, there are several incidents of the breach of Pakistan's sovereignty. Pakistan is still enmeshed in this tangle: first, how to secure its western border and how to avoid a conflict with the US and its allies, even with the Afghan national army, and how to preserve the sanctity of its sovereignty while ensuring the perpetual inflow of foreign aid/loans to Pakistan? Second, Pakistan has been facing the challenge of the vanishing of the principle of parity with India in the region. Since 1947, Pakistan has endeavored to achieve (and keep) parity with India as an equal friend or foe in the region. By 1998, Pakistan had achieved nuclear parity with India. However, in the post-9/11 world, the US-India nuclear energy deal in 2008 confirmed Pakistan's status as being far below India on the ladder of regional importance. Afterwards, in 2009, the Af-Pak strategy of the US made Pakistan realize once again that the US does not consider Pakistan's parity claim vis-à-vis India. The strategy de-hyphenated Pakistan from India and hyphenated Pakistan with Afghanistan. Pakistan is still struggling to come out of that status. It may be possible that post-2014 Afghanistan offers Pakistan an opportunity to hyphenate itself once again with India. Pakistan is relying on time and not on its efforts to offer a strategic alternative to the world in the region of South Asia. Third, the next challenge haunting Pakistan is its failure to see the world through the economic lens. Pakistan is still seeing the world through the antiquated political and ideological glasses of the Cold War. It seems obsessed with its geo-political importance. The internalization of this point has made Pakistan's policy makers, in both the bureaucracy and military, convinced that the world is in need of Pakistan's help and cooperation, and consequently the world should come to terms with Pakistan on the conditions laid down by it. This obsession has become a major hurdle in changing Pakistan's approach towards the world and a reason for Pakistan's failure to notice the changes happening around, especially in the field of economics. Similarly, Pakistan thinks that a kind of ideological conflict, similar to the one prevalent in the Cold War era, is still going on and Pakistan can seek monetary benefit out of it. This delusion has become another major obstacle in transforming Pakistan's approach towards the emerging realities of the world. Pakistan has still not been realizing the importance of economic global polarity driven by the capitalist school of thought. Similarly, Pakistan is still not realizing the importance of regional trade (in South Asia and with Central Asia) to strengthen its economy locally. Fourth, Pakistan has been facing the challenge of being seen as a country equipped with nuclear weapons but flooded with Islamic extremists. Pakistan may

declare 1,000 times that its nuclear assets are in safe hands and that it is observing certain special safety protocols but the world is apprehensive of a single mistake, which may happen in these 'safe hands' or a single breach of any protocol being observed. The existence of non-state actors (Islamic extremists) associated with Pakistan or working on Pakistan's land with impunity is considered a threat to the peace of the world. The ongoing war on terror has increased the numerical and ideological strength of these non-state actors. Moreover, any news of an attack launched by non-state actors on any nuclear facility of Pakistan will bring Pakistan under immense international pressure either to abandon its nuclear programme or hand over the weapons to any international security force. In the beginning of this year, Pakistan confessed that the major challenge to its security was coming from inside. Pakistan is not only struggling with curbing the menace of non-state actors on its land but is also trying to find a way for the amelioration of its international image.

Fifth, the next challenge is that Pakistan is failing in playing a significant and proactive role in the Muslim world. In the past, Pakistan tried to be the voice of the Muslim world, besides being considered its leader. Pakistan tried to observe the 'ideology of Pakistan' in its diplomatic relations with other countries. However, not only had the end of the Cold War but also the post-9/11 phase changed the policy contours of the countries of the Muslim world. The attack of Iraq on Kuwait in 1990 and the invasion of Iraq by the US and its allies in 2003 divided the Muslim countries. It is now obvious that the acquisition of nuclear technology has not automatically graduated Pakistan to be a significant voice of the Muslim world. Pakistan lacks economic development and political stability, which keeps on making Pakistan dependent on international players and financial institutions. The Kerry- Lugar-Berman Act 2009 was also a major manifestation of Pakistan's deteriorating status in the eyes of the US. The ongoing sectarian conflict is also persuading Pakistan to think of the renewal of its relations with the countries of the Muslim world.

What Should be Considered while Preparing a Resolution?

- 1) Protection of Freedom and Sovereignty**
- 2) Cordial Relations with Muslim Countries**
- 3) Non-Interference in Internal Affairs of Other Countries**
- 4) Implementation of U.N Charter**
- 5) Forming Foreign policies pertaining to Pakistan's Tribal Belt**
- 6) Non-Alignment (Pakistan follows the policy of Non-Alignment i.e. to keep away from alignment with any big power bloc, and avoids taking sides in the cold war. It has also given up its association with SEATO and CENTO and was included in NAM in 1979.)**
- 7) Support for Self-Determination and Condemnation of Racial Discrimination**
- 8) Policies that are beneficial for the Pakistan and will bring advantages such as investment, trade, support on war against terror.**
- 9) No compromise over Nations Integrity and self-defense 10) Member of International Organization (Pakistan had become the member of the British Commonwealth with the time of its establishment. In addition it is the member of**

United Nations (U.N), Non-Aligned Movement (NAM), Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC), Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO), South Asian Association for Regional Co- operation (SAARC), Association of South East Asian Nations (ASEAN), and D-Eight.



Topic Area B: Restoration of Student Politics in Pakistan

Politics now a days is known to those who pay heed to it only, we misunderstand the term 'political' and even use it as an abusive article. Why? Isn't it the dimension through which we got our land, Pakistan? Isn't it the way through which we got those 90,000 prisoners back from the international jails? If it is so than why ignore politics, the way toward dialogue, the road that has always led to amnesty within and without. It is what our great founder Muhammad Ali Jinnah did. He introduced us to the concept of 'Parliament', he founded this country as the secular and democratic state we all needed. But, currently on the scene politics isn't the problem, but it has been shown to us as one. Let's dive down into the deep pool of history. The history says that this country faced the darkest age of national crisis and it still is, and it is due to the ban on student politics and it being sabotaged for certain interests. In this debatable session of Pakistan National Assembly we will thoroughly go through the chronological attacks on the student empowerment of this land. It has been banned since the long reigning martial laws. When student politics got banned, political parties stopped getting fresh political blood. The same old batch of our political uncles kept running the scenario, due to which instead of innovative legislation and formation in democracy we face a crisis of political learning. Second of all when student politics is nowhere the public now doesn't believe in the country's system due to which people have become violent toward our national politics. Very less romantic people and thinkers are left who love the motherland as it should be. The youth has been deprived of all its rights and now there is no recognition for the education of many Pakistani students. Our syllabuses have been designed in a way that we are discouraged from student-dialogue and pupils only know what their rights are and have forgotten what their duties must be. Due to such a big vacuum of time, about 30 years and counting our youth doesn't know the reproduction of Pakistani politics and its significance. We need new thinkers, ideology supporters and logic makers. Let's legislate for what is 'OUR' right! We don't have to be students who have been grouped as student politicians with violence; we have to be student politicians with words and democracy with diplomacy as our only skill. If you have what it takes to take our rights back through dialogue than you are ready to hear the words 'People's Champion'.

Prominent Student Unions in Pakistan

Before student unions were banned by the Ziaul Haq dictatorship in 1984, their activities were conducted through regular annual elections in universities and colleges.

A Brief History

Student politics in Pakistan has had a tumultuous but rich democratic history. Before student unions were banned by the Ziaul Haq dictatorship in 1984, their activities were conducted through regular annual elections in universities and colleges. Student parties that participated in these elections played an important role in looking after vital academic, cultural and political interests of the students. The following is a history seen through brief profiles of some of the country's leading student parties.

Islami-Jamiat-i-Taleba (IJT) The student wing of the Jamaat-i-Islami (JI). Repeatedly defeated by the NSF in student union elections in the 1960s. Gained electoral strength in the early 1970s and sustained the momentum through the decade. Played a significant role in the 1977 movement against the Z A Bhutto regime. Accused of introducing firearms in

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student politics when some members fired upon an NSF rally at the University of Karachi in 1979. The IJT became more violent after student politics were banned in 1982 by Ziaul Haq. Eventually it lost ground in Karachi to the rise of the All Pakistan Muttehida Students Organisation (APMSO) in the late 1980s. It showed unimpressive performance in Punjab when student union elections were briefly revived by the first Benazir Bhutto government in 1989. A more populist faction broke away in early 1990s and formed Pasban.

Muslim Students Federation (MSF)

The student wing of the Pakistan Muslim League (PML). Supported Ayub Khan till 1965, but joined the NSF's agitation against the Ayub regime in the late 1960s. Withered away in the 1970s before being revamped and revived in the late 1980s by the Zia-backed PML. Supported the Nawaz Sharif faction of the PML in the 1990s.

Ideology populist (1960s); conservative (1970s-80s); populist-conservative (1990s-2000s).

Famous former members Nawaz Sharif (former prime minister); Jawad Ahmed (pop singer).

Peoples Students Federation (PSF)

The student wing of the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Formed in 1972. Part of progressive students' alliances, the USM and the PSA in the 1970s and 1980s. Exhibited electoral strength in interior Sindh and northern Punjab. Played a leading role in the anti-Zia agitation in the late 1970s and then again during the MRD movement in 1981 and 1983. Many members were flogged and tortured by the Zia regime. Currently the organising strength behind the PPP rallies.

Progressive Students Alliance (PSA)

Electoral alliance formed in late 1970s to counter the IJT's rise in Punjab colleges and universities. Included the National Students Federation, Democratic Students Federation and the People's Students Federation. Defeated the IJT in 1977 and 1978 student union elections in northern Punjab. Played the leading role in the anti-Zia movements at the Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad in the 1980s. Dissolved in 1988.

National Students Federation (NSF)

One of the oldest progressive student organisations in Pakistan. Began as the student wing of the Communist Party of Pakistan (CPP). Exhibited electoral supremacy in student union elections through the 1960s and early 1970s. Was at the forefront of the movement against the Ayub Khan dictatorship in 1968. Experienced a split in early 1960s when a pro-China faction broke away and formed the Democratic Students Federation (DSF). Electoral influence started to wane from 1973 onwards as another faction broke away and formed the Liberal Students Federation (LSF).

In the late 1970s and 1980s the NSF became part of the progressive electoral alliances, the United Students Movement (USM) in Karachi and the Progressive Students Alliance in Punjab. Currently the NSF has a small presence in a couple of colleges in Sindh, Punjab and Azad Kashmir.

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Urban Sindh-based nationalist students' group formed in 1978; in retrospect the student forerunner of the Muttahida and the Mohajir Qaumi Movement. Was part of the progressive students alliance, the USM, until becoming an independent force in 1988. Sidelined the IJT's influence in Karachi. Still strong in Karachi.

Ideology ethnic-socialist (1970s); militant-ethnic (1980s-90s); liberal (2000s).

Famous former members Altaf Hussain (politician); Azeem Ahmed Tariq (former minister); Imran Farooq (politician); Dr Farooq Sattar (former minister).

United Students Movement (USM)

An electoral student alliance formed in Karachi in 1979. Included the National Students Federation, the Democratic Students Federation, the People's Students Federation, the All Pakistan Mohajir Students Organisation, the Baloch Students Organisation and the Pakhtoon Students Federation. Managed to route the IJT in the last student union elections held in Karachi in 1981. Survived as an anti-Zia/anti-IJT alliance throughout the 1980s; also worked against the militant Jeeay Sindh Students Federation (JSSF) and the pro-Zia Punjabi Students Federation.

Ideology Islamist (1960s-70s-80s-90s-2000s)

Famous former members Liaquat Baloch (former minister); Shaikh Rashid Ahmed (former minister); Mohammad Ali Durrani (former minister); Hussain Haqqani; Farid Paracha.

Ideology Marxist (1960s-70s); progressive (1980s-90s)

Famous former members Miraj Mohammad Khan (former minister); Fatyab Ali Khan (politician); Raja Anwar (former minister/writer); Ammanullah (Politician); Dr Haroon Ahmed (Psychiatrist).

Ideology Socialist (1970s); progressive (1980s-90s-2000s)

Famous former members Jehangir Badar (former minister); Masroor Ahsan (former senator); Qasim Zia (former minister/hockey player); Salamullah Tipu (notorious radical).

The withering Though student organisations remained active in most state-owned colleges and universities and continued taking part in union elections, these elections were deemed null and void by the regime. From the 1990s onwards, with the rapid withering away of conventional student politics, the colleges and universities (especially privately owned) started being subtly and silently penetrated by some elusive socio-political groups. These groups were however unsuccessful in getting a foothold in state-owned campuses, mainly due to the presence of conventional student parties there. The target audience of these new groups are the new urban middle-class youth now caught between a 'corrupt democracy' and a politicised clergy. That's what their analysis was as they saw the new generation open up to 'new ideas'. These groups (at least in educational institutions) do not operate like the conventional student groups. In fact they claim to shun politics and pretend to help the students become better and more successful Muslims.

This is so because the two main groups having access to private-owned campuses are both Islamic in orientation. One is the evangelical Tableeghi Jamaat and the other the Hizb-ut-Tahrir, a group first formed in the UK and which advocates the imposition of a worldwide modern-day Caliphate. Conscious of the repulsion students demonstrated for the violence associated with the established student groups on state-owned campuses in the 1980s, the Tableeghi Jamaat and the Tahrir slipped into private educational institutions with a more social agenda. Instead of preaching political ideology, these groups emphasised on 'social behaviour'.

Restoration of Student Politics in Pakistan

1. **What should be the role of Parliament in the restoration of Student Politics in Pakistan?**
2. **Our schools, colleges and universities should be re-introduced to student politics and what should be the rights given back to students?**
3. **Was it wrong to ban student politics in Pakistan?**
4. **Should Governments play a role in organizing political programs for Pakistani students?**
5. **Should educational institutions design their system with the content of early student politics?**
6. **We do face a political crisis due to absence of student politics in Pakistan. Why if Yes or No?**
7. **How and who should design our syllabi in order to restore political orientation for students?**
8. **How can Politics be taught as a profession?**
9. **What is 'Politics'?**
10. **National politics should be based on party politics?**
11. **The insertion of independent or non-party candidates in history till now weakened Pakistani politics and parliament?**

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