

CURRENT AFFAIRS — PART-II

Q.2. “Pakistan stands at a decisive turning point where climate shocks, rapid population growth, governance gaps, non-traditional security threats and intense fiscal stress are converging to heighten national vulnerability.” Critically evaluate and propose policy measures.

1. Introduction

2. Multiple crises are converging to make Pakistan increasingly vulnerable

- 2.1 Climate shocks are intensifying existing socioeconomic vulnerabilities.
- 2.2 Rapid population growth is increasing pressure on resources and services.
- 2.3 Governance gaps weaken the state’s capacity to respond effectively.
- 2.4 Non-traditional security threats are expanding beyond conventional warfare.
- 2.5 Fiscal stress limits the state’s capacity to finance development and resilience.

3. Climate change is transforming environmental risks into national security challenges

- 3.1 Extreme floods are damaging infrastructure, agriculture and livelihoods.
- 3.2 Heatwaves are threatening public health and economic productivity.
- 3.3 Water scarcity is intensifying competition over vital resources.
- 3.4 Climate-induced displacement is increasing social pressures.
- 3.5 Food and energy insecurity can aggravate political instability.

4. Demographic, governance and fiscal pressures are deepening Pakistan’s vulnerability

- 4.1 A rapidly growing population is increasing demand for employment and basic services.
- 4.2 Youth unemployment can create socioeconomic and political frustrations.
- 4.3 Weak institutional capacity reduces policy implementation.

- 4.4 Political instability disrupts long-term development planning.
- 4.5 High debt and fiscal deficits restrict public investment.
- 4.6 Cybersecurity, terrorism, pandemics and organised crime are expanding the security spectrum.

5. Pakistan needs an integrated resilience strategy combining prevention, reform and preparedness

- 5.1 Strengthen climate adaptation and disaster-risk management.
- 5.2 Expand early-warning systems and climate-resilient infrastructure.
- 5.3 Improve water governance and promote climate-smart agriculture.
- 5.4 Invest in population management, education and human capital.
- 5.5 Strengthen local governance and institutional coordination.
- 5.6 Broaden the tax base and improve fiscal management.
- 5.7 Develop comprehensive policies for cyber, health and food security.

6. Conclusion

Q.3. “Brain drain threatens Pakistan’s ability to achieve its SDGs by 2030.” Discuss its causes and consequences with reference to three SDGs.

1. Introduction

2. Pakistan’s brain drain is driven by persistent economic and institutional weaknesses

- 2.1 Limited professional opportunities encourage skilled migration.
- 2.2 Low wages reduce the incentive to remain in Pakistan.
- 2.3 Political and economic uncertainty encourages permanent migration.
- 2.4 Weak research and innovation ecosystems push professionals abroad.
- 2.5 Better career prospects and living standards attract skilled Pakistanis.
- 2.6 International demand for Pakistani professionals facilitates outward migration.

3. Brain drain threatens SDG 3 by weakening Pakistan’s healthcare capacity

- 3.1 Migration of doctors and medical professionals creates domestic shortages.
- 3.2 Rural and underserved areas suffer disproportionately from skilled-worker losses.

- 3.3 Public investment in medical education can benefit foreign health systems.
- 3.4 Healthcare shortages can undermine progress towards universal health coverage.

4. Brain drain threatens SDG 4 by weakening Pakistan’s education and research systems

- 4.1 Migration of teachers and academics reduces institutional capacity.
- 4.2 Loss of researchers weakens domestic innovation.
- 4.3 Universities face difficulties retaining highly qualified faculty.
- 4.4 Weak educational capacity limits human-capital development.

5. Brain drain threatens SDG 8 by reducing productive capacity and decent employment

- 5.1 Migration reduces the domestic supply of specialised skills.
- 5.2 Loss of entrepreneurs and professionals weakens productivity.
- 5.3 Domestic industries face shortages of skilled human resources.
- 5.4 Remittances provide short-term benefits but cannot fully replace lost human capital.

6. Pakistan can convert brain drain into brain circulation through targeted reforms

- 6.1 Improve professional salaries and working conditions.
- 6.2 Create stronger research and innovation opportunities.
- 6.3 Develop incentives for skilled expatriates to return.
- 6.4 Promote knowledge-transfer programmes with the diaspora.
- 6.5 Align education and employment policies with domestic economic needs.

7. Conclusion

Q.4. “Natural resources, though desirable for development of a country, can become a source of conflict and instability.” Critically appraise with examples, lessons and way forward for Pakistan.

1. Introduction

2. Natural resources can accelerate economic development when effectively governed

- 2.1 Energy resources can strengthen industrialisation.
- 2.2 Minerals can generate exports and foreign investment.
- 2.3 Water resources support agriculture and hydropower.
- 2.4 Resource revenues can finance public development.
- 2.5 Effective management can transform natural wealth into national prosperity.

3. Resource abundance can produce conflict when benefits and costs are distributed unfairly

- 3.1 Competition over resource control can fuel political conflict.
- 3.2 Unequal distribution can generate regional grievances.
- 3.3 Resource revenues can strengthen corruption and rent-seeking.
- 3.4 Environmental degradation can create local resistance.
- 3.5 External actors may compete for strategic resources.

4. International experience demonstrates both the resource curse and successful resource management

- 4.1 Nigeria demonstrates how oil wealth can coexist with conflict and corruption.
- 4.2 Democratic Republic of Congo illustrates the link between minerals and armed conflict.
- 4.3 Venezuela demonstrates how resource dependence can create economic vulnerability.
- 4.4 Norway demonstrates how strong institutions can convert resource wealth into sustainable prosperity.
- 4.5 Botswana demonstrates the value of transparent resource management.

5. Pakistan's resource disputes reflect governance, distribution and environmental challenges

- 5.1 Balochistan's mineral resources have generated debates over ownership and benefit-sharing.
- 5.2 Water distribution remains sensitive among provinces.
- 5.3 Mining can generate environmental and community concerns.
- 5.4 Weak local participation can intensify resistance to development projects.
- 5.5 Lack of transparency can undermine public trust in resource governance.

6. Pakistan should transform resource wealth into inclusive and conflict-sensitive development

- 6.1 Ensure transparent and equitable distribution of resource revenues.
- 6.2 Strengthen provincial and local participation in resource management.
- 6.3 Establish stronger environmental safeguards.

- 6.4 Improve transparency in mining and energy contracts.
- 6.5 Invest resource revenues in human capital and local development.
- 6.6 Strengthen institutions to prevent corruption and rent-seeking.

7. Conclusion

Q.5. NGOs were once called a “force multiplier” but now face growing public skepticism. Critically examine why NGO space is shrinking globally, with specific reference to Pakistan.

1. Introduction

2. NGOs have historically strengthened governance and social development

- 2.1 NGOs provide services where state capacity remains limited.
- 2.2 They support health, education, poverty reduction and disaster relief.
- 2.3 NGOs amplify marginalised voices in public policy.
- 2.4 They contribute to human-rights advocacy and social accountability.
- 2.5 Their specialised expertise can complement government institutions.

3. The global NGO space is shrinking because governments increasingly prioritise control and security

- 3.1 Governments impose stricter registration and funding regulations.
- 3.2 Foreign funding is increasingly viewed through a national-security lens.
- 3.3 Authoritarian tendencies restrict civic and political freedoms.
- 3.4 Misinformation and declining public trust damage NGO credibility.
- 3.5 Some NGOs face criticism over weak transparency and accountability.

4. Pakistan’s NGO sector faces distinctive regulatory and trust-related challenges

- 4.1 Concerns about foreign funding have increased regulatory scrutiny.
- 4.2 Registration and compliance requirements can restrict NGO operations.
- 4.3 Security concerns influence the operating environment of civil society.
- 4.4 Political polarisation can undermine perceptions of NGO neutrality.
- 4.5 Questions regarding transparency and accountability affect public confidence.
- 4.6 Restrictions can particularly affect rights-based and advocacy organisations.

5. A stronger regulatory framework should protect civic space while ensuring accountability

- 5.1 Registration procedures should become transparent and predictable.
- 5.2 Financial reporting should be strengthened without excessive administrative burdens.
- 5.3 NGOs should maintain transparency regarding funding and operations.
- 5.4 Government should distinguish legitimate civic activity from genuine security threats.
- 5.5 Independent oversight can rebuild public trust.
- 5.6 Collaboration between state, NGOs and communities can improve service delivery.

6. Conclusion

Q.6. COPs and Their Achievements with Special Reference to COP30

1. Introduction

2. COPs have created the central multilateral framework for addressing climate change

- 2.1 COPs bring countries together under the UNFCCC.
- 2.2 They provide a platform for negotiating mitigation and adaptation measures.
- 2.3 They promote international climate cooperation.
- 2.4 They facilitate climate finance and technology discussions.
- 2.5 They review collective progress towards climate objectives.

3. Major COPs have produced important milestones in global climate governance

- 3.1 COP3 Kyoto 1997 established binding emission targets for developed countries.
- 3.2 COP21 Paris 2015 produced the Paris Agreement and its temperature goals.
- 3.3 COP26 Glasgow 2021 strengthened global commitments on mitigation and adaptation.
- 3.4 COP27 Sharm el-Sheikh 2022 established the Loss and Damage Fund framework.
- 3.5 COP28 Dubai 2023 called for transitioning away from fossil fuels and advanced the first Global Stocktake.
- 3.6 COP29 Baku 2024 focused heavily on climate finance.

4. COP30 in Belém strengthened the implementation dimension of climate diplomacy

- 4.1 COP30 placed implementation of existing climate commitments at the centre of negotiations.
- 4.2 It advanced discussions on climate finance for developing countries.
- 4.3 Adaptation remained central to the needs of vulnerable states.
- 4.4 The Amazonian setting highlighted forests, biodiversity and indigenous communities.
- 4.5 COP30 reinforced the need to translate climate pledges into national action.

5. COPs still face major limitations in converting commitments into measurable climate action

- 5.1 National climate commitments remain insufficient for the 1.5°C pathway.
- 5.2 Developed and developing countries continue to disagree over finance.
- 5.3 Fossil-fuel dependence remains difficult to overcome.
- 5.4 Implementation and enforcement mechanisms remain limited.
- 5.5 Climate-vulnerable countries continue to demand greater financial support.

6. Pakistan should use COP diplomacy to advance climate finance and resilience priorities

- 6.1 Seek greater access to adaptation and Loss and Damage finance.
- 6.2 Strengthen climate diplomacy among vulnerable developing countries.
- 6.3 Present evidence-based cases for climate-induced losses.
- 6.4 Improve domestic climate governance to effectively utilise international finance.

7. Conclusion

Q.7. Prospects for Resolution of the Palestinian Conflict and the UN Security Council's U.S.-Drafted Gaza Resolution

1. Introduction

2. The Palestinian conflict remains unresolved because its political and security dimensions are deeply interconnected

- 2.1 The absence of a final-status settlement remains the central problem.
- 2.2 Israeli security concerns and Palestinian statehood demands remain difficult to reconcile.
- 2.3 The status of Jerusalem remains highly contested.
- 2.4 Israeli settlements complicate prospects for a viable Palestinian state.

- 2.5 Gaza's humanitarian crisis adds urgency to diplomatic efforts.

3. The recent U.S.-drafted UNSC resolution creates a diplomatic opening but does not guarantee lasting peace

- 3.1 A Security Council-backed framework can provide international legitimacy.
- 3.2 Ceasefire and humanitarian provisions can reduce immediate civilian suffering.
- 3.3 International monitoring can support implementation.
- 3.4 Reconstruction can create conditions for longer-term political settlement.
- 3.5 The absence of genuine political consensus could undermine implementation.
- 3.6 Durable peace requires addressing the underlying question of Palestinian statehood.

4. Major obstacles continue to threaten implementation of any Gaza peace framework

- 4.1 Disagreement over Hamas and Gaza's future governance remains fundamental.
- 4.2 Israeli security concerns may limit political concessions.
- 4.3 Palestinian political divisions weaken negotiating capacity.
- 4.4 Settlement expansion and territorial disputes complicate the two-state prospect.
- 4.5 Regional rivalries and great-power competition can obstruct consensus.
- 4.6 Weak enforcement of international decisions remains a recurring challenge.

5. Pakistan can contribute diplomatically and humanitarily to a credible peace process

- 5.1 Pakistan can support international diplomatic efforts through the UN.
- 5.2 It can advocate consistently for Palestinian self-determination.
- 5.3 Pakistan can contribute to humanitarian and reconstruction assistance.
- 5.4 It can coordinate with OIC members and other supportive states.
- 5.5 Pakistan can support an inclusive and internationally supervised reconstruction process.
- 5.6 Its role should remain diplomatic, humanitarian and consistent with international law.

6. A durable Palestinian settlement ultimately requires a credible two-state political framework

- 6.1 Palestinian statehood must remain central to negotiations.
- 6.2 Security guarantees must be provided to all relevant parties.
- 6.3 Gaza reconstruction should accompany political negotiations.
- 6.4 International guarantees and monitoring should support implementation.

7. Conclusion

Q.8 (i). Pros and Cons of Food Production through Genetically Modified Organisms (GMOs)

1. Introduction

2. GMOs can strengthen agricultural productivity and food security

- Higher crop yields
- Pest and disease resistance
- Drought and climate tolerance
- Improved nutritional content
- Reduced crop losses

3. GMO agriculture also raises environmental and socioeconomic concerns

- Possible effects on biodiversity
- Development of resistant pests
- Gene-flow concerns
- Dependence on patented seeds
- High costs for small farmers

4. Pakistan needs science-based regulation of GMO agriculture

- Strong biosafety assessment
- Transparent labelling
- Independent scientific monitoring
- Farmer awareness
- Research into locally suitable crops

5. Conclusion

Q.8 (ii). Implications of Depopulation

1. Introduction

2. Depopulation creates major demographic and economic pressures

- Shrinking labour force

- Ageing population
- Lower economic productivity
- Reduced consumer demand
- Pressure on pension systems

3. Depopulation produces important social and regional consequences

- Rural and regional decline
- Closure of schools and services
- Increased dependency ratio
- Loss of community vitality
- Greater pressure on working-age populations

4. Migration and declining fertility are major drivers of depopulation

- Youth migration
- Low birth rates
- Economic insecurity
- Urbanisation
- Changing family structures

5. Countries can mitigate depopulation through demographic and economic policies

- Family-support policies
- Employment creation
- Managed immigration
- Regional development
- Support for working families

6. Conclusion

Q.8 (iii). Role of China in Evolving World Order

1. Introduction

2. China's economic rise is shifting the distribution of global power

- World's major manufacturing centre
- Major trading partner for numerous states

- Expanding technological capabilities
- Growing role in global supply chains
- Increasing international investment

3. China is building alternative platforms of global economic connectivity

- **Belt and Road Initiative**
- **Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank**
- **BRICS**
- Greater Global South engagement
- Expansion of regional trade partnerships

4. China is challenging aspects of the existing Western-led international order

- Advocacy of a multipolar world
- Greater representation for developing countries
- Increasing use of the renminbi in international transactions
- Competition with the United States in technology and geopolitics
- Greater influence in international institutions

5. China's growing power creates both opportunities and strategic challenges for Pakistan

- **5.1** CPEC strengthens Pakistan-China economic connectivity.
- **5.2** Chinese investment can support infrastructure and industrial development.
- **5.3** China provides diplomatic and strategic support to Pakistan.
- **5.4** Growing U.S.-China rivalry creates strategic balancing challenges for Pakistan.
- **5.5** Pakistan needs to maximize economic cooperation while preserving strategic autonomy.

6. Conclusion