

May 2023

IORA ACADEMY (CSS/PMS)

by Sir Imran

Siddique

Dawn Newspaper (May 15, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central Column “Why soft power counts” by Maleeha Lodhi.

Q.1. Critically observe two benefits of the soft power projection? [2]

Answer: When integrated into hard-power projection, it may enhance the potential of the state by increasing its moral clout in diplomacy. Soft-power is an image booster which attracts tourism and promotes industrial brand name.

Q.2. Give the name of at least three top ranking soft-power states.

Answer: America, Canada, Singapore, Qatar and China.

Editorial “Declining remittances”

Q.3. What are the major reasons for the rapidly declining remittances in the ongoing fiscal year?

Any Two. [3]

1. Gap between interbank and open-market dollar-rate.
2. Overseas Pakistanis, thus, prefer sending their money through hawwala or hundi.
3. Ishaq Dar’s policy of fixing the dollar value.

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Dawn Newspaper (May 16, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central Column “Roots of the rage” by Arifa Noor.

Q.1. Critically analyse reasons for the recent violent behavior of the people during protests against the status quo (military establishment)? Any THREE. [3]

Answer:

1. First, socio economic conditions of the people have convinced them into thinking that establishment’s political meddling is responsible for their poverty. Empty stomach is a potential rebel.
2. Secondly, establishment mostly relied upon its support base in the Punjab. First PML(N) and then PTI, popular parties in this province, spread this narrative that the establishment is

responsible for the political chaos.

3. Challenge to the powerful status quo comes from social media and its handlers, the youth.
4. There is a great realization on the part of civil society that power equation tilted in favour of military must change.
5. Dollars from America has dried up. They were necessary to keep subsidies to the military led businesses (fouji foundation). They were also circulated in the society to narrow fiscal gap artificially capping the popular dissent in the society.

Editorial “Census concluded”

Q.3. Give at least two reasons for the controversy on the recently concluded census. [2]

Answer:

Allegations of politically motivated results in head count.

Parties in Karachi and Baluchistan have shown concern that their population is shown lesser than their actual number.

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Dawn Newspaper (May 17, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central Column “Creeping military rule” by Zahid Hussain & editorial “Dangerous designs”.

Q.1. Critically examine the repercussions of trying the civilians under Army Act 1952. [3]

Answer:

1. Trial of the civilians who rioted and set fire to military installations under Army Act 1952 and Official Secrets Act 1923 would set the precedent for army to control the political parties in future by installing fear in their hearts.
2. It will invoke human rights organizations to condemn Pakistan’s parallel justice system.
3. It goes against the basic principle of the constitution which categorically separates judiciary and executive. If military as the institution under executive organ intrudes into the domain of judiciary, it will set the trend for other institutions to expand their constitutional parameters.
4. Only army personnel or the accused of espionage for a hostile agency can be tried under army act.

Editorial “LSM decline”

Q.3. Give at least THREE reasons for the LSM decline. [2]

Answer:

1. Restrictions on export related import of raw material.
2. Rise in dollar and shrinking domestic
3. Decline in the international demands in the face of myriad global crises.
4. Delay in the deal with IMF has negatively impacted the economic indicators of our country.
5. Decline in our credit rating by global rating agencies.
6. Political instability and shrinking business confidence.

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Dawn Newspaper (May 28, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central column "Competition gap" by Ambar Darr.

Q.1. What are the reasons for the low performance of Competition Commission of Pakistan? Any THREE [3]

Answer:

Absence of governmental will-power and judiciary's attitude are the main reasons. First Pakistani government first delayed enacting the competition act until 2010. And once it was passed, it didn't establish Competition Appellate Tribunal. It, resultantly, put pressure on the courts in terms of petitions related to competition. The Courts rather than deciding the cases at the earliest, not only delayed them but also restricted in many cases the Commission to punish the violators. Thus with its wings clipped the CCP appeared to lose its appetite for politically sensitive enforcement and allowed powerful sugar and what cartels to ravage the economy while it focused on the easier cases.

Q.2. What consequences our economy is suffering from ineffectual CCP? Any TWO. [2]

Answer:

The real victims of CCP's impotence are entrepreneurs and innovators struggling to make space for themselves in markets that continue to be in the stranglehold of large corporate groups, and ultimately, the Pakistani consumer who deprived of choice, quality and price options remains at their mercy.

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Dawn Newspaper (May 29, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central column "Why is UNSC reform is elusive" by Maleeha Lodhi.

Q.1. Global structure was built upon the Bretton Woods institutions in 1944/45. Name the three institutions. [2]

Answer:

(i) IMF & World Bank

(ii) UNO (Although UNO was created after the agreement on the above two at Bretton Woods, both of them are the part of the UN charter and important components of international system UN strove to build)

Q.2. Why the global institutional structure built in 1944/45 has become outdated? And why UN reforms have become inevitable? Any TWO reasons. [2]

Answer:

The institutional architecture of the international system was the product of a specific historical era. International system based upon Bretton Woods twin and the UN reflected the realities of the newly emerged global order agreed upon by the victors of WWII. The victors became the permanent members of the most premium and executive organ of the UNO. Possession of the veto power buttressed P5's position and created an inequality that persisted to date. Thus UN responsibility to bring peace and whose decisions were binding became anchored in the past. New hubs of power including G-20 and non-permanent members of BRICS have spoken aloud for decades to reform the UNO especially Security council. Emerging multi-polar world has added to the intensity of urge to reform the UNO as it reflects the power relations of 1945 and needed to be updated. Since 2009 the talks have been going on to reform the Security Council in informal sessions of General Assembly.

Q.3. What are the major areas of reform discussion in the UNO? [2]

1. Categories of membership
2. Question of veto
3. Regional representation
4. Size of the UNSC
5. Working method of expanded Security Council.

Q.4. Critically evaluate the point of view of United for Consensus Group? [3]

Answer:

Countries agree on reform but fundamental disagreement persists such as increasing Council size, more representation of the developing nations especially Africa. The principal disagreement is between those countries dubbed as G-4, which aspire for permanent seat, and United for Consensus Group, which favours non-permanent seats, more democracy, more accountability and more representation in UNSC. Reform shouldn't reinforce inequality and preserve privilege for a few, but give all member states, big, medium and small, a chance to serve on the Council by rotating elected seats. This would make the body more representative. Moreover, in the democratic era, reform should be in sync with the spirit of the age. The principle of election is the bedrock of democracy. That should also apply to Council reform. More elected members will make it more democratic and accountable to the general membership.

IORA ACADEMY (CSS/PMS)*by Sir Imran***Siddique**

Dawn Newspaper (May 30, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central column "Beyond the crackdown" by Arifa Noor & editorial "Judicial quarrel".**Q.1.** Compare Pakistan's case with Egypt and Myanmar in terms of democracy. [3]**Answer:**

In both cases there is just a nominal democracy. Junta or military calls the shots. No democratic dispensation without junta's wishes can make government. However, Pakistan's case is different in some cases. In Pakistan there hasn't been the dictatorial rule for more than a decade, but in case of other two countries the regimes ruled for over 40 years. Pakistani people get soon tired of any one government. They then seek change in guard.

Q.2. What are the consequences of judicial quarrels?

[4]

Answer:

The schism in the top court has distracted the institution's focus away from its core responsibilities, leaving a vacuum in the trichotomy of power. This bodes ill for a country suffering protracted social

and political unrest. The superior judiciary is supposed to be the voice of wisdom and restraint in testing times: instead, it seems to be incapable of getting over their personal differences to agree on basic modus vivendi. The inability to get the executive to hold elections according to the time period enshrined in the constitution shows how this institution's credibility is at stake. If the full court in unanimity could have given a clear-cut decision, the situation would have been different. It is a gradual disorder of the legal system. Judiciary's infighting has emboldened the law breakers and they seem invincible.

IORA ACADEMY (CSS/PMS)

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Dawn Newspaper (May 31, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Editorials "Constitutional courts" & "Hunger pangs"

by Sir Imran

Q.1. What could be the significance of the constitutional courts for state? [3]

Answer:

The creation of such a court to deal with the constitutionality of various parliamentary actions and legislations was a proposal jointly agreed to by the PP and PML-N under the Charter of Democracy signed in 2006. This court will be comprised of retired, non-controversial chief justices, along with the judges drawn from the superior judiciary as well as parliamentarians with legal expertise.

More than 60 countries have introduced this idea of constitutional court. It is not bad one considering the massive and continuously increasing backlog of cases pending before Supreme Court Justices, who must currently deal with both pressing constitutional matters as well as regular criminal and civil appeals.

Q.2. What are the major reasons U.N agencies FAO-WFP have given for the acute food insecurity of Pakistan? [4]

Answer:

Pakistan is grouped with the states such as Ethiopia, Kenya and Syria in terms of food insecurity by the UN agencies. The study lists the three main factors.

1. Economic and political crises, along with massive floods of 2022. It predicts that the political crisis and civil unrest are likely to worsen as elections draw close. Indeed, high inflation has made severe impact upon middle and lower middle class. Even financially more secure segments of the society have to tighten their belts significantly.
2. Amid this polycrisis the country is battling food insecurity. When foreign exchange reserves are nose-diving the food import has become quite difficult.
3. The rich elite, be it political, bureaucratic or military, have easy access to variety of food, they can't realise the magnitude of the problems.
4. Food security is also dependent upon agri-imports. When dollar goes up, the prices of import also inflate.

IORA ACADEMY (CSS/PMS)
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by Sir Imran

Dawn Newspaper (June 11, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central Column "Stereotyping Baloch youth" by Amir Rana

Q.1. What are the stereotypes we have attached with the Baloch youth? [2]

Answer:

Some stereotypes about them.

1. They are not well educated.
2. They are highly secular.
3. They are not loyal to Pakistan.
4. They are not religious.

Editorial "Struggling to pay"

Q.2. What will you think be the repercussions of expansionary budget? [3]

Answer:

Expansionary budget presented by the government is populist. It only aims to net the voters by spending a lot on salaries (about 30 to 35% raise), and on development projects. When budget deficit is already projected to increase exponentially the next year and we have failed to get IMF tranche to

manage our expenditures, extra burden is unadvisable. It may repel IMF further because it was stressing on increasing revenue and cutting down expenditures. Without IMF deal sooner than later, and high expenditures, as per budgetary commitments, the risk of default on sovereign debt payment has increased manifold.

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Dawn Newspaper (June 12, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central Column “Confrontation or coexistence” by Maleeha Lodhi

Q.1. What is the chip war between China and U.S? [2]

ANSWER:

Washington is engaged in a battle to maintain supremacy in technology with an intense ‘chip war’ underway. It has imposed sweeping measures to bar American companies and allied countries from exporting chips and advanced chip equipment to China in order to cripple its semiconductor industry, that manufactures chips and circuits for modern electronics ranging from supercomputers and smartphones to automobiles. These restrictions have further worsened relations.

Editorial “Agriculture woes”

Q.2. What are the reforms needed for the small growers to alleviate hunger in the country? [3]

Answer:

The government must

1. invest heavily in agriculture research,
2. set up initiatives to encourage technologies,
3. mitigate the impact of climate change.
4. enhance the small growers’ access to cheaper formal credit, give them crop insurance, and link them to the market to eliminate the role of the middleman

IORA ACADEMY (CSS/PMS)**by Sir Imran****Siddique****Dawn Newspaper (June 13, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)****Editorial "Looking east"****Q.1. Critically evaluate the prospects of our trade with India? [3]****Answer:**

1. We can learn lessons from India how they never returned to IMF after successfully implementing reforms during the first IMF programme.
2. Pakistan by opening trade with India will open up to new ideas from East.
3. Pakistan's access to South Asia and East Asia will become convenient.
4. Many countries with historical rivalries do not refuse to engage economically with each other, why should Pakistan and India? It is difficult to disagree. It would be net loss for the people.
5. Cheaper goods can be imported from food to pharmaceuticals.

Dawn Newspaper (June 26, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)**Editorial "Revised budget"****Q.1. What were the three demands of IMF before releasing the required funds to Pakistan? [5]****Answer:**

1. Expanding tax net.
2. Removing control on exchange rate.
3. External financing gap estimates.

Pakistan adjusted more taxes in the budget of almost hundreds of billions of rupees and made cuts on expenditures. It was one of the demands of IMF. However, we still missed the opportunity of expanding the tax net by netting the undertaxed sectors such as Retailers, big industrialists and real estate. Govt. although increased withholding tax on sale and purchase of property but it's not alternative to documentation of the sector. There was nothing in the revised budget about

reformation of SOE's. Most of the burden of the taxes will fall upon organized corporate sector and already compliant tax payers.

central Column “Bargain with the future” by Maleeha Lodhi

Q.2. Why is quality leadership needed to fix the structural reforms of the country? Give at least THREE reasons.

Answer:

Good leadership is flexible with its opponents, it reforms the economy by taking bitter measures and avoid populist steps. A good leader selects the economic team prudently, formulates the policy directions judiciously and implement them in letter and spirit. It's about will-power which fixes the structural reforms and brings about stability. A good leader turns fiscal deficiencies into economic strength by galvanizing the support base. He takes on board all the stake holders and devise a pluralistic, inclusive approach.

Dawn Newspaper (July 5, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Editorial “Grim figures”

Q.1. Which two major challenges the security planners need to keep in mind while planning counterterrorism plans? [2]

Answer:

1. Fast changing nature of militancy which includes an unexpected nexus between Baloch secular nationalists and religiously inspired Pakhtun TTP.
2. Second, the rising figure of casualties of personnel and civilians.

Editorial “Flash in the pan”

Q.2. What two short term impacts has the deal with IMF made on Pakistan's economy? [2]

Answer:

1. Rupee appreciation
2. Stock market activity

Q.3. Why the deal with IMF is a short term breather? Any One reasons. [1]

1. We have to pay many times bigger debt this year than the volume of IMF short term arrangement
2. Rating agencies Moody's and Fitch are still skeptical about Pakistan's paying capability
3. Long term structural reforms are not in short sight.

Dawn Newspaper (July 9, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Editorial “Keeping promises”

Q.1. Why have Pakistan failed to keep promises when it came to respecting the sovereign financial contracts? [2]

Answer:

1. Policy inconsistency due to change of the governments and political polarization
2. Interference of judiciary in the past such as in Recko Deq, Steel Mills and LNG contract with Qatar.

Editorial “Troubled waters”

Q.2. Indus Water Treaty allows for bilateral resolution of disputes, however, in case of stubborn irritants, what is stipulated by the treaty? [1]

Answer:

Legal proceedings with UNO to appoint a neutral arbiter whose ruling will be binding upon both the states.

Q.3. Name the two water projects against which Pakistan initiated legal proceedings in 2016 at the Permanent Court of Arbitration in The Hague. [1]

Answer:

Kishanganga Power Project on Jhelum River and Ratle Project on Chenab River.

“Changing Security Scenario” by Amir Rana.

Q.4. What are the reasons that China is brokering bilateral deal between Pakistan and Iran? Any THREE. [2]

1. To bring closer the states which are members of BRI to make the plan successful.
2. To fight terrorism by ensuring regional cooperation and removing misgivings.
3. To reduce Indian influence in Iran.
4. Create a window to negotiate on Pakistan’s concerns regarding Baloch nationalists taking shelter in Iran and the latter’s doubts about Saudi-West proxy Jaish-ul-Adl using Pakistan’s soil

Dawn Newspaper (July 10, 2023) (Only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Editorial “Food concerns”

Q.1. What is the focus of Land Information and Management System (LIMS)? [2]

Answer: LIMS aims at transforming how farming is done in Pakistan with a view to optimizing agricultural output for improving domestic food security and creating exportable surplus for Gulf states and China. The new strategy is backed by military and financed by the Gulf and China.

Q.2. What structural reforms Pakistan needs apart from the foreign funded LIMS? [4]

Answer: According to World Food Programme 37 pc. of Pakistan is food insecure. We need deeper structural changes through policy reforms such as climate change, soil erosion, land fragmentation, lower crop yields, etc. Rising demand has to be met either through an increase in yield or expansion in cultivable cropland. Govt. needs to put stop to encroachment of cultivable land by housing societies.

Dawn Newspaper (Aug. 14, 2023) (only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Editorial “Reviving PIA”

Q.1. Describe the government’s plan to revive PIA. [2]

Answer:

PIA’s liabilities and debt of Rs. 742 billion have far exceeded its assets of Rs. 110 bn. PDM government has placed the airliner on its long list of privatization. This privatization plan was revealed after Islamabad pledged to implement strict IMF plan. But, finding an investor to buy such a trash is a big issue. The authorities thus aim at restructuring it before handing over its management to private investors. Under this plan, the authorities intend to transfer the airline’s liabilities to a new holding company before outsourcing management. It is imperative to divest its liabilities to make it attractive for investors.

Central column “Breaking from the past” by Maleeha Lodhi.

Q.2. Describe the four social-economic trends, which have emerged over the decades since 1947, leading to the necessity of a new political set up focused upon the needs of the people. [5]

Answer:

1. Resurgence of urban middle class. According to 2023 census, it is now evident that almost 40% of our population resides in urban areas. Rise in urbanisation means rise in urban middle class. It is now an influential economic and social group that wants a bigger voice in national affairs.
2. The shift in economic centre of power is also creating new political dynamics. An important indicator of this is the declining share of agriculture in national output. This has fallen to around 22 pc at present. Urban Pakistan now accounts for much of GDP mostly in services sector.

3. Technology driven changes and the information revolution are strengthening participation of the masses in policy affairs. This, in turn, has the potential to transform the old political power structure of clans-related influential families. Access to technology is making people better informed and well aware of their rights. All this is gradually changing the relationship between state and citizenry as well as how people evaluate governments and their performance.

4. The fourth trend is the growth of a more diverse and vibrant civil society.

Dawn Newspaper (Aug. 21, 2023) (only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central column “Power and purpose”.

Q.1. what are the reasons that we couldn’t transform the colonial-era civil service into modern governance tool. [2]

Answer:

1. Protracted politicization of civil service esp. Police system distorted its functioning a. eroded its authority b. de-emphasised its merit c. draining its morale.
2. Postponed reforms to keep it in sync with modern complex governance issues.

Editorial “Saudi-Iran bonhomie”

Q.2. What impact the Islamic world will have with Saudi-Iran rapprochement? [2]

Answer:

1. Sectarian tensions will come down especially Iraq, Bahrain and Pakistan.
2. Brutal proxy war in Yemen may be wound down.

Other political disputes in the Gulf may get some respite such as Iran has a dispute on some islands with UAE, gas field disputes with S. Arabia and Kuwait.

Dawn Newspaper (Sep. 11, 2023) (only for the senior students of more than two weeks)

Central Column “Era of Middle Powers” by Maleeha Lodhi.

Q.1. Pakistan is also included into the definition of a Middle Power, but for what one reason, Maleeha Lodhi describes, its global influence is diminished? [1]

Answer:

Economic issues

Q.2. What major financial reforms BRICS seeks in order to reconfigure the global order?

Answer:

They seek reform of the international financial system and Bretton Woods institutions. They are emerging as the countervailing force to US-led Western groupings, such as G7.

Q.3. Main features of current geopolitics are

Answer:

Multipolarity and U.S China rivalry

Q.4. How has U.S-China rivalry benefited Middle Powers? Explain with one example.

Answer:

Many middle powers are capitalising on the US-China competition to strengthen their bargaining position. They also seek to enhance their relations with both powers. They want to avoid getting embroiled into the cross hairs of their disputes. Saudi Arabia is a case in point. She has improved her ties with Tehran in an agreement brokered by China. It has urged Washington to pursue a grand bargain in the Middle East. This involves S.A normalising its relations with Israel and scale down its relations with Beijing in return of mutual security pact with the US. Riyadh is driving a tough bargain by making several demands - a defense pact with Washington, a civilian nuclear deal, missile defense system and other high-tech weapons along with substantial Israeli concessions for the Palestinians. Turkey is another country which has maintained ties with Russia and U.S. it sought to mediate between Russia and Ukraine and brokered the Black Sea Grain Deal. Ankara also used its leverage over the issue of Nato's expansion to secure concessions from the US and EU.