

US withdrawal from Afghanistan

By: **Sulman Ali**

The United States has announced complete withdrawal from Afghanistan. US President Joe Biden announced that America will withdraw its military by September 11, 2021, exactly 20 years after the 9/11 Twin Towers attack. "It's time to end America's longest war," Biden said. Official data indicates that the U.S. has spent \$978 billion on the Afghan war between 2001 to 2020. The US and NATO forces entered Afghanistan in 2001 to topple the Taliban government, in response to the Al-Qaeda attack on twin towers and Taliban's refusal to hand over Al-Qaeda Chief, Osama Bin Laden, to the US.

This is not the first time the US is leaving the region after a deadly conflict. After the first Afghan war, which ended in the disintegration of the USSR, the US conveniently left the region, leaving Afghanistan and Pakistan to counter the issues of militancy, religious extremism and the Taliban.

Former US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton admitted in an interview with Fox news that, "The Soviets left Afghanistan. And then we said great, goodbye – leaving these trained people who were fanatical in Afghanistan and Pakistan, leaving them well armed, creating a mess, frankly, that at the time we didn't really recognize."

Observers maintain that the US is not doing anything different this time, because even after its longest war the US has failed to eliminate the Taliban from the country. A large territory of the country is under the Taliban's control and this war has paved the way for extremist groups like ISIS and Al-Qaeda to establish their basis in the war-torn country. Experts reiterate that the US withdrawal will make the situation worse.

Analysts in Pakistan maintain that the circumstances for Pakistan can also become menacing. There is concern that the counterterror gains following Operation Zarb-e-Azb in the former FATA region might be lost in the absence of US forces. Even though Pakistan has almost completed the Pak-Afghan fence, it is not a sure safety against cross border attacks, observers say.

Since the US has announced its complete withdrawal, there is a new wave of militancy attacks in the country. Taliban have started fresh attacks against Afghan forces. Thousands of people have left their houses in the Helmand province of Afghanistan after the Taliban launched a massive offense against the army. "Many who still have not found shelter in the city need urgent assistance," noted provincial council head Attaullah Afghan.

The concerns were vindicated on Saturday, when a bomb attack targeting a girls' school in Kabul killed at least 85, mostly schoolgirls.

Authorities claim that the withdrawal has been done under a US-Taliban agreement, which means the Taliban now holds political legitimacy. This means Washington has accepted the Taliban as a strong political actor in Afghanistan, hence, held negotiations with them, which appears to be another success for the Taliban. After a two-decade war, observers contend that the US has accepted the Taliban as a powerful entity, at the cost of thousands of lives, and the destruction of economic and social structures.

Another major consequence of this whole scenario, as mentioned earlier, would be ISIS gaining space and base in the country. In the last couple of years, ISIS has gained power in different parts of the country, attacking Taliban, civilians and the military of Afghanistan. There are reports that the US has secretly supported the Taliban against ISIS, but after its withdrawal, it seems highly unlikely in the future.

Experts say that this means more attacks, militant clashes, civilian casualties, leading to a civil war situation is inevitable. What worries many observers is that the US might distance itself from these realities and might even may blame Afghanistan or Pakistan for "spreading terrorism" and will continuously urge the both countries to "do more" to stop urgency. Another concern shared is that while Washington has a major role in bringing Afghanistan to the current situation, the world might not blame the US for instability in Afghanistan in the coming future.

Experts also issue reminders of the situations created in the past, just like in the Middle East, where the US toppled Saddam Hussain's regime and tried the same with the Assaad regime in Syria, which resulted in complete devastation of the whole region and the emergence of extremist organisations like ISIS. The fear is that those situations might be similar to the one now in Afghanistan.

Last week, four FC soldiers were martyred and six others were injured in a cross-border attack in Manzakai sector in Balochistan's Zhob. In a statement, Pakistan military media wing said, "terrorists from Afghanistan ambushed them".

Madiha Afzal, a research fellow at the Brookings Institution, says that Pakistan would need to continue to seek cooperation with the US even after the withdrawal of troops, which shouldn't be limited to the strategic situation in Afghanistan.

"The new focus recognises that a geo-strategic approach only goes so far, and if Pakistan is to rise on the world stage, that position will have to be predicated on economic growth", she noted.

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Israel and India on self-destructive path

By: **Sajjad Shaukat**

Repeating the scenario of the war of 2014, in its worst form, since May 10 this year, Israeli airstrikes and ground shelling have martyred more than 200 Palestinians, including 50 children and 60 women, while injuring more than 1500 innocent civilians in Gaza in particular and the West Bank in general. Entire families in Gaza enclave are sleeping on one bed at night, so that if they are struck by the Israeli air raids, they all die.

Unmatched with Israeli heavy and modern weapons, freedom fighters of Hamas and the Islamic Jihad group Abu Ubaida had no option except firing rockets inside of Israel.

Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu had stated: "Israel will respond very forcefully. We will not tolerate attacks on our territory...Whoever strikes us will pay a heavy price."

Tensions have been running high since dozens of Jewish settlers marched to the Sheikh Jarrah neighbourhood and watched as Israeli forces assaulted Palestinian residents and protesters.

Israeli police stormed the Al-Aqsa Mosque in occupied East Jerusalem and attacked the Palestinians during special night prayers for the fasting month of Ramadan. Thousands of Palestinians staged protests in the Al-Aqsa Mosque complex, located in the Old City of Jerusalem.

According to Israel's Channel 12, "Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu has been waging two wars... Opposition lawmakers acknowledged that the prospects of a non-Netanyahu government still being formed were remote. Instead, Israel was likely to hold yet another general election... the Netanyahu era was coming to an end, with Naftali Bennett, a right-wing lawmaker, poised to lead Israel. Netanyahu... has led Israel for 12 straight years and is standing trial on multiple corruption charges... But he now appears to have neutralized the political threat, thanks in part to the escalation with the Palestinians."

Meanwhile, an emergency meeting of the foreign ministers, recently held by the OIC, called for an immediate halt to what it described as Israel's barbaric attacks on Gaza. Pakistan's Foreign Minister Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi condemned Israel for its tyrannical measures.

UN Secretary-General Antonio Guterres pleaded for an immediate end to the violence, warning a Security Council meeting that the fighting could plunge the region into an "uncontainable" crisis.

Earlier, called by China, the Security Council held an urgent meeting on the unrest in Jerusalem. The three sessions of the UN body also failed after the USA's moves to block a joint statement that would condemn Israel for the violence and call for a ceasefire.

Like the past administrations, US President Joe Biden and US Secretary of State Antony Blinken reiterated that Israel has the right to defend itself.

Biden also sent Linda Thomas-Greenfield, the USA's UN envoy, who continued to engage in diplomacy at the highest levels to try to de-escalate tensions. However, it is part of the double game of Washington.

Now, US-led major Western countries, including Egypt, are pushing both sides, Hamas and Tel Aviv, to cease fire to prevent a full-scale war, which Israel has already started.

Prime Minister Netanyahu has repeatedly stated that he will continue military operations against Gaza. He also rejected the two-state solution of the Israeli-Palestinian dispute which the US also stressed.

There have also been clashes between Jews and Israel's minority Arab community in mixed cities across Israel. These clashes which started in Israeli city of Lod, spread to other cities and towns. Protesters waving Palestinian flags burnt cars and properties, including a synagogue, and clashed with Israeli police.

Israeli Prime Minister Netanyahu who declared a state of emergency in Lod, equated it with dangerous civil war.

In this backdrop, a lot of anti-Israeli factions in the region, including Lebanon-based Hezbollah could be aiming to put more pressure on Israel and the Biden Administration for non-intervention in the Israel-Palestine conflict. Hezbollah leader Hassan Nasrallah praised Hamas for confronting Israel. In case of a wider war in the region, the Israeli forces would be in a weak position to defend their homeland.

In the mean time, large protests by pro-Palestinian activists are, again and again, being held in solidarity with Palestinians in Pakistan and various Islamic countries, including Turkey, and in major cities of the Western countries, urging the international community to take notice of Israeli continued state terrorism in Gaza.

Taking cognizance of the inaction of the UNO, OIC and the US-led West, Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan and Turkish President Recep Tayyip Erdogan who have strongly condemned Israel's heinous crimes on the Al-Aqsa Mosque as well as on Gaza, vowed to work together especially at the UNO, in jointly mobilizing the international community to help stop these strikes.

Israel occupied East Jerusalem and Syrian Golan Heights during the 1967 Arab-Israeli war and annexed the entire city in 1980 in a move that has never been recognized by the UNO or the international community.

Notably, the Balfour Declaration of 2 November 1917 which was a conspiracy of the American and the British rulers against the Palestinians was implemented. On 14 May 1948, the UNO acted upon the 1947 UN Partition Plan and established the state of Israel.

Similarly, during the partition of the Subcontinent, the people of the state of Jammu and Kashmir, which comprised a Muslim majority, decided to join Pakistan according to the British formula. But, the Dogra Raja, Sir Hari Singh, a Hindu who was ruling over the state in collusion with Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and Governor General Lord Mountbatten, joined India.

The Security Council adopted a resolution on 21 April 1948, which promised a plebiscite under UN auspices to enable the people of Jammu and Kashmir to determine whether they wished to join Pakistan or India. On 5 February 1964, India backed out of its commitment of holding a plebiscite. Instead, Indian Parliament declared Kashmir an integral part of the Indian Union.

Indian cruel actions against the Kashmiris reached climax on 5 August 2019 when the Indian extremist government led by Prime Minister Narendra Modi, the leader of the fanatic ruling BJP, revoked Articles 35A and 370 of the Indian Constitution, which gave a special status to the disputed territory. New Delhi unilaterally annexed Indian-Held Kashmir into the Indian Federation and took additional steps to turn the Muslim majority into a minority.

Implementing the ideology of Hindutva, Indian prejudiced rulers have issued over 1.8 million domicile certificates to non-Kashmiris to change the demographic structure of Indian-Held Kashmir.

And deployment of more than 900,000 military troops in Indian-Held Kashmir, who have martyred thousands of the Kashmiris through brutal tactics like fake encounters, while the closure of mosques, shortages of food, medicines for patients and coronavirus-affected persons have proven the worst form of India's state terrorism. Now, more than 18 months have passed. But the Indian strict military lockdown in Indian-Held Kashmir continues.

Besides various human rights violations, India denied medical treatment to the Kashmiris and their leaders who are in jails.

The Indian Citizenship Amendment Act 2019 (CAA) and the National Register of Citizens (NRC) further exposed the discriminatory policies of the Modi-led government against the Muslims.

Despite criticism of the rights groups, foreign leaders, the UN and moderate Hindus in wake of violent protests which killed hundreds of persons, mostly Muslims, by the police

and prejudiced Hindus, Modi's regime has not withdrawn the CAA/NRC. In fact, New Delhi is following the Israeli model of ethnic-cleansing of the Muslims in India as part of Hindutva ideology and to divert attention from internal issues and the scandals in wake of mishandling of the Coronaviurs pandemic.

Modi regime has been also using brutal force mercilessly in repressing various separatist movements, including Maoists' insurgency, while its counterinsurgency strategy to crush these movements has badly failed.

In these terms, Israel and India who are in collusion, especially against the Muslims, are moving on the self-destructive path, like the former USSR.

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Inside the Palestine-Israel conflict

By: **Syed Wajahat Ali**

The Israel-Palestine region is located at the eastern shore of the Mediterranean sea. It comprises modern Israel and the Palestinian territories of the Gaza Strip and the West Bank bordering Jordan, Syria, Egypt, Lebanon, and the Mediterranean. The territory has historically remained important for the great powers; from the Romans, Muslims, to the British. For a Mediterranean power, the land serves as a strategic land bridge to the eastern half and for an Eastern power, the land is important to control its flank in the Mediterranean hosting estuaries of many important rivers and waterways connecting Europe, the Middle East, and Asia. Ships use the Suez Canal to sail between the Mediterranean and Red Sea.

Four distinct topologies constitute the region: half of it is Negev desert, an extension of Sinai desert Egypt, the Coastal Plain begins in the Gaza Strip and extends northwards to the border of Lebanon, the Hill Region starts from the foothills of Mount Hermon to the south of Jerusalem, and the Jordan Rift Valley moves along the Jordan river and continues down to the Red Sea. Israel claims the western two-thirds of the Golan Heights, a strategic plateau located on the Syrian border. The Coastal Plain hosts the major core of the country. The greatest geographic challenge for Israel is a dearth of sufficient resources combined with a lack of strategic depth. Its narrowest point between the Mediterranean coast and the Palestinian West Bank is just 9.3 miles wide.

Before the UN Partition Plan for Palestine (1947), the whole region belonged to Palestine but was controlled by Britain. The UN plan gave away 55 percent of historic Palestine for the creation of a new Jewish state; 45 percent of land went to the Arabs while Jerusalem remained under international control. The Arab states declared that the two-state partition plan favoured the Jews and subsequently rejected the formation of the State of Israel, and declared war. Over time, Israel expanded by winning the 1948 and 1967 wars, moving borders, and establishing settlements. Following the 1967 victory, it seized a huge swathe of land beyond the green line, including the entire West Bank. Many Israelis saw this as a divine sign to regain the historically sacred hills of Judea and Samaria.

Israel's recent diplomatic normalisation with Bahrain, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia catalysed Israel's claims to legitimacy in the region. The inconsistent stands of the neighbouring countries from 1948 onwards have added to the complexity of the issue. What started as an Arab-Israel conflict gradually became the Palestine-Israel conflict

The 1993 Oslo Accords, between Israel and the Palestinian Liberation Organisation (PLO) and signed in Washington, divided the West Bank into three regions: 18 percent to be given to Palestinian self-rule; 22 percent of the area under Palestinian government control and Israeli security control; and 60 percent falling under full Israeli control. So here they ended up with this mess of a map. Israel's military monitors who and what moves in and out of these regions, including Gaza and the West Bank.

The goals of settlements are to secure more geographical space for Israeli citizens, diluting the Palestinian concentration in the West Bank, and to attain strategic depth across the Jordan Valley; a resourceful patch extended on the west bank of Jordan river, fertile, and militarily important to oversee the rest of the West Bank area. Settlers from all over the US and Europe have moved there for both practical and ideological reasons. The settlements are guarded by Israeli military checkpoints, properly developed, interconnected, and equipped with modern facilities. UN resolution 446 (1979) determined that "these settlements have no legal validity and constitute a serious obstruction to achieving a comprehensive, just, and lasting peace in the Middle East".

Palestinians are sandwiched and unwillingly follow the Israeli separation laws with limited freedom of mobility. Palestinian have less control over their economic resources and territory, bringing them to a state of utter disgrace and deprivation. They seek permission from Israeli authorities before constructing homes on the land which they consider their own. Most Palestinians oppose annexations as they fear more eviction, expropriating more lands, more displacements, above all, the extinction of their strong Arab-Islamic national identity in the region. The arrangement is a flagrant violation of international humanitarian law.

Jerusalem is the heart of the conflict. It has Al-Aqsa mosque, the third-holiest site for Muslims where they believe that the Prophet Muhammad (PBUH) started his journey to visit God; the Western Wall, part of the holiest site in the world for Jews since 567 BC; and the Church of the Holy Sepulcher, the place where many Christians believe Jesus was crucified, buried, and resurrected. The conflict of ownership dates back three millennia and is entrenched in profound religious roots. The city stands at the crossroads of all Abrahamic religions and witnessed a history of procrastinated wars, displacements, and settlements. The religious outlook of Jerusalem keeps changing along with its geographical contours. It is perhaps the most contentious real state of the world.

The recent unrest in occupied Palestine started with fears of an attempt to allow a new Israeli settlement in Sheikh Jarrah, a small colony of occupied Eastern Jerusalem. Israeli law allows only Jews to claim back their properties if they can prove title deeds before the 1948 war. No such law prevails for non-Jews. The unrest turned violent when Israeli police entered the compound of Al-Aqsa Mosque, where tens of thousands of Muslims were praying during Ramzan. The Israeli government passed a decree in 2019 that not more

than 10,000 people can gather for prayers in Al-Aqsa Mosque, whose compound is sacred for Jews as the Temple Mount. Many Muslims fear that Jews want to build a synagogue in the compound.

Israel does not view the encroachments as annexation. Rather, Israeli Prime Minister Benjamin Netanyahu calls it "applying sovereignty over our homeland". Naftali Bennett, former Israel's defense minister called settlements "an opportunity to anchor our security for generations and to cherish forever the land of our forefathers".

Far-right religious interpretations perpetuated the conflict. Many exclusivist Jews believe that they are the only rewarded, righteous, and entrusted followers to hold and execute the word of God on Earth while all other religions are deviating bystanders in the divine scheme. Many Muslim groups like Hamas, Hezbollah and the Muslim Brotherhood also take inference from their holy book that Jews are eternal enemies of Islam and they must go to any extreme to avoid the establishment of an independent Jewish state.

The international community including the UN, EU and OIC have already condemned Israel's defiance to international conventions and its human rights violations in the West Bank and Gaza. Israel has developed a well-equipped army to defend its vulnerable geography, and enjoys support from Washington and therefore ignores calls for calm. An Iman wrote of recent Israeli airstrikes on Gaza: "I put the kids to sleep in our bedroom, so that when we die, we die together, and no one will live to mourn the loss of another one."

Israel's recent diplomatic normalisation with Bahrain, the UAE, and Saudi Arabia catalysed Israel's claims to legitimacy in the region. The inconsistent stands of the neighbouring countries from 1948 onwards have added to the complexity of the issue. What started as an Arab-Israel conflict gradually became the Palestine-Israel conflict.

The conflict has both ideological and geographical limitations. The sensitive location of the region, growing population of both Israel and Palestine, limited exploitable land, galvanised religious sentiments, and the increasing plight of the local Palestinians, all accounted for this conflict to become a challenge for the diplomatic capitals. Practically, the current mapping of the area, as explained, cannot sustain without effective diplomatic enforcement. Moreover, peace deals in history turned void due to the lack of trust and resolve to co-exist. Israel's attempts to encroach upon the green line used to fuel the conflict, sometimes for domestic political consumption. A comprehensive territorial agreement cannot work without tapping the common socio-geographical realities, re-evaluating the conflict using a sociological approach instead of an ideological one, and political will to disagree in an agreeable manner by supporting pluralism for sustainable peace amid acute ethno-religious antagonism. The authors, intellectuals, artists, businessmen, musicians, and other sections of the civil society from both sides would have to unite and come forth to defy hatred.

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Overworked civil servants

By: **Muhammad Khudadad Chattha**

BACK in my civil service days, one comment by a senior stuck in my head for years. In a moment of candid frustration, the senior civil servant confessed that he and his colleagues were busy throughout their workday. Yet, if you were to take a step back and look at the big picture of the state of governance in Pakistan, nothing was really changing. This senior civil servant was obviously quite invested in Pakistan's institutional development but was often frustrated by these 'contradictory' half-truths. The reason why I say half-truths is that not all civil servants are as overworked or invested in institutional development. Nor has the civil service not evolved in Pakistan over time, although this change has certainly been at a slow pace.

So, what is really happening behind these 'contradictory' half-truths? It was several years after his remarks, that I found a conceptual language to express this apparent disconnect.

From a macro perspective, the first half-truth is of central importance. The civil service indeed has pockets of excellence with highly qualified individuals motivated for public service. At the same time, there is a large part of the civil service with the exact opposite. Combine this with a system where there are few disincentives for low performance (eg it is hard to fire a civil servant from a job), and you have a system where the highly qualified category is given most of the work, while the low-performing category gets to slack off.

The result? A system that relies on a small number of individuals for performance and consequently at an aggregate level does not move much. To the distant observer, the bureaucracy would seem like a stationary object representing the status quo. To the keen observer, there are interesting heterogeneities at play with some civil servants overworked and others slacking off.

Zooming into the micro perspective, the nature of work being assigned to civil servants determines the functional performance of the bureaucracy. A common theme that you might hear from civil servants is that they are quite busy with tasks throughout their workday, but these tasks are not necessarily related to their core functions.

Here, the concept of 'isomorphic mimicry' introduced by Lant Pritchett, Matt Andrews and Michael Woolcock is relevant. Pritchett and coauthors use the analogy of two snakes to explain the concept, which goes as follows. The eastern coral snake and the scarlet king snake both have red, yellow and black stripes and consequently look similar. However, the former is venomous, and the latter is not. As a result, the non-venomous scarlet king

snake can enjoy all the survival benefits of being venomous just because it looks like or 'isomorphically mimics' the venomous eastern coral snake.

Applying this analogy to the context of the civil service, you can have the public-sector organisation prioritising form over function just to look like a successful public-sector organisation. Imagine a public-sector organisation implementing a few 'international best practices' that do not necessarily work in the Pakistani context to look like a highly functional public-sector organisation in another country just to keep donors, politicians and voters happy in the short run. The result? A public sector where functional improvement takes a back seat in the long run.

At an even more granular level, the day-to-day activities of civil servants also offer interesting clues. 'Firefighting' is a word that often instantly resonates with overworked civil servants in Pakistan, which represents both an assignment of too many tasks and an inability to focus on the core tasks of the job. Recent work by Aditya Dasgupta and Devesh Kapur documents this phenomenon of 'bureaucratic overload' in India where civil servants are not able to allocate enough time to managerial tasks, which in turn risks the functional performance of the organisation. In the Pakistani context, similar 'firefighting' puts functional performance on the back burner.

There are thousands of well-meaning and hardworking civil servants in Pakistan who share the same frustration that the senior civil servant felt at work. The unfortunate part is that broader structural challenges of the civil service blunt the effort of these civil servants leading to the governance outcomes that we observe today. There is no silver bullet to solve the broader structural issues of the civil service since the problem is multifaceted and complex as discussed above. However, finding the right conceptual framing to define these complex problems is itself a gateway to potential solutions. After all, a problem well defined is already half-solved.

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A reform agenda

By: Tariq Khosa

POWER and celebrity status act like drugs, warping one's sense of reality and weaving a web of deceit, wherein too many in positions of power come to believe that laws and rules do not apply to them. This must change. While reflecting upon our follies of the past, it is time to rethink and change course for, as Khalil Gibran said: "Progress lies not in enhancing what is, but in advancing toward what will be."

Can our planners focus on a vision based on the concept of a care economy — health, education, housing, jobs, poverty alleviation, social welfare, justice? Can we tax the rich and give relief to the disadvantaged sections of society? We talk about Islamic humanism, but can we formulate concrete action plans around this concept of the state caring for society? While addressing structural reforms in economic sectors, ideally a charter of economy should be agreed upon by all major political parties. However, in a divisive political milieu, this appears to be wishful thinking. Can we ever think of gross national happiness by reducing the huge chasm between the rich and poor?

There is an urgent need to agree upon an effective internal security and governance framework. The following are some recommendations:

- 1) The National Internal Security Policy 2018-23 is quite comprehensive with a sound interprovincial institutional coordination mechanism. The cabinet may task the interior ministry with initiating the process of implementation, for what good are the policies if they are not to be implemented?
- 2) All provinces have come up with rule-of-law roadmaps. The interior ministry must coordinate with them and launch an initiative to improve the capacity of police, prosecution, the courts and prisons.
- 3) The Intelligence Bureau is a key instrument of support in matters related with criminal intelligence and facilitating law-enforcement agencies in combating organised crime. It should make a difference.
- 4) The National Counter Terrorism Authority was established in 2009 to come up with counterterrorism and counter violent extremism policies and strategies. Kinetic and CT-related measures adopted in the 20-point National Action Plan since 2015 have resulted in a 70 per cent reduction in acts of terror but specific measures against religious extremism remain unimplemented. Nacta undertook a policy review of CT NAP in 2019. Its national coordinator may brief the National Security Committee suggesting changes required for latest CT and CVE strategies.
- 5) The cabinet approved the setting up of a CE Commission in November 2020 and referred to its sub-committee on new legislative measures. The terms of reference may be finalised, and an independent CE commissioner appointed for three years.

- 6) The federal government must come up with a national strategy against organised crime. The FIA is the lead institution against interprovincial and transnational organised crimes. An inter-agency task force may be constituted to come up with a national strategy against TOC (including money laundering and terror financing). This institutional measure will also help Pakistan address FATF's concerns.
- 7) FIA and NAB are premier anti-corruption institutions, with overlapping legal mandates. Unfortunately, both have been often misused for political purposes at the behest of the ruling elite and security establishment. An independent commission against corruption must be established to review their performance and introduce meaningful reforms to promote integrity, ensure neutrality and enhance professionalism of these instruments of accountability.
- 8) The criminal justice system is broken and requires far-reaching reforms. This involves a concerted effort by the interior and law ministries, the attorney general's office and the Law and Justice Commission to come up with an action plan. A criminal justice commission, to be headed by a former Supreme Court chief justice of impeccable credentials is the need of the hour. 9) The National Police Bureau in the interior ministry should implement police reforms. A Police Reforms Committee constituted by the SC in May 2018, among whose members are nine retired and all the current serving IGPs, submitted its report to the Law and Justice Commission in January 2019. The report in two volumes was sent to the federal government (interior and law ministries) and provincial governments (chief secretaries) for implementation. Vested interests have scuttled the efforts to introduce meaningful police reforms.
- 9) Reforming the Punjab Police should be accorded the highest priority; what was achieved in KP in 2013-18 is doable in Punjab too. A start could be made by establishing an independent police complaints authority under the police law of 2002. A retired judge or police officer of unimpeachable integrity should be appointed for three years, along with six non-political members by the public service commission, to address public complaints against the police, especially at operational levels.
- 10) Civil service reforms are direly needed. While some measures have been recommended by the task force for restructuring of government machinery, what is really needed is to depoliticise the bureaucracy and inculcate public service ethos. This can only be achieved through security of tenures, merit-based recruitments and proper career planning.

Finally, let us frankly admit that in Pakistan we have failed to resolve the conflict between the state and the republic. Frequent military rule has resulted in erosion of democratic institutions. There is a constant tension and an undercurrent of mistrust between the military and civilian leadership. It reflects a paradox of power. The military draws a clear

distinction between the defenders of state — the embodiment of the national interests — as opposed to those who are perceived as defenders of special interests, like the leadership of political parties, feudal barons and business tycoons. It is in fact a crisis of leadership and institutions. Sadly, our political leadership has often faltered in promoting good governance and setting an example of probity and wisdom in steering the ship of the state under crises. The responsibility for good governance is on the political leadership. If they think that by giving extension in service to army chiefs, they can attain stability of tenure and promote the mantra of civilian and military on same page, they are sadly mistaken. Both may be on the same page but reading different books.

Pakistan needs to choose between decline under an authoritarian state or the renewal of the vision of its founding father to be a democratic, enlightened and progressive republic. Both the state and the republic need to converge around this democratic way forward.

The writer is former IG police and author of *The Faltering State* and *Inconvenient Truths*.

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Climate change and a green economy

By: **Dr Hassnain Javed**

Climate change, global warming and carbon emissions can no longer be dismissed as mere jargon cunningly employed by environmental activists to draw attention to their work. No, these are realities that affect the global population. According to the Geneva-based IDMC (Internal Displacement Monitoring Centre): "Nearly 1,900 disasters triggered 24.9 million new displacements across 140 countries and territories in 2019." Its Global Report on Internal Displacement 2020 went on to note that "[t]his is the highest figure recorded since 2012 and three times the number of displacements caused by conflict and violence." We are now looking at annual displacement figures of 20 million, on average. That we are facing a severe humanitarian crisis cannot be underestimated. Especially as the number of migrants is expected to reach 140 million by 2050 worldwide.

Simultaneously, the 2018 Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change's (IPCC) report on 'Global Warming of 1.5°C' warned that "total losses from natural catastrophes and synthetic disasters [globally] in 2018 was about USD 165 billion" and that if these were not mitigated, global temperatures would rise to 3.2°C, while the world will endure an 18-percent loss to GDP by 2050. According to another study (2008-2018), the developing world's agriculture sector suffered \$108 billion in economic damage; a huge price to pay.

The human cost of climate change is no less agonising, with more than 135 million in 55 countries classified as under crisis from famine in 2019. The devastating floods in South Asia resulted in over 1,200 deaths and affected over 20 million people, including 6.8 million children. This number could rise to 250,000 global deaths annually by 2030.

At the end of last month, US President Joe Biden convened the virtual Leaders Summit on Climate, with 40 countries in attendance. It is important to mention here that half of these account for 81 percent of global carbon emissions. China alone accounts for 27 percent of global emissions, followed by the US (11 percent) and India (6.6 percent), surpassing the European Union for the first time.

The summit called for renewed commitments from world leaders on mitigating climate change and an agreement to limit planetary warming to 1.5 degrees Celsius, achieve net-zero emissions by 2050 and mobilise technology transfer that leads to a sustainable green economy worldwide. Biden called for joint action on climate change: "All of us, particularly those who represent the world's largest economies, we have to step up." Chinese

President Xi Jinping urged “unprecedented ambition” coupled with action, while pledging to make his country carbon neutral by 2060.

Despite world powers vowing to pitch in play their part to curb the effects of climate change – the sad truth about it is that this does not affect everyone equally. Pakistan is a point in case. Although we account for less than 1 percent of carbon emissions, the German Watch Report ranked Pakistan 8th on its Long-term Global Climate Risk Index 2020. It is projected that by 2030, more than 250 million Pakistanis will migrate to cities, compared to 36 percent (of today's 220-million strong population) now.

Pakistan has experienced more than 173 extreme weather-related events over the last 20 years, causing a loss of \$3.8 billion to the national exchequer and more than 1.2 million acres of land. Other statistics reveal that Pakistan has incurred 0.3 percent life losses per 100,000 inhabitants during the same period.

Presently, economic and environmental experts believe that over the next 30 years, the country will need to generate USD \$7-15 billion to tackle the adverse effects of climate change. Through zero-emission power generation, 3.6 million Americans had clean energy jobs in 2019. This means that we need to drastically change our approach towards climate change and see it for the opportunities that addressing it may bring, rather than viewing it only as an imminent threat.

We must appreciate the current leadership for voicing concern vis-à-vis this most urgent issue, both at national and international forums; while introducing concrete steps towards mitigation. In addition to the globally-recognised Ten Billion Trees Tsunami Programme, the PTI government has allocated 6 percent of the federal budget to combat climate change. It has also introduced Recharge Pakistan – a flagship programme dedicated to water conservation and creating green jobs. Clean Green Pakistan (CGP) is a conscious grassroots effort under the Naya Pakistan banner to harness the power of public advocacy by promoting civil society, private and public partnerships.

Ideally, Pakistan should have been on a par with the developed world in terms of reaching its industrial potential through coal-based energy. However, we do not have the luxury 'to go black before we go green. The priority remains transitioning towards a Green Economy.

We must explore the opportunities presented in the name of Green Initiatives. Many local businesses in Pakistan have introduced sustainable and green business solutions. These must not only be appreciated but encouraged on a national level. Many popular retail outlets are taking the lead by using bio-degradable cotton fibre in clothing ranges. Some have introduced biodegradable, seed-infused shopping bags, while others work with local farmers on alternative methods for cotton production that require much less water. The

fashion retail industry is one of the largest polluters in the world. Therefore, the government must systematically push them to adopt greener business practices.

Some medium-scale green businesses have begun to produce odourless and biodegradable socks, leading to water conservation and a healthier environment. Others provide compostable and biodegradable birchwood cutlery to local restaurants, and at least one private waste management company aims to become the first self-sustained zero-waste set-up in this sector. These companies have taken the initial steps towards a Green Economy, but the government should introduce the following to take these initiatives further:

- Development of a Strategic Green Economy plan similar to world leaders like China;
- Introduction of alternative energy sources to discourage coal usage and carbon emissions;
- Introduction of Venture Funds & Incubation Centres for local Green Businesses;
- Enhanced efforts of Carbon Capturing through international technology transfer;
- Encouraging Firms to publically declare their GHG (greenhouse gas) emissions and join the global net-zero emission movement;
- Carbon Taxation on heavy producers of GHG emissions; and
- Strategic partnerships with global corporate leaders for knowledge and technology transfers.

The truth is that combating climate change is not the government's responsibility alone. Thus, it is about time that the public and private sectors, as well as every individual, must step up to the challenge and play their role to save the planet for future generations.

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Harassment by the same gender

By: **Aks e Zainab**

Harassment is a breach of basic human rights. It deprives the victim of social empowerment. When this kind of behaviour is experienced at the workplace, it reduces productivity, lowers workers' motivation and lowers their morale. It has highly negative consequences on the economy as well. A research report published in the journal of general education suggests that about half of the female workers are harassed by their co-workers and more than half of males are subject to the same treatment by their co-workers. These respondents claim that this is because of the inefficiency of the management. The Nineteenth Amendment grants the security to both male and female, which provide them relief from harassment at the workplace. This law applies to every kind of employee either permanent, contractual, or apprentice. Now the question is whether this law is seriously implemented by all the authorities and institutions of Pakistan in reality.

Beginning with the idea of harassment, let's clarify our perceptions of harassment. There are so many types of workplace harassment like power harassment, discriminatory harassment, personal harassment, verbal harassment, physical harassment, sexual harassment, and so on. So, harassment is not only sexual and physical as it is understood commonly, but verbal harassment also plays a vital role to lower the morale of a person at the workplace. The aggressive attitude of bosses often creates a humiliating working environment for employees. When an employee is yelled at and scolded publicly, it hits the self-respect of the employee and indicates the lack of dignity and worth of that individual. Verbal abuse includes yelling, making belittling comments, cursing, name-calling, and threats.

Recently in Pakistan, a video went viral on the social media became an issue for the traditional media as well. In the video, a well-known Special Assistant to the CM Punjab was yelling at and scolding the Assistant Commissioner Sialkot in public for not properly inspecting Ramazan Bazaars, as there the SACM saw that damaged fruits were being sold. The AC was trying to explain the issue and was giving the reason that due to the bad weather it happened, but the SACM was not listening to her and kept on scolding her until she walked away to end the rant. This kind of behaviour is highly unbearable in this democratic country as no one has the right to humiliate anyone in public. The right decorum for this issue is to sort it out privately in offices. These kinds of visits are for on-ground observations only. The outcomes of the observations must be conducted with decorum and decency, not to yell unprofessionally at the government employee in public.

The SACM should have reported the issue to the other superior authorities of AC rather than questioning her designation. This was an act of verbal abuse by the same gender and hence it comes under the rubric of verbal harassment.

To stop workplace harassment issues, first of all, there must be a policy statement, in which there should be clear and obvious actions mentioned to deal with these kinds of unethical course of conduct. Moreover, there must be a proper training system for all employees, including the bureaucrats, which would sharpen up their minds and build a good attitude towards the general public and other coworkers. Secondly, if there occurs any issue of harassment, those responsible must be punished according to law. All reputable institutions like the National Institute of Public Administration, Pakistan Administrative Staff College, Civil Services Academy, and other departmental training institutions should conduct the training. These pieces of training must include psychological training related to human relations.

Normally, an act of harassment is considered as coming from the opposite gender. But this is not always the case, sometimes one could be harassed by the same gender too. People are fighting to eliminate gender biases from the world and for this, the suffering gender tries to give a helping hand to each other to empower themselves.

If it is seen with the eye of the Feminism School of thought, females are taking a stand for other females to make them empowered, eradicate the acts of discrimination they are facing, and protect their basic rights. For this, a woman must take a stand for a woman and talk about their rights until those rights are granted. But if a woman starts to scold and yell at another woman in public this is the humiliation of the gender as a whole. No one has the right to ask for justification for the position that one is having.

The above incident portrays the brutal attitude of ministers towards civil servants. Such type of incidents have occurred in the past but the action was not taken properly to end this type of behavior of superior authorities with civil servants. It can be also a bureaucrat harassing his or her lower staff in the same manner. It is always the common people who suffer the most. Why are all the obligations for common people, not for bureaucrats and politicians?

Though Pakistan is a democratic state, the attitude of authorities has always remained like that of a proud and brutal monarch. It is still a mystery that either the history is linked with this as in the region many proud kingdoms have ruled, or it is an inherited trait of bureaucracy from British rulers. Most of the time they don't consider that these codes of conduct are also an obligation on them. In advanced countries, bureaucrats and ministers consider themselves public servants, whose duty is just to serve the people and the state. Every individual of the country is equally responsible to follow the law, constitution, social values, and other courses of conduct.

It is high time this behaviour is sorted out, and the government should devise a policy to deal with such kind of behaviour. The government must be aware of some alarming consequences of this kind of behaviour. Research suggests that workers are involved in very negative acts in the organization when they become subject to harassment. The government is required to go for strategic leadership to solve this issue. A research study by H. Williams suggests some techniques for strategic leadership to maintain a harassment-free workplace. These techniques could be implemented by the government on broader terms to ensure the attitude of a government worker with another worker to enhance productivity and efficiency.

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All wars end

By: **Atle Hetland**

I wish the title of my article today could be read the way we really want, that all wars have indeed ended or will end soon. But the title only means that all wars end, sooner or later. However, I am not even sure that all wars do end. It may be true that direct wars and military conflicts end, that agreements are signed between parties, but that doesn't mean that it is all over and that peace will come. It just means that the hard work to re-build, to build back better, can begin, physically, socially and mentally.

Today, I shall write about long-lasting wars and conflicts, especially the Israel-Palestine conflict, which again has turned into direct war. Like the Kashmir situation, when the Brits left in 1947, that of the Palestinian people's situation should have been sorted out in 1948 by the Brits and the international community, at the time of the creation of the State of Israel. This time, the superpower USA and the United Nations have the power to find a lasting solution and end the tragedy, with material destruction and enormous human suffering. Alas, the US considers Hamas a terrorist organisation in spite of it ruling the Palestinian of the Gaza Strip. It should be recalled that PLO was for long also considered a terrorist organization.

In the current conflict, the new American President Joe Biden holds the key to immediate ceasefire and longer-term solutions. However, there is little general support for the Palestinian cause in America, so Biden places the conflict down on his agenda. It is said that in the UN Security Council, all but the USA of the 15 members wanted to demand a ceasefire from both sides; USA uses its veto power, and thus is responsible for the conflict having escalated and lasted longer than necessary. It should be said that Israel considers itself the boss in the Middle East, not the USA.

Professor Johan Galtung (b. 1930), the principal founder of peace and conflict studies as an academic discipline, said in the 1970s when I was a student and began my own work in peace and development studies, that there had been at least a hundred wars after WWII, but in the West we called it an era of peace. We did, however, count the independence struggles in developing countries, the Vietnam War, the Cold War between the East and West, and more. But most people in the West looked at them with outsiders' eyes since they didn't affect us directly. At the same time, peace organisations mushroomed in the West, indeed in America where many were against the Vietnam War. International solidarity developed and development aid increased. Many young people argued for moral development at home and abroad, indeed in relations with poorer countries, which the West exploited and keeps exploiting. This we termed 'structural war', not so easy to see. Today, more systematic and structural discrimination and racism are often denied by politicians, yet, often leading to conflicts.

A few days ago, retired Professor Nils Butenschøn (b. 1949), a Middle East and human rights specialist at the University of Oslo, was asked on a Norwegian radio programme (NRK 'Dagsytt18', 18.05.21) how long he would have thought the Israel-Palestine conflict would last when he was young. He said he thought at that time that the situation could not go on for more than twenty years or so. Now, fifty years hence, the conflict still goes on.

Another Norwegian, Jan Egeland (1957), a political scientist, diplomat, politician, and the UN Emergency Relief Coordinator in 2003-2006, was interviewed on Swedish Television (SVT 'Agenda', 16.05.21). He said that all wars end. He stressed that no war and conflict is impossible to solve, but we must want it to happen, and we must remain optimistic. He was also asked about the so-called 'Oslo Accords' (also referred to as the 'Oslo Agreement'), signed at the White House in Washington DC in 1993. It was a framework for how to solve the Israel-Palestine conflict, including the key element of the creation of an interim Palestinian self-government, the Palestinian National Authority (PNA). Jan Egeland was at a young age that time, an architect of the agreement, along with the Norwegian Minister of Foreign Affairs that time, Political Scientist Johan Jørgen Holst (1937-1994), and many others. They held secret meetings in Oslo for several years, where even the Palestinian leader Yasser Arafat attended. Sadly, little has come out of the unique efforts. I had the privilege of meeting Holst a few times, not knowing about the unique and very demanding work they were involved in until afterward. Holst himself died from heart failure in his best years. His wife, Political Scientist Marianne Heiberg, said that he had overworked himself with the Oslo Accords. Little would perhaps have been different had he lived longer, but somehow I think about his fate every time the Palestinian tragedy is on the agenda.

I don't know how to solve the Israel-Palestine conflict, or the Kashmir conflict, which on the Indian side is similar to war and occupation. But I do know that the parties, with their neighbours and the international community, must find sustainable solutions. Too much attention and talk get drawn to these long-lasting conflicts, but without real debates, new approaches and solutions. Young people must be more action oriented and find out what to do; we who are now as old as the conflicts have failed. We have failed in so many other wars and conflicts, including in Afghanistan.

Two days ago, the Norwegian PM Erna Solberg gave a briefing to parliament about NATO's and her country's troop withdrawal from Afghanistan. She said that they had not achieved their development goals 'in recent years', but they had ended Afghanistan's support to terrorism. She did not say that the West did not have any right to invade Afghanistan and keep a war going for twenty years, with 160,000 killed, and also not having helped the country to find internal and external solutions to its difficulties, during

the recent 20 years and several score years before. She just spoke in the official Western language, disguising the truth.

Alas, long-term wars and conflicts are allowed to go on, also shorter-term conflicts. I believe this is to a major degree caused by the lack of peace education in schools and organisations in all countries. We don't have the right peaceful 'mindset'. The United Nations has as its main task to support development of peace and solve conflicts. Its work through UNESCO's 'Culture of Peace Programme' has done well, but it was far too small. In future, we must all support peace development programmes so that our thinking and actions can be in people's interests everywhere on the only globe we have. After all, God wants us to live in peace; we all want to live in peace; but then we must do what is needed to achieve our goals. We must find urgent solutions to the Israel-Palestine conflict, and the many other wars and conflicts; we want to see that 'all wars end'.

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India's National Policy and Relations with Neighbours

By: Dr Rajkumar Singh

Although national or domestic policy and foreign policy of a state are two different things having separate jurisdictions with a clear-cut demarcation between the two, they, however, impact each other in a big way. Domestic policy are administrative decisions that are directly related to all issues and activities within a state's border and covers a wide range of areas, including business, education, energy, healthcare, law enforcement, money, taxes, natural resources, social welfare, and personal rights and freedoms, while a state's foreign policy or external policy is its objectives and activities in relation to its interaction with other countries, whether bilaterally or through multilateral platforms.

But any major event of one field definitely affects the perception and working of the other and in case of a clash between the two, the democratic government of any country, normally, prefers to side with the domestic mood and popularity because it is bound to face a election in a very definite period in which the decision of the public becomes final. Thus, foreign policy is not immune from the impact of values, ideas, initiatives and upheavals. History has proven that the external ambitions of the state are far from homogenous, but the realm of the foreign policy is an ideological concept, a product of international dynamics and domestic attributes and hence, generated from within.

The influence of the domestic forms the basis of foreign strategy and correlation between both policy areas is one of great strength. In the context successful politicians mobilise and retain public support as a means of maintaining public office. As democracy encourages choice, the political parties focus on policy areas which reflect the opinions and values of the majority of the electorate. In case of the Indian government, its two decisions taken in August 2019, the abolition of Articles 370 and 35A and passing of the controversial Citizenship Amendment Act in December 2019, have cast a dark shadow on its relations with neighbours, especially Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan.

With Afghanistan, except during the brief regime of the Pakistan-supported Taliban, relations remained co-operative, based on mutual understanding. In the context needless to add here that both Pakistan and Bangladesh were parts of united India before 15 August 1947. In the division Pakistan comprised two wings, East Pakistan and West Pakistan, with a territorial distance of 1800 km. As a result of the general elections held in

1970, which were followed by a civil war there and ultimately dividing the nation in December 1971 which gave birth to a new nation called Bangladesh. In the whole process India played an active role and relations between the two started on a positive note. Relations with Pakistan almost all the time remained suspended due to negative developments and actions from both sides. In Afghanistan Ashraf Ghani became President in September 2014 and came to India in April 2015. Return visits were also paid by the Indian Prime Minister in December 2015 and June 2016. Kabul enjoyed the fruits of good relationship with India because Afghanistan, during his regime, wanted to reduce the country's dependence on Pakistan, it moved seriously towards New Delhi. But later India was sidelined in the peace process held between Afghan Government and the Taliban, brokered by Pakistan.

After becoming Prime Minister, Narendra Modi visited Bangladesh in June 2015 and concluded a border agreement with his Bangladeshi counterpart, and in return Sheikh Hasina paid an official visit to New Delhi in April 2017 and registered several developments on matters of trade and security, but many other issues, including the migration of Bangladeshi and Rohingya refugees and effective tools to combat terrorism, remained unresolved. In relation to Pakistan despite Mian Nawaz Sharif's attending the swearing-in ceremony of Narendra Modi in May 2014 and the sudden visit of the Indian Prime Minister to Islamabad in the last week of December 2015, the terror attack by Pakistan on Pathankot in January 2016, retaliatory surgical strike by India in September 2016, Pakistan's Pulwama terror attack in February 2019 which took costly life of 40 CRPF personnel, India's airstrikes at terror camps in Balakot in Pakistan, provided an environment not conducive for bilateral relations between India and Pakistan.

In fact, relations with all the three countries- Afghanistan, Bangladesh and Pakistan reflected a negative trend and perception due to the abrogation of Article 370 in August 2019, the dismemberment of Jammu and Kashmir, the enactment of the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) and the threat to implement a nation-wide National Register of Citizens (NRC). In particular, relations with Pakistan remained the most hit and with two others partially affected. Although, the eruption of the covid-19 pandemic provided, once again, a chance to all countries of the region to come together and help each other in controlling and eliminating this life-threatening disease.

The abrogation of Article 370 and 35A directly affected India- Pakistan relations for a longer time to come, but the passing of disputed Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) in December 2019, jeopardised India's relations with three of its neighbours, Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh, while a large number of people inside the country also started protesting the Act. It was because of one of the provisions of the CAA that gives citizenship to persecuted non-Muslims such as Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists, Parsis, and

Christians, from Bangladesh, Pakistan, or Afghanistan, who entered India on or before 31 December 2014.

In particular, this religious categorization for obtaining citizenship was opposed because it was against the secular character of the Constitution of India. In addition, this CAA was attached with a National Register of Citizens (NRC) which will be carried out in all India. As the constitutions of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Bangladesh provide for a specific state religion, the said Act extends protection to such people facing religious persecution in these countries. In contemporary history there are several examples of forced conversion, torture, extortion, and exploitation of minorities. Anyhow, this Act is bound to affect India's relations with these countries, heavily with Pakistan and Bangladesh and to some extent with Afghanistan.

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