

Pakistan's Nuclear Energy: An efficient alternative

By **Rabia Javed**

Prime Minister Imran Khan on 21st May virtually inaugurated the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant Unit-2 (K-2), a third-generation state-of-the-art plant with improved safety systems. Over the years, Pakistan has been commendably successful in the application of nuclear energy and technology for the benefit and development of society. Director General of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) hails the commissioning of the K-2 Nuclear Power Plant as a leap towards Pakistan's clean energy future. Additionally, Pakistan has placed sufficient human resources capable of taking up more challenging assignments to harness nuclear energy for the economic progress of the country.

Pakistan established the Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) in 1956. PAEC is pursuing numerous programmes and doing research and development in many diverse scientific areas, including basic and applied sciences, food, agriculture, and biotechnology, human health, energy, and industry.

Pakistan raised its first nuclear power plant with the help of a Canadian firm during the 1960s. Named KANUPP, it started producing electricity by the end of 1972 with a total power generation of more than 100 MW. This marked a distinguished year in the history of Pakistan because it joined the club of the few countries that were producing electricity by using nuclear reactors.

Despite many constraints, gradually, Pakistan established four nuclear power plants at Chashma – Chasnupp 1, Chasnupp 2, Chasnupp 3, Chasnupp 4. All these nuclear reactors are now collectively producing 1435 MW of electricity.

Nuclear Energy for Economic Progress

The nuclear programme of Pakistan is effectively contributing to the welfare of people and towards the attainment of United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. To illustrate, PAEC is putting a lot of emphasis on peaceful applications of nuclear energy in the medical sector. In this regard, the organization has so far established 18 nuclear medicine and oncology hospitals throughout the country. These achievements are a matter of national pride.

Highlighting the civilian use of nuclear resources, Pakistan has used its Centres of Excellence to promote and share best practices in nuclear security through three affiliated institutes, the Pakistan Centre of Excellence for Nuclear Security (PCENS), the National

Institute of Safety and Security (NISAS), and the Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences (PIEAS).

Similarly, Pakistan has also achieved excellence in operating safe and secure nuclear energy plants. It is evident from the history, when in 1959; PAEC signed an agreement with Canadian General Electric Company for construction of a 137-MW electrical nuclear reactor in Karachi. The Karachi Nuclear Power Plant-1 (KANUPP-1 or K-1) started commercial operations in 1972 under International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) facility-specific safeguards.

Karachi was the first Pakistani city to benefit from nuclear energy after KANUPP was connected to the grid. The construction of two more units i.e. (KANUPP-3) is ongoing, when completed it will bring more energy to the metropolis. The Karachi Coastal Power Project is part of Pakistan's Nuclear Energy Vision Programme that seeks to generate 44,000 MW of electric power by 2050.

Pakistan is proactively engaged with the international community to promote nuclear safety and security. Nuclear power plants in Pakistan are under IAEA safeguards. All these efforts of expanding the nuclear energy programme are in pursuit of a clean and effective option to address Pakistan's energy deficit and meet the international community's ambitious goal of lowering global temperatures by two degrees in the next 30 years.

To further secure its civil nuclear materials, Pakistan has joined the Convention on the Physical Protection of Nuclear Materials (CPPNM) and the Convention on Nuclear Safety (CNS). Pakistan has introduced an extensive institutional and legislative response to secure sensitive technologies and nuclear materials to implement UN Resolution 1540.

It is highly commendable that despite being embargoed under the organized hypocrisy of the global nuclear order, Pakistan is one of the 30 countries that operate nuclear fuel cycle and operational power plants.

Pakistan's clean history in utilizing nuclear energy is a clear depiction of its national resolve and commitment towards effective implementation of a stringent peaceful nuclear programme. Pakistan is in a position not only to use nuclear energy for its national programmes for development and progress, but also can provide assistance to other countries of the region in the peaceful uses of nuclear energy.

There is a need to admire the efforts and commitments that Pakistan has in place for its peaceful nuclear programme by rewarding Pakistan as a responsible nuclear state. Pakistan has an inherent interest in pursuing safe and efficient forms of civil nuclear energy and should continue investing in this sector.

Pakistan's nuclear energy programme

By **Dr. Syed Javaid Khurshid**

Energy plays a vital role in the development of a country. A country's progress is also estimated by its energy demand and consumption. At present, Pakistan has an installed generation capacity of about 37,500MW. The minimum total demand at present is about 24,000MW whereas the maximum total demand in summers is enhanced to nearly 29,000MW. The country's transmission and distribution capacity, however, is only approximately 22,000 MW. This results in hours of electricity outages in the hot summer months. Besides that, over 50 million people are not connected to the national grid and don't have access to electricity. An unrelated but major problem that has plagued Pakistan's power sector besides distribution capacity is the cost of electricity production. Energy production in a country must be affordable, reliable and continuous and should be without emission of greenhouse gases to mitigate climate change. There are many sources of energy. If we examine Pakistan's energy mix, we can have a clear idea of where the action is needed to obtain cheaper, continuous, and green energy. At present, the energy mix of Pakistan is 64 percent fossil (gas-38 percent, oil-16 percent, coal-10 percent), 26 percent hydropower, 6 percent nuclear, and 4 percent renewable (solar, wind). In Pakistan, fossil fuel consumption is disproportionally high. Secondly, the use of imported gas and oil has enhanced the cost of electricity production manifold. Third, the cost of electric power generation plants operating on fossil fuels emits a lot of greenhouse gases.

It has also been realised by many international agencies such as the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), the International Energy Agency (IEA) and the Nuclear Energy Agency (NEA) that the energy source of a country has to be reliable and continuous. During the pandemic or any other similar situation, the uninterrupted supply of energy is also an essential factor for the security of a country.

The logical solution for these problems is nuclear power. It has many advantages over other sources of energy. It is a mature and reliable technology. It ensures a continuous supply of energy and is also cost-effective besides having stringent safety standards and being environmentally friendly.

Nuclear power is one of the best and cleanest energy sources, produced by disintegrating atomic nuclei in a reactor in a controlled manner. The first commercial nuclear power generation started in August 1956 at Calder Hall, United Kingdom by a 50MW reactor. Nuclear power generation picked up very quickly due to its advantages against all other forms of energy production.

Wind energy production uses a large area of land for installation. It uses sulphur hexafluoride gas for coating turbines, which stays for 1300 years in the atmosphere. Solar energy is a good renewable energy source but there is a disadvantage in manufacturing solar panels. They use heavy metals, hydrofluoric acid and nitrogen trifluoride. The nitrogen trifluoride is 1700 times more toxic than carbon dioxide and stays for 100 years in the atmosphere. Another problem is after completing their life span of 12-15 years solar panels need to be disposed of. It is estimated that about 10,000 tons of solar panel waste by 2021 will grow to 800,000 tons by 2040. As solar panels consist of heavy metals, their disposal will cause huge environmental problems.

Pakistan is a country with a population of 2.3 billion and has been striving for energy sufficiency since its inception. The country needs a continuous increase in electricity production to meet the growing demand. To meet the future projected demand of 42,000MW by 2025, mitigation of greenhouse gases and assured continuous and reliable supply, nuclear power generation seems to be the best available technology for the present.

Nuclear power plants have proved that they are essential to maintain energy supply and thus are a very important pillar for the energy security of the country. The greatest advantage of nuclear power plants is that they can provide an uninterrupted supply of electricity for more than a year. With the advent of SMR technology, the running time will also increase and refueling the SMRs every year would not be needed.

Pakistan has to achieve its targets of producing nuclear power of about 16 percent of the energy mix, which is 3,350MW by 2021, 8,800 MW by 2030, and 40,000 MW by 2048. This nuclear power production plan is a part of the Energy Security Plan 2005 given by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission and approved by the Government of Pakistan. Pakistan is on course to achieving the targets set to obtain nuclear energy for the country. This will also go a long way to ensuring Pakistan's long-term energy programme.

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The nuclear journey

By **Dr Salma Shaheen**

May 2021 marks 23 years of the nuclear voyage that India and Pakistan have travelled together since 1998 to establish and maintain nuclear deterrence along with frequent occurrences of crises.

One can argue that the nuclear weapons have been successful in preventing war between India and Pakistan yet tensions and risks have increased in the region. This makes one wonder at how different the South Asian nuclear voyage was from that of other nuclear-armed states, notably the US, the USSR/Russia, Britain, France and China (the de-jure nuclear-armed states also known as the P-5 who tested their nuclear devices before the signing of Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty in 1968).

The nuclear expedition of the US (1945-1968) and the USSR (1949-1972) embraced rapid development and diversification in nuclear force and novel technologies to bolster deterrence. However, these developments were not free from introducing new risks of nuclear first-strike, rapid retaliation, pre-emption and fears of escalation of conventional to nuclear crisis/war into the strategic calculus of superpowers.

Amid these developments, the 1962 Cuban missile crisis was an eye-opener that taught superpowers a hard-earned lesson that their cities were at nuclear risk as a result of the fog of misjudgement, miscalculation and/or miscommunication. Furthermore, with the Soviets' approaching strategic parity with the US, Washington along with the Nato states changed its priority to keep fewer fingers over the nuclear button, and endeavoured to lower the risk of nuclear war by engaging in and promoting arms control negotiations and agreements bilaterally and multilaterally.

By 1972, several bilateral and multilateral arms control agreements were negotiated and signed, reflecting an understanding among nuclear-armed states that you cannot go along nuclear development pathway without talking about arms limitation and control. Importantly, the Soviets and the Americans negotiated the ABM Treaty despite the fact that the Soviets' ABM defence was a major threat for Britain, France and China which had much smaller deterrent forces whereas the US with a heavy inventory of multiple re-entry vehicles (MRVs) and multiple independently targetable re-entry vehicles (MIRVs) could saturate Soviet defence.

To neutralise their gravest threat, both Britain and France developed systems to penetrate through the Soviet defences. For instance, Britain worked to modernize its Polaris force to penetrate the Soviets' ABM system. Paris developed a missile (S-3) capable of better penetrating anti-missile defences. On the other hand, China during the initial decades was slow to develop strategic thinking that could incorporate nuclear weapons in it. It was the

change in leadership (Deng Xiaoping in 1977) that transformed traditional people's war thinking to war under new conditions, and expedited work on force modernization.

Despite similarities in the overall P-5 attitude towards quantitative and qualitative nuclear force development and arms control, some of the P-5 states displayed distinct characteristics during the initial decades. For instance, Britain decided to maintain only a sea-based deterrent force as compared to other states that continued to develop and modernize triad nuclear force. In contrast to other states, China maintained its no-first use policy from the very beginning. Likewise, French understanding about arms control was different from that of the Americans, Soviets and English.

A strict comparison between the P-5 and India-Pakistan developments in their initial decades might not grasp the landscape of South Asian nuclear expedition so far. Nonetheless, the above-mentioned developments in the P-5 nuclear inventory and attitude do provide some basic sketch against which one can assess South Asian nuclear journey. In comparison to these five nuclear-armed states, India and Pakistan have not done little to catch-up with the pace of weapons development and diversification.

Both states developed and are aiming to develop ground, air, and sea-based deterrent forces along with demonstrated intent in exploring the area of emerging technologies for strategic purposes. However, Pakistan initially faced conventional imbalance that increased the salience of nuclear weapons; gradually this salience was adjusted over time with qualitative improvement in Islamabad's conventional arsenal. Moreover, to achieve strategic parity with Indian advancements, Islamabad devised a spectrum doctrine along with missile inventory. Regardless of these competitive developments to balance weapons and doctrinal innovations, nuclear South Asia, unlike the P-5, is facing a challenging situation of recurrent crises and lack of progress in the field of arms limitation and control. Since overt nuclearization, both India and Pakistan have experienced major crises which added new dimensions to the existing fragile security situation — including the possibility of fighting a limited war and carrying out surgical strikes under a nuclear overhang and the likelihood of capable non-state actors bringing two nuclear-armed states eyeball-to-eyeball militarily in a crisis.

The competitive weapons and doctrinal developments in South Asia not only help manage the need to address strategic parity but also aggravate nuclear risks in region. This competition becomes intense, especially for Pakistan given its stringent economic conditions. Regardless of economic challenges, Pakistan continued to develop its nuclear deterrent — suggesting the critical significance of nuclear weapons for the country's security.

Due to stringent economic conditions, Britain was once faced with the choice to give up its Polaris programme to survive economically. Britain however continued to retain and modernize its nuclear deterrent to neutralise the Soviets threat and to keep the power balance within Europe, demonstrating how significant nukes are for power and security.

Despite the critical significance of nuclear weapons, though, the P-5 engaged in the bilateral and multilateral arms control process. India and Pakistan too thus need to demonstrate progress on arms control to help reduce nuclear risks.

The writer is a London-based writer and teaches at King's College London.

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Energy security and the nuclear program

By **Yasir Hussain**

The month of May marks the 23rd anniversary of nuclear weapon tests in South Asia. Since then, the discourse on non-military aspect of nuclear technology and its enormous potential of peaceful application have overshadowed by its military use.

The creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) in 1957 was a watershed moment in the history of nuclear fission technology. Since then, some 30 countries around the globe have been benefiting from over 440 nuclear power reactors, with France leading from the front, where about 70 percent of total electricity generation comes from nuclear technology. It is projected that, by 2050, global nuclear power capacity would reach 506 Gigawatts.

Pakistan is one of the 30 countries in the world to operate a complete nuclear fuel cycle; yet, the country needs a significant build-out of electricity generation capacity to meet current and future demands and, for that, a low-cost nuclear energy option seems vital for Pakistan's overall energy security.

Pakistan suffers because of an acute energy crisis; an uninterrupted and inexpensive energy supply is a fundamental precondition for the country's sustainable economic growth and improved human welfare. The energy crisis is estimated to cost around two percent of GDP annually through lowering economic output and exports.

The chronic energy crisis has forced the closure of thousands of factories (including more than 500 alone in Faisalabad), paralyzing economic activity and exacerbating unemployment. Although much of the criticism goes to flawed energy policies pursued for decades by various administrations, poor transmission and distribution capacity — stalled at approximately 22,000 MW against the demand of more than 25,000 MW — remains a real concern for Pakistan's energy security. In addition, seasonal fluctuations further add to Pakistan's energy deficiency.

With rising economic activity, the demand for uninterrupted and reliable power supply is also increasing. To meet the increasing energy demand, the burden lies on natural resources which are depleting at a rapid pace. Therefore, Pakistan desperately needs to devise a comprehensive policy to secure its resources, while sustaining its economic growth. In this regard, nuclear energy has the full potential to lift the burden from the rapidly depleting energy resources.

Pakistan is not alien to the concept of peaceful nuclear technology and its utility. It has a history of over 40 years of experience in operating nuclear power plants — and that too without any safety and security incident. The IAEA and other global nuclear watchdogs

have, on multiple occasions, praised Pakistan's commitment to the safety and security of its nuclear power plants. At the moment, Pakistan operates five nuclear power plants on two sites, one unit – the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUPP) at Karachi, and four units of Chashma Nuclear Power Plants at Chashma. The gross capacity of these five nuclear power plants is 1430 MW.

Pakistan's nuclear energy contributions are meager when compared with a developed country such as France, where nuclear energy contributes to almost 70 percent. Pakistan lags behind other countries when it comes to the installed capacity of nuclear power generation.

The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) has intensified efforts to meet the nuclear electricity generation target of 8,800 MW by the year 2030. It is a part of the comprehensive Energy Security Plan formulated in 2005. The Economic Survey 2019-20 states that the completion of the K-2/K-3 project will bring the PAEC closer to achieving this target.

One of the primary motivations behind Pakistan's increasing reliance on nuclear energy appears to be worsening climatic conditions. Three of Pakistan's major cities — Karachi, Lahore, and Faisalabad — have been placed on the list of most hazardous cities. Pakistan's massive coal consumption for its energy needs also adds to environmental degradation, which contributes to 25 percent of the power generation mix. Therefore, nuclear energy, being affordable, clean, and friendly to the environment, appears to be the best alternative for Pakistan's energy needs.

Pakistan's impressive track record of the safe and secure operation of its nuclear energy programme is a clear depiction of its national resolve and commitment towards effective implementation of stringent policies and global standards. Former DG IAEA, Yukiya Amano, on his visit in 2018 to the various nuclear facilities of the PAEC, appreciated the safety and security mechanism of Pakistan's nuclear programme. Subsequently, the IAEA in 2018 initiated a four-year programme with Pakistan to closely coordinate with the country's key nuclear energy institutions on safe, reliable, and sustainable operations of nuclear power plants. All this shows Pakistan's strong desire and commitment to uplift its socio-economic outlook by benefiting from the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

The utility of nuclear technology in Pakistan isn't confined to the domain of energy and power production. Pakistan has been successfully utilizing nuclear technology in various sectors including agriculture, medicine, and scientific research and development. The PAEC runs 18 medical centers spread all over the country, which use nuclear medicines to treat deadly diseases such as cancer. The utility of nuclear technology in Pakistan's agriculture sector, particularly the development of high-yield stress-tolerant crops, reflects the country's commitment to peaceful usage of this technology.

The UN has devised 17 Sustainable Development Goals (SDGs) to be achieved by 2030. Among these, environmental protection, agriculture, food security, and health are

included. Pakistan's peaceful nuclear programme has been playing a crucial part in meeting these goals. The IAEA, being the flag bearer of nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, should assist Pakistan in expanding its international nuclear cooperation, so that the international community can benefit from Pakistan's experiences and vice versa. Although Pakistan has over 40 years of remarkable experience in the safe and secure operation of nuclear power plants, it often faces international discrimination. This discrimination stems from unjust international practices. Lack of access to the international nuclear market and technology denial by global powers hurts Pakistan's energy security. Pakistan has both the capacity and the expertise to become an active participant in global peaceful nuclear cooperation.

The only thing that restricts Pakistan from a meaningful global contribution in peaceful nuclear cooperation is the double standards of various international nuclear cartels, such as the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG). The cartel needs to revisit its policies, particularly country-specific exemptions being awarded to non-NPT signatories such as India. Such policies need to be changed to enable countries like Pakistan to realize their full potential for not only the betterment of their people but for all of humanity.

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Educating all children

By **Faisal Bari**

THAT basic (10-odd years) education has been declared a fundamental right of children and the fact that it is also considered a basic right in many countries and jurisdictions is not enough to convince a number of people here that all children should be educated.

All children irrespective of their family income, gender, religion, geography, ability, etc have the right to education. Not only that, in most countries, education is considered mandatory. Even if a child or her family do not desire that the child be educated, she can be 'forced' to be educated. The public good element and positive externalities have made education in most jurisdictions obligatory. An educated child contributes more to society at large than an uneducated child. It is as simple as that.

In the case of Pakistan, here is how the 'right' to education is worded in our Constitution. "Article 25-A: Right to Education: The state shall provide free and compulsory education to all children of the age of five to sixteen years in such manner as may be determined by law." Article 25-A was inserted in the Constitution as part of the 18th Constitutional Amendment in 2010. It is in the fundamental rights section of the Constitution. It is important to highlight how the Article is worded, ie "free and compulsory". The 'compulsory' part articulates that it is obligatory.

And yet there are people in Pakistan who feel that we should not or cannot afford to educate all our children. They clearly do not understand what the notion of a 'right' is. Fundamental rights are supposed to be trump cards: their provision has to trump all other considerations. If you are calling for 10 years of education to be a fundamental right for all children, this provision has to trump all other considerations that do not invoke other fundamental rights. This should be enough reason to provide education to all children. But, it seems, rights mean little in our country. So, let us look at further considerations.

Unemployment, amongst the educated youth, is high. It tends to be high in countries where the economic growth rate and job creation rate are not high enough. In these countries, the rate at which jobs are created, compared to the rate of entry of young people into the labour force, is lower and this creates a situation of excess supply. But, how can this be a reason for denying the right to education? Growth rates change a lot even over the short to medium run while the provision of education takes place over decades, that is, you cannot start/stop education systems on the basis of short- to medium-term considerations.

Educated people drive both innovation and growth; they come up with new ideas and new ways of organising and delivering services. Education has large positive externalities on the sociopolitical front as well — in terms of reduction in fertility and population growth, health and education benefits for families of educated mothers, female

empowerment and labour force participation, age of marriage, and the working of democracy in a country. Even if the rights argument is not considered strong enough, how can all of these benefits be sacrificed at the altar of growth rate and unemployment rate fluctuations?

View this problem from the other side as well. Imagine we do not educate our young. Pakistan is a young country that is still going through a demographic transition. Can we afford to have millions of uneducated youth to look after? Education opens up avenues for people for individual and family transformations. Can we afford to not offer this opportunity to all of our children? What will Pakistan's future be if we have millions of uneducated youth who we need to cater for? Daron Acemoglu, professor of economics at MIT, in a recent lecture pointed out that the way the labour markets are changing, due to technology change, countries with large populations of uneducated youth are going to face very difficult economic, and consequently social and political, circumstances. Does that look more promising than trying to educate all children and the challenge of unemployment for the educated?

Another major argument for denying the right to education to all is based on the idea of limited financial resources. It is argued that Pakistan does not have the financial resources to educate every child. We only raise 10-odd per cent of our GDP as taxes and given the needs in other areas, we cannot afford to spend 5pc to 6pc of GDP on education alone. Even the current 2pc of GDP that we spend on education is with great difficulty and hardship.

It is true that financial resources are tight. Do bear in mind, though, that they are and have been tight for all countries across time. But others have made different choices. When the developed countries of today decided to invest in the education of their citizens, they were not as rich as they are today. Look at the history of mass education in the UK or Europe, the US and even Japan. All of them decided to go for mass education, for a variety of reasons, at a time when they were also struggling financially. But education, for all, was considered important to a) produce better labour, b) not fall behind other nations, c) craft a notion of citizenship, etc.

Even over the last few decades we have seen developing countries make choices for education that have been different from the choices made by Pakistan. India, China, Bangladesh and Sri Lanka provide interesting examples even from our region. Are these not resource-constrained countries?

It is hard to believe that even today we are still debating whether or not the right to education should be extended to all children in Pakistan and there are still people who think that we should not and that we cannot afford to. I guess this reflects quite vividly the country's political economy issues. The rights of all are trumped by the needs of the elites — a pattern that is also reflected in many other decisions of the state.

The writer is a senior research fellow at the Institute of Development and Economic Alternatives, and an associate professor of economics at Lums.

Amazon and the economy

By **Dr Imran Batada**

Amazon is one of the best online marketplaces that you can use to sell and buy products. It opens the door to millions of sellers online to help them grow economically and promote their products in international market. As a seller on Amazon, you get a large customer pool to sell your products to expeditiously.

Amazon has recently announced that it will now allow Pakistan sellers to sell their products on Amazon. This great change makes it a right time for any Pakistan seller to build their brand to maximize their reach and exposure internationally.

It has been reported that almost 70 percent of textile products are taken from Pakistan by other sellers from different regions. So, the fact that Pakistan provides one of the best textiles in the world will help local businesses get a boost directly from now on. This will not only benefit sale of textiles but other commodities too. However, in the garment industry, Pakistan may face some issues in breaking into the biggest fashion brands as it competes with Bangladesh, India, China, and Thailand. Pakistan is still a minor player and will need to majorly improve to ensure a better position.

Some of the best products one can sell on Amazon include textiles, electronics, toys & games, books, video games, clothing, shoes, jewelry, fitness items, cameras, home equipment, kitchen utensils, handtools, and much more. If you are planning to start being a Pakistan seller on Amazon, you better choose from any of these niches. With the variety of sellers on Amazon, you just need to have unique products to stand out from the crowd. Before choosing a specific niche, you need to know what kind of products you can source easily and what you have enough knowledge about. This is because you need to have great products to prevent your seller account from being closed down because of bad products/ reviews. If you start a reputable store it will help build your customer pool and lead to more revenue.

Some of the most in-demand business models you can choose from are Private Label Wholesale, Reselling, Dropshipping, and handmade. Choose a fulfillment method. It can either be fulfillment by Amazon, in which as a seller you ship to Amazon's warehouse and they sell the product directly to the customer. Or it can be fulfillment by the merchant where you store your products and send them directly to your customers.

To succeed as an Amazon seller from Pakistan, you need to first study competitors from your specific niche. Get to know what they are doing to be on top of the selling list. Look at the best sellers as well as the best selling products. Do market research before settling for a certain product because if there is low demand, you will go at a loss when no one is willing to buy it, and so it will stay in the warehouse for long. You can use a combined

product listing to invite more buyers. To initiate, start with few products, and then with time you can scale up and add more products as you grow. You can start with a unique brand that will help you stand out from the other sellers. To rank better use great product images, optimized titles, and descriptions. This will help your product to be easily visible. On top of that, you can utilize the Amazon Marketing Services (AMS) that help you create ads for your products so that users can see your products under products related to this item. This brings great exposure. However, you should still be vigilant while selling items on Amazon. If you provide the wrong information, your account can easily be blocked.

Pakistan's government had engaged Amazon last year about the issue, and it has finally succeeded. This great move will lead to favorable outcomes for the youth as well as small and medium enterprises to sell on the Amazon platform. This will add Pakistan sellers into the international market.

Pakistani sellers selling on Amazon will impact the economy in a positive manner. This is because unlike before, where Pakistan sellers used to sell through third parties, they will now be able to sell directly. This will help boost the economy and create more job opportunities. Hence, entrepreneurs will have a greater customer base. With such a change, the capacity of the youth needs to be built so that they can use Amazon and other e-commerce platforms effectively, to maximize their revenue stream. This includes checking the various tutorials that will help empower on how to use the Amazon seller's account.

Increased empowerment will make more people use Amazon for selling which will create more opportunities. Let's assume 100,000 Pakistani residents start making money through Amazon selling. With each person earning a minimum of \$500 per month, after a year it will have a great impact on the economy. This will lead to a lot of sustainability and efficiency.

Statistics show that India ranks at number 5 in countries with the largest numbers of successful Amazon sellers. A 2019 report showed that there were over 209,000 active Amazon sellers from India, and the numbers have risen in 2020. Moreover, there have been over 70,000 Indian exporters selling millions of 'Made in India' products on Amazon websites. India's largest marketplace on Amazon has over 320 million monthly visits. Amazon was approved in India back in 2012 and the Indian government allows foreign companies to sell on their platform. However, selling on Amazon India is only limited to its residents, so brands need to get a local distributor to sell on the marketplace.

Bangladesh is another region that thrives well on Amazon. In 2019, Amazon made a bold move to source goods from Bangladesh for its global buyers. The proposal was for Bangladesh to keep their goods on Amazon warehouses in the US. This was meant to help the small exporters. Small traders could now easily access the global markets through the Amazon online platform.

Thailand is well known for producing high-quality electronics, silk, and much more. In 2016, Amazon introduced the Amazon web service in Thailand and a Thailand global selling team in 2019. This was to bring more manufacturers and retailers in Thailand on board. This led to the Thai government introducing the e-commerce initiatives like the ETDA B2c marketplace that helps drive growth in the region.

Pakistan being approved to sell on Amazon will have a great impact on the economy and will help in the growth of the country. Even with the great move, though, Pakistan sellers need to prove themselves to ensure they remain part of the Amazon community. To keep up with people from other areas, they will need to provide quality items for the benefit of everyone.

The government should start capacity-building programmes for the youth so that they can learn how to use Amazon in the best possible way. There are different on-going youth development programmes, and with this great change, it is the right time to add Amazon selling tricks & tips as a normal course. Universities need to add entrepreneurship and e-commerce selling on Amazon to their curriculum. These initiatives will undoubtedly serve as the stepping stones for the success of our youth and the economic development of our country.

The writer is director of the Centre for Information and Communication Technology at IBA.

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If the powerful cannot be held to account, is the UN fit for purpose?

By SAIF KHATTAK

From Palestine to Kashmir, international institutions have failed to protect human rights and serve as tools of stronger states to pursue their agendas.

In the aftermath of World War II, great powers resolved to never repeat the atrocious events of the past years again. They established international institutions that treated all states as equals and championed the causes of the weak against the strong.

With the responsible guidance and able leadership of the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC), human civilisation now lives through an unprecedented period of progress and prosperity – a period aptly called the Long Peace. How one feels about the above mentioned statements greatly depends on where one is situated in the world. For those living in the Global North, the world is what Dutch historian Rutger Bregman calls “the land of plenty” where “almost everyone is rich, safe, and healthy” and “the only thing we lack” is “a reason to get out of bed in the morning.” But life manifests itself in a different way for those living down in the power chain – a reminder of what Thomas Hobbes called “solitary, poor, nasty, brutish and short.”

The reality is that despite the so-called efforts of global purveyors of justice, the nature of the world one finds today is not far from the one Thucydides described over 2,000 years ago in which “right is only in question between equals in power, while the strong do what they can and the weak suffer what they must.”

International institutions have failed to protect rights of the weak and served merely as tools of stronger states to pursue their agendas. Be it the causes of freedom in Palestine and Kashmir, or the violence meted out by outsiders against local populations in Afghanistan and Yemen, international institutions have paid only lip-service to the causes of the oppressed.

The strong do what they can

For decades, Israel has been gradually encroaching on Palestinian lands and rights. It has killed and maimed thousands of innocents – with over 230 killed in just the past two weeks.

Every time Israel proposes an annexation plan, establishes a new settler colony, or displaces Palestinian families from neighbourhoods, there is a local reaction to which it retaliates disproportionately. A great number of protests occur globally condemning

Israel's actions. A ceasefire takes place. Leaders and institutions give themselves a pat on the back.

But Israel does not cancel its original annexation plans, nor destroy established colonies, nor resettle displaced families in their homes. While its response against local opposition diminishes, its injustices remain. Israel gets what it wants. The cycle goes on.

Every time international institutions condone an injustice, it encourages another oppressor to take advantage of their apathy. The Indian revocation of Article 370 is a textbook example.

In a video that went viral in 2019, India's Consul General in New York Sandeep Chakravorty advocated Israel's model of settler-colonialism in Indian-occupied Kashmir: "It has happened in the Middle East. If the Israeli people can do it, we can also do it."

But what does India want to do?

Over the past two years, India has pursued a demographic invasion of Kashmir. It has illegally changed laws that allow outsiders to buy land and lay claim to a Kashmiri domicile.

Following Israel's example, India is creating separate settlements to house families of ex-military personnel with Kashmiri authorities having no say in the matter. Any opposition to Indian colonialism is crushed with an iron-fist.

India's annexation of Kashmir, a disputed territory, is a direct violation of multiple UN Security Council resolutions. But the UN remains idle while the human rights it claims to enshrine get trampled on in Kashmir.

If this is the dismal condition of the causes that have numerous governments and organisations championing them, imagine the plight of those who lack a global voice.

After seven years, the war in Yemen remains the world's worst humanitarian crisis, with over 233,000 people killed in the conflict. Yemen's descent into darkness has been perpetuated by the greed of great powers who signed lucrative deals with Saudi Arabia, providing them with arms and turning a blind eye to their inhumane use.

The naval blockade set up by the Saudi-led coalition has prevented any humanitarian aid to reach civilian populations currently tormented by a civil war, a famine, and a pandemic. Over 13 million people alone – a number greater than the population of Belgium – are at risk of starving to death.

In February, President Biden announced that the US will be ending its support to Saudi Arabia in the Yemen war. Washington may even call out Saudi Arabia for human rights violations. But will it hold its ally accountable? Will it even hold itself accountable?

The US has been a poster child of the might-is-right nature of global politics. Its record goes as far back as its history does.

While the US and its allies pack their bags in Afghanistan, they leave some very grim tales for the Afghan people to tell. Amnesty International reports that during their stay in

Afghanistan, US and NATO troops were frequently involved in unlawful kidnappings, torture, and killings of innocent civilians.

Another case that reflects the disgraceful dehumanisation of Afghans is the engagement of Australian SAS soldiers in the savage practice of 'bleeding' – a military initiation rite that led to the slaughter of at least 39 Afghans, including children. These are just a few cases that have come to light. The actual number of incidents is believed to be far greater.

An archaic international system

Despite lofty claims made by the UN regarding its achievements, the grim reality remains that it has only emboldened stronger states to oppress weaker populations. The root cause of its ineffectiveness lies in the colonial nature of its Security Council.

At its inception, the P5 accounted for 10 percent of UN member states and over 50 percent of the world's population. Britain and France became members based on their control over vast empires – control through which they exploited indigenous peoples for centuries.

Today, after several waves of decolonisation, the P5 make up only 3 percent of UN member states and 26 percent of the world's population – of which China alone accounts for 18 percent. There remains no sound reason to grant the P5 states their special status, especially when other states surpass them in many development metrics.

Providing some states with an unjust monopoly over international decision-making prevents any chance of holding them and their allies accountable for the atrocities they commit.

The archaic structure of the UNSC remains incompatible with modern global realities. While the UN presents itself as a champion of equality, democracy, and human rights, it allows states like the US to veto any action against war crimes and human rights violations of its allies. The existence of a veto power defeats the purpose of the UN itself.

Without equal representation in the UN's decision-making processes, there cannot be any accountability of stronger states. It is high time that the international community realises that the world is bigger than five. It needs to start a discourse against a UN model that emboldens the strong to oppress the weak. Only a demand for inclusivity can ensure justice.

While the strong may resist giving up their power, there is much that can be done with help from the masses.

The recent ceasefire in Gaza – though an uneasy one – has shown that even if a great power vetoes action against injustice, public opinion can still turn the tide against the oppressor. It can be the voice of the voiceless - and stop the hand of the heartless. It can ensure that the strong do not do what they can, and the weak do not suffer what they must.

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