PAKISTAN'S NON-TRADITIONAL SECURITY THREATS

TILAK DEVASHER

Traditional analysis of Pakistan's security threats begins with its geographical construct: a flat terrain coupled with several of its population centres being close to the border with India. Even before the creation of Pakistan, the Cabinet Mission Plan of May 16, 1946, had stated clearly: "The two sections of the suggested Pakistan contain the two most vulnerable frontiers in India and for a successful defence in depth, the area of Pakistan would be insufficient."[1]

Post-creation, Ayub Khan was perhaps the first to articulate the lack of depth of Pakistan. He wrote in his diary on October 10, 1968: "The Chinese keep talking to us in terms of guerilla warfare because that is their experience, besides they have the space for this. Unfortunately, we lack depth in our country and, besides, some of our centres of population, communication links, headworks and canals lie near the borders, so we have to be ready to defeat the enemy as soon as he enters our territory. This is what we did last time and we have every hope of success should he aggress again."[2]

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1. Statement by the Cabinet Delegation and His Excellency the Viceroy (as issued in New Delhi on May 16, 1946), http://www.bl.uk/reshelp/findhelpregion/asia/india/indianindependence/transfer/transfer2/. Accessed on September 24, 2017.
2. Craig Baxter, ed., *Diaries of Field Marshal Mohammed Ayub Khan, 1966–72* (Karachi: OUP, 2007), p. 271.

These non-traditional threats actually go to the heart of what is going wrong with Pakistan. With a comprehension of such threats, it would be easier to understand where Pakistan is headed and what threats it could pose to us in the future, in addition to the traditional military and terrorist threats that it poses.

As a consequence, Pakistan has always seen its security primarily in military terms. Analysts have pitched in with articulation of its nuclear arsenal, conventional military capability and its use of non-state actors as force multipliers. Articles in many journals also do a missile for missile, tank for tank, division for division, aircraft for aircraft and ship for ship comparison between India and Pakistan. What gets neglected in such analyses is a critical element of the power matrix that comes under the rubric of Non-Traditional Security Threats (NTSTs).

More contemporarily, there has been a shift away from the exclusive stress on territorial security seen in military terms to include NTSTs that encompass all threats dealing with human security or the well-being of the citizens of a country. They include issues like (a) energy, food and water security; (b) economic security; (c) environmental security; and (d) societal security.

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This article focusses on four areas of Pakistan's NTSTs that are collectively called the WEEP factors. These are Water, Education, Economy and Population.[3] In addition, some environmental issues are also touched upon.

WATER

Pakistan is an arid country but an agro-based one, where 60 percent of the population depends on agriculture for their livelihood, especially in the dominant province of Punjab. Agriculture accounts for about 20

3. A detailed coverage of these issues can be found in the author's *Pakistan: Courting the Abyss,* published by Harper Collins India in December 2016. The discussion in the succeeding paragraphs is largely based on a section of the book.

percent of the Gross Domestic Product (GDP) and over 70 percent of Pakistan's exports depend on agriculture-based products. Not surprisingly, therefore, up to 95 percent of all water—surface and ground water—is utilised in irrigation for agriculture.[4]

It is estimated that by 2025, water availability would have shrunk to 855 m3/per capita/year when its population could increase to 220 million. The country is expected to become absolute water scarce – less than 500 m3/ per capita/year– by 2035.

- **Water Availability:** The total average annual availability of water in Pakistan is estimated at 200 MAF (Million Acre Feet), of which 145 MAF is surface water and 55 MAF is ground water. However, the per capita availability of water decreased from 5,650 cubic metres (m3) per year in 1951, when its population was 32.5 million and it was a water-abundant country, to roughly 940 m3/per capita/year in 2015[5], when its population was estimated to be 194.5 million. Currently, the per capita availability is estimated at 908 m3/ per capita/year.[6] It is estimated that by 2025, water availability would have shrunk to 855 m3/per capita/year[7], when its population could increase to 220 million. The country is expected to become absolute water scarce – less than 500 m3/per capita/year– by 2035,[8] though some analysts and organisations like the Pakistan Council for Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) even predict this by 2025

4. Daniya Khalid, "Pakistan's National Water Policy", *The Express Tribune*, July 29, 2017, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1469030/pakistans-national-water-policy/. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
5. Mushtaq Ahmed, "Water Saga", *The Nation*, May 31, 2016, http://nation.com.pk/columns/31-May-2016/water-saga. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
6. "Water Scarcity Looming Large in Pakistan: Report", *The Nation*, August 21, 2017, http://nation.com.pk/national/21-Aug-2017/water-scarcity-looming-large-in-pakistan
7. "Water Wars", editorial, *The News,* February 17, 2015, https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/24547-water-wars. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
8. An area is said to be experiencing water stress when its annual water supplies fall below 1,700 m3 per capita; water scarcity when supplies fall below 1,000 m3 per capita, and there is absolute water scarcity when supplies drop below 500 m3 per capita a year. Zaigham Habib, "Water Worries", *The Friday Times,* April 24–30, 2015.

i.e eight years from now.[9] Incidentally, absolute water scarcity means drought-like conditions in parts of the country.

- **Indus:** Pakistan is dependent on just one river system – the Indus— and ground water for its water needs. The peculiarity of the Indus is that 75 percent of its flows occur during four summer months, and 25 percent during the rest of the year. The problem, however, is that the water demand is 60 percent in summer and 40 percent in winter. This necessitates sufficient water storage during the short surplus period for use during the longer water stress period.[10]
- **Water Storage:** Pakistan has built only three major storage facilities : Mangla (1967-Jhelum), Tarbela (1976- Indus) and the Chashma Barrage (Indus). When constructed, they had a total live storage of 15.73 MAF.[11] This capacity is inadequate to store the water available during the summer months. In fact, Pakistan can store only 30 days' supply[12] or 150 m3 per capita per year. The international standard is 120 days.[13] Without adequate storage, 30 MAF of water in the Indus in the surplus months flows to the sea. To put it in perspective, this is equivalent to more than the entire water of the Chenab river. Moreover, due to silting, it is estimated that the storage capacity of around 8.37 MAF will be lost by 2025. Even now, the Tarbela and Mangla Dams have been reaching dead-levels earlier.[14]

9. "Pakistan Could Face Mass Droughts by 2025: PCRWR", *Express Tribune*, September 16, 2017, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1508063/pakistan-face-mass-droughts-2025-pcrwr/ Accessed on September 26, 2017.
10. Habib, n. 8.
11. "The Indus Equation", Strategic Foresight Group, Mumbai, 2011, http://www.strategicforesight.com/publication_pdf/10345110617.pdf. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
12. Simi Kamal, "Pakistan's Water Challenges: Entitlement, Access, Efficiency, and Equity," in Michael Kugelman and Robert M.Hathaway, eds., *Running on Empty: Pakistan's Water Crisis* (Washington DC: Woodrow Wilson International Center for Scholars, 2009), pp. 28–44.
13. "Looming Water Crisis", editorial, *Daily Times*, June 12, 2015, http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/editorial/12-Jun-2015/looming-water-crisis. Accessed on September 26, 2017. However, addressing a two-day international conference on "Regulation of Hydraulic Structure for Flood Management" arranged by the Global Water Partnership in June 2013, the minister of planning asserted that this had fallen to eighteen days due to losing 4.6 MAF of live storage in the existing reservoirs because of sedimentation. "Per capita Water Availability Alarming: Minister", *The News*, June 29, 2013, http://unesco.org.pk/ns/documents/2013/fms/pc_The-News.pdf. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
14. Sehrish Wasif, "Water Levels at Mangla, Tarbela at Lowest Points in a Decade", *The Express Tribune*, March 18, 2017, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1358512/lowest-decade-water-levels-mangla-terbela-lowest-points/ . Accessed on September 27, 2017.

- **Water Utilisation:** It is not that Pakistan does not have enough water but its water utilisation is among the worst in the world. For example, (a) its water intensity rate—the amount of water, in cubic metres, used per unit of GDP – is the world's highest, which means that Pakistan's economy is more water intensive and water dependent than any other country in the world. Against the world average of $8.6, Pakistan's one cubic metre of water contributes only 34 cents to its GDP.[15] (b) It is also indicative of the inefficiency of water usage because only 36 percent of the water reaches the fields, with 64 percent being lost in transmission.[16] (c) As noted by the Economic Survey, Pakistan's crop productivity per unit of water is very low at 0.13 kg per cubic metre. What this means is that "Pakistan is using 97 percent of its allocated water resources to support one of the lowest productivities in the world per unit of water."[17]

Ground water supplies are depleting at 16–55 centimetres a year, according to a study carried out by the International Waterlogging and Salinity Research Institute (IWASRI), part of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA).

- **Ground Water Depletion:** Ground water, akin to the family gold, to be used as a last resort when surface supplies are disrupted, is also depleting very fast. Satellite data shows that the Indus basin aquifer is now among the most stressed in the world. This means that Pakistan does not have much ground water in reserve that can be used as the river system becomes more stressed.[18] Of the 55 MAF of ground water, about 45 MAF is being exploited to supplement the surface water through public sector and private tubewells that numbered about 1.1 million by 2014. This is unsustainable because the gap between withdrawal and recharge is growing. Ground water supplies are depleting at 16–55 centimetres a year, according to a study carried out by the International Waterlogging

15. n. 13.
16. Kamal, n. 12.
17. Ibid.
18. Syed Mohammad Ali, "IMF's Advice for our Water Woes", *Express Tribune*, July 10, 2015, https://tribune.com.pk/story/917872/imfs-advice-for-our-water-woes/. Accessed on September 26, 2017.

and Salinity Research Institute (IWASRI), part of the Water and Power Development Authority (WAPDA).[19] The irrigation department of Punjab has stated that while in the 1990s, water could be extracted in the province at a depth of 20–40 ft below the ground, in the 2010s, drilling now has to take place at close to 800 ft below the ground. Additionally, this indiscriminate pumping and heavy use of pesticides are contaminating the aquifer, with tubewell salinity increasing. It is estimated that 14 percent of the ground water reserves are highly saline, unfit for drinking purposes as well as irrigation, and there is now saline water intrusion into mined aquifers.[20]

THE SITUATION, UNFORTUNATELY, IS LIKELY TO GET WORSE. WHY?

Climate Change: Due to climate change, there have been increased glacial melts causing heavy flooding followed by periods of reduced availability. Already, a reduction in the long-term average availability of water has been noticed. A statistical comparison of surface water availability between the last 30 and 10 years points towards declining water flows. While average flows for the years 1978 to 2008 equal 140-145 MAF, the same for 1998–2008 is 128.52 MAF.[21]

Practically speaking, this has resulted in decline in water availability during the rabi season (sowing in October–December and harvesting in April–May) in 2013–14 by 10.7 percent, in 2014–15 by 9.1 percent, in 2015–16 by 20 percent and in 2016-17 by 25 percent.[22]

Water Demand: The UN estimates that water demand in Pakistan is growing at an annual rate of 10 percent. [23] Given the estimates of a population of 220 million in 2025, the water demand is projected to rise to 274 MAF

19. n. 13.
20. Kamal, n. 12.
21. Kaiser Bengali, "Water Management under Constraints: The Need for a Paradigm Shift", in Kugelman and Hathaway, eds., n. 12, p. 48.
22. Khaleeq Kiani, "Water Shortage Worsens for Rabi Crops", *Dawn*, October 14, 2015, https://www.dawn.com/news/1212909. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
23. UNESCO, *UN World Water Development Report* (New York: United Nations, 2012), p. 823, cited in Daanish Mustafa, Majed Akhter, and Natalie Nasrallah, eds., *Understanding Pakistan's Water-Security Nexus* (Washington DC: United States Institute of Peace, 2013).

by 2025, while water availability is not likely to change from the current 200 MAF. This gap of about 74 MAF is almost two-thirds of the Indus river's current annual average flow.[24] And this is without India utilising fully its share of the western tributaries of the Indus (3.6 MAF) and Afghanistan not storing the waters of the Kabul river.[25] (4.7 MAF) The International Monetary Fund (IMF) report, "Is the Glass Half Empty or Half Full?" takes the figures of water availability at 191 MAF and so projects a water shortage at 83 MAF by 2025.[26]

The Pakistan Senate passed a resolution on March 7, 2016, asking the government to 'revisit' the Indus Waters Treaty with India, something that *Dawn* called "bizzare".

Where will Pakistan get this additional water from ? It can be only through one of two ways: the first is massive investment in the water sector—build dams, promote rain water harvesting, drip irrigation, improve water infrastructure and water efficiency. However, there are very little signs that any of this is happening at the time of writing.

The second option that Pakistan has is to blame India for its water woes, accusing it of "water terrorism". Such calls will increase as will calls to either scrap or "revisit" the Indus Waters Treaty (IWT). For example, the Pakistan Senate passed a resolution on March 7, 2016, asking the government to "revisit" the Indus Waters Treaty with India, something that *Dawn* called "bizzare".[27]

EDUCATION EMERGENCY

According to a Government of Pakistan publication "Pakistan Vision 2025", Pakistan ranks 113th out of 120 countries in the United Nations Educational, Scientific and Cultural Organisation's (UNESCO's) Education

24. Shaheen Akhtar, "Emerging Challenges to Indus Waters Treaty: Issues of Compliance and Trans-boundary Impacts of Indian Hydroprojects on the Western Rivers", *Focus*, vol. 28, no. 3, 2010, cited in Mustafa, et al., eds., n. 23.
25. "Sharing Water Resources with Afghanistan", *Dawn*, November 13, 2011, https://www.dawn.com/news/673055. Accessed on September 25, 2017.
26. Anwar Iqbal, "Water Scarcity May Threaten National Economy: IMF", *Dawn*, June 9, 2015, https://www.dawn.com/news/1187036/water-scarcity. Accessed on September 25, 2017.
27. "Indus Waters Treaty", editorial, *Dawn*, March 9, 2016, https://www.dawn.com/news/1244492. Accessed on September 26, 2017.

for All, Education Development Index. Pakistan's literacy rate (57 percent) lags well behind that of the country's neighbours."[28]

Not surprisingly, the Pakistan Education Task Force 2011 described the situation as an "Education Emergency"[29] primarily because the country's education system was among the least effective in the world. As a result, Pakistan ranked 113 out of 120 countries in the Education Development Index. Why?

- According to the Non-Governmental Organisation (NGO) Alif Ailaan, out of 52.91 million school-going children, only 27.89 million attend an educational institute (government or private), leaving 25.02 million children or nearly 50 percent, out of school. Of these, 5.1 million (other estimates, including of the Ministry of Education's Education for All, put it at about 6.7 million,) are at the primary level. Furthermore, even those admitted to schools suffer from massive drop-out rates before they reach Class 5—63 percent boys, 77 percent girls in 2011.[30]

  The proportion of out-of-school children increases with the rise in the level of education. Thus, the corresponding figures for middle school (age group of 10–12 years) is 6.6 million or 52.1 percent; high school (age group of 13–14 years) 5.6 million or 66.7 percent; and higher secondary (age group 15–16 years) 7.5 million or 84.8 percent. [31] What is unfortunate is that according to official records, this figure has remained mostly unchanged since 2005.[32]
- While the country needs to spend 4 percent of its GDP on education, just to be on track for the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs),

28. Pakistan Vision 2025, Ministry of Planning, Government of Pakistan. http://www.pakbj.org/statics/css/pakbj/pdf/Pakistan-Vision-2025.pdf Accessed on September 27, 2017.
29. "Education Emergency" is assessed to be equivalent to an estimated lost-yield to the economy on the scale of a flood every year; "Education Emergency in Pakistan", *Dawn*, March 9, 2011, https://www.dawn.com/news/611831 Accessed on September 25, 2017.
30. Alif Ailaan, "25 Million Broken Promises: The Crisis of Pakistan's out of School Children", 2014. https://d3n8a8pro7vhmx.cloudfront.net/alifailaan/pages/540/attachments/original/1434016427/Alif_Ailaan_report_25_million_broken_promises_English.pdf?1434016427. Accessed on September 25, 2017.
31. Ibid.
32. Azam Khan, "Why 25 Million Children are out of School", *The Express Tribune*, August 31, 2015, https://tribune.com.pk/story/946594/why-25-million-children-are-out-of-school-in-pakistan/. Accessed on September 25, 2017.

its budgetary allocations have been abysmally low, hovering between 1.5 percent and 2.1 percent during the last 15 years[33]; 89 percent of such expenditure is administrative[34] and 25 percent of the rest remains unutilised.[35]

- The literacy rate in Pakistan is 58 percent – 74 percent in urban areas (81 percent male and 66 percent female) and 49 percent in rural areas. According to the Economic Survey 2015-16, the national literacy rate was 58 percent – 74 percent in urban areas (81 percent male and 66 percent female) and 49 percent in rural areas. However, there was significant disparity between the provinces. While the literacy rate for Punjab was 61 percent, it was 56 percent for Sindh, 53 percent for Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK) and 43 percent for Balochistan. The overall literacy rate in Pakistan has actually declined from 60 percent in 2012–13 to 58 percent in 2013–14.[36]

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Table 1 below illustrates the outcome of such an education or the lack of its by showing the educational levels of the labour force:

Table 1: Labour Force and Education[37]

Year	Illiterate	Primary	Middle	Matric	Inter	BA
1990–91	53.0	22.7	10.9	9.6	3.0	1.7
2001–02	36.7	25.7	15.9	14.6	4.7	2.3
2010–11	35.3	26.0	16.4	13.8	5.3	3.3

33. "Pakistan: Education for All, Review Report 2015", Pakistan Ministry of Education June 2014, In Collaboration With UNESCO.
34. Ibid.
35. "Financing Education in Pakistan, Opportunities for Action", Country Case Study for the Oslo Summit on Education for Development, July 6–7, 2015, p. 12.
36. Economic Survey of Pakistan 2015–16, p. 174.
37. Rashid Amjad, "Why Has Pakistan Not Reaped Its Demographic Dividend?", in Zeba A. Sathar, Rabbi Royan and John Bongaarts, eds., *Capturing the Demographic Dividend in Pakistan* (Islamabad: The Population Council, 2013), p. 50.

In other words, 61 percent of the labour force was either illiterate or had just primary education and only 3.3 percent of the labour force comprised graduates.

The Economic Survey of Pakistan, 2014–15, highlighted the fact that there had been a marked deterioration since the previous year in all three competencies, i.e., language—Urdu/Sindhi/Pashto; English; and arithmetic. For example, quoting the Annual Survey of Education Report (ASER), 2014, it noted that while 50 percent of Class 5 students could read a Class 2 Urdu/Sindhi/Pashto story in 2013, only 46 percent could do so in 2014. For English in 2014, 42 percent of Class 5 students could read Class 2 level English sentences as compared to 43 percent in 2013. Similarly, 40 percent of Class 5 students were able to do two-digit division sums in 2014 compared to 43 percent in 2013.[38]

Pakistan's noted nuclear scientist, Dr Samar Mubarakmand, while delivering the keynote address at the ninth convocation of the Government College University (GCU) in December 2010, stated that there was a need of thousands of mathematicians, chemical analysts, engineers and other experts. However, he regretted that Pakistan had a very small number of educational institutions of higher education that were producing quality manpower.[39]

According to the United Nations Global Education Monitoring Report, 2016, the cumulative impact of a lack of sustained focus on education had resulted in Pakistan being more than 50 years behind in its primary education targets and 60 years in its secondary education targets.[40]

Given the state of education in Pakistan, especially scientific education, it is hardly surprisingly that Pakistan is among the least innovative countries in the world. According to the Global Innovation Index (GII) 2016, co-published by Cornell University, INSEAD (Institut Européen d'Administration des Affaires) and the World Intellectual Property Organisation, Pakistan ranked

38. n. 36.
39. "Another Reko Diq in North Waziristan", *The News*, December 4, 2010, https://www.dawn.com/news/588404. Accessed on September 25, 2017.
40. "UN Report: Pakistan's Education 50 Years Behind World", *The Express Tribune*, September 7, 2016, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1177702/un-report-pakistans-education-50-years-behind-world/. Accessed on September 27, 2017.

119 of 128 countries surveyed. The current allocation on research was only 0.29 percent of the GDP, far below the world average, as most developed countries spend between 2 and 4 percent of their GDP on research.[41]

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The most controversial and crucial aspect of education is, of course, the curriculum or what is actually taught in schools since this provides the roadmap for the future generations. In Pakistan's case, this is all the more so since, from the time of Ayub Khan, only officially published textbooks are allowed to be used from Class 1 to college level in order to enable the governments to set the curriculum as per their own predilections.

Although much attention has remained focussed on the role of *madrassas*, it is the government educational institutions and academia that have become a key factor in extremism and terrorism. A report titled "The Subtle Subversion: The State of Curricula and Textbooks in Pakistan", edited by A.H. Nayyar and Ahmad Salim (2004) and published by the Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), an Islamabad-based think-tank, has identified several issues in the curricula and textbooks that included factual inaccuracies and omissions which distorted the nature and significance of actual events; incitement to militancy and violence that included encouragement of *jihad* and *shahadat*, a glorification of war and the use of force; encouragement of prejudice, bigotry and discrimination towards fellow citizens, especially women and religious minorities, and other nations.

The report revealed: "*Madrassas are not the only institutions breeding hate, intolerance, a distorted worldview, etc. The educational material in the government run schools does much more than madrassas. The textbooks tell lies, create hatred, inculcate militancy, and much more…. the curriculum encourages ideas that are*

41. "Pakistan Among the Least Innovative Countries in the World, Report Says", *The Express Tribune,* September 8, 2016, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1177993/pakistan-among-least-innovative-countries-world-report-says/. Accessed on September 25, 2017.

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incompatible with the ideals of Pakistan as a forward looking modern state committed to equal rights and equitable treatment for its citizens." [42]

The reason for such distortions is clearly the effort to Islamise education. Zia-ul-Haq laid down the objectives of education in Pakistan. He ordered: "*The highest priority would be given to the revision of the curricula with a view to reorganizing the entire content around Islamic thought and giving education an ideological orientation so that Islamic ideology permeates the thinking of the younger generation and helps them with the necessary conviction and ability to refashion society according to Islamic tenets.*" As a result, political Islam became part and parcel of the curriculum up to university level.[43]

Zia's instructions were operationalised by the University Grants Commission's directive to textbook authors "…*To guide students towards the ultimate goal of Pakistan—the creation of a completely Islamicized State*".[44] India and Hindus were converted into caricatures, with two outstanding features: cowardice and deviousness.

As a result, since Zia's time, "Islam was used to support the state's own militaristic policies in a way that it appeared to the readers of these textbooks that Pakistan, the Pakistan Movement, Pakistan's wars with India and the Kashmir issue were all connected not only with Pakistani nationalism but with Islam itself."[45]

42. A.H. Nayyar, "Insensitivity to the Religious Diversity of the Nation", in A. H. Nayyar and Ahmad Salim, eds., *The Subtle Subversion: The State of Curricula and Textbooks in Pakistan* (Islamabad: Sustainable Development Policy Institute, 2004), http://www.sdpi.org/publications/files/State%20of%20Curr&TextBooks.pdf. Accessed on September 26, 2017.
43. Cited in United States Commission on International Religious Freedom, "Connecting the Dots: Education and Religious Discrimination in Pakistan. A Study of Public Schools and Madrassas", November 2011, p. 13, https://www.uscirf.gov/sites/default/files/resources/Pakistan-ConnectingTheDots-Email(3).pdf. Accessed on September 26, 2017.
44. Cited in Stephen Cohen, *The Idea of Pakistan* (New Delhi: OUP, 2004), p.171.
45. Tariq Rahman, "Denizens of Alien Worlds", cited in Haroon Mustafa Janjua, "Curricula of Deception", *The Nation,* January 3, 2015, http://nation.com.pk/columns/03-Jan-2015/curricula-of-deception. Accessed on September 26, 2017.

While the curriculum is distorted enough, a study found that upwards of 80 percent of the public school teachers viewed non-Muslims as "enemies of Islam" in some form or other.[46] And such values have been transmitted repeatedly to successive generations of students over the last three decades.

ECONOMY

Pakistan's economic growth since the 1950s has been marked by a persistence of periodic crises and bailouts, and by high volatility in growth rates due to a 'stop–go' growth model.

The primary reason is poor governance that has resulted in Pakistan's economy suffering from structural weaknesses that have not been rectified over the decades and will not be rectified by ad hoc, band-aid type of solutions. The key among these structural weaknesses are: the high dependence upon external factors like foreign assistance, exports and workers' remittances instead of internal drivers of growth; high burden of debt repayment; inadequate measures to raise the rate of savings and investment; low investment as a percentage of GDP in the social sectors such as health and education; a very high defence burden; revenue shortages; and so on.

The results of these structural flaws have been: low rates of growth; poor infrastructure; lack of industrialisation; a widening trade gap; high incidence of poverty; low social development indicators; a low literacy rate; and an unskilled workforce.

Given this, it is not surprising that the growth of the economy from US $50 billion to US $275 billion in the last 15 years, and increase in the per capita income from $490 to $1,370, has not been translated into the well-being of the population. Instead, it has widened disparities between the rich and the poor.[47] The income share of the richest 20 percent of the population increased by 12 percent — from 43.5 percent in 1987-88 to 48.7 percent in 2010-11. And that of the poorest 20 percent has shrunk by 21

46. n. 43, p. 16.
47. Asad Rizvi, "Pakistan's Economic and Financial Problems and Global Outlook 2015", *Business Recorder*, January 2, 2015, https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/pakistans-economic-financial-problems-global-outlook-2015-asad-rizvi. Accessed on September 27, 2017.

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percent from 8.8 percent to 7.0 percent over the same period.[48]

According to a noted Pakistani economist, "The new *jagirdars* of the economy and politics are no longer the traditional landowners and industrialists, but stock market brokers, property developers, and grain and fuel importers and traders." He describes Pakistan as a casino economy, "where a wily few siphon off money from the pockets of the unsuspecting populace."[49]

Ostensibly, the economy looks okay. The stock market is doing well, foreign reserves are healthy, the growth rate, has picked up from the under 4 percent growth of the 2000s.

However, macro-economic indicators have deteriorated. Just one example would suffice. Former Prime Minister (PM) Nawaz Sharif's government had obtained a whopping $35 billion in new loans during the first four years of its tenure to repay maturing debt and keep official foreign currency reserves at a level which could give a sense of economic stability to investors.[50] About $17 billion or nearly half of the total loans obtained from July 2013 to June 2017 were utilised to repay the previous debt. The government added net $18 billion to the country's total external debt and liabilities – the highest amount added by any government during its tenure.

Since 2013, total public debt has increased from Rs 14.5 trillion to nearly Rs 22 trillion, a 50 percent increase in four years.[51] The trade deficit has reached an alarming $26.9 billion and it is likely to grow to $30 billion this year. The current

48. Kaiser Bengali, "Pakistan's Casino Economy: A Blueprint for Inequality", *Dawn*, September 29, 2016, https://www.dawn.com/news/1286841/pakistans-casino-economy-a-blueprint-for-inequality. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
49. Ibid.
50. "Nawaz Added Whopping $35b to Pakistan's Debt; Shahbaz Rana", *The Express Tribune*, July 30, 2017, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1469896/nawaz-added-whopping-35b-pakistans-debt/. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
51. Sakib Sherani , "Economic Pressure Points", *Dawn*, September 1, 2017, https://www.dawn.com/news/1355187/economic-pressure-points. Accessed on September 27, 2017.

account deficit has reached $12 billion and Pakistan is sinking fast. It will soon have to negotiate new loans with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) to pay off old loans, thereby going deeper into an abyss.[52]

In 2008, Pakistan went to the IMF with reserves sufficient for barely two months of imports, and in 2013, that figure was 1.7 months, according to World Bank data. In both those years, the White House perceived Pakistan as a vital ally in the war against terrorism. That perception played a critical role in ensuring that most of the truly difficult preconditions that accompany such a bailout were not imposed.[53] Today, in the absence of good ties with Washington and despite the US having much lower direct bilateral leverage on Pakistan due to its dwindled economic as well as military assistance, it can nevertheless exert substantial leverage via its control of the IMF and International Financial Institutions (IFIs) such as the World Bank. The 'force multiplier' that can be used to the US' advantage is the framework of concerted lending whereby all international lending institutions, and the world's investment hubs, follow the lead of the IMF on a particular country.[54]

However, macro-economic indicators have deteriorated. Just one example would suffice. Former PM Nawaz Sharif's government had obtained a whopping $35 billion in new loans during the first four years of its tenure to repay maturing debt and keep official foreign currency reserves at a level which could give a sense of economic stability to investors.

In a nutshell, the kind of borrowing that Pakistan has indulged in is unsustainable and together with declining exports and remittances from overseas workers, the Pakistani economy is headed for a severe balance of payment crisis in the very near future.

Apart from finances, energy is an area of critical shortages with swathes of the country suffering up to twelve hours of power cuts. The energy deficit

52. Atta-ur-Rahman, "A New Governance System", *The News*, August 30, 2017, https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/226994-A-new-governance-system. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
53. Editorial, *Dawn*, September 6, 2017, https://www.dawn.com/news/1355908/depleting-reserves. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
54. Sherani, n. 51.

has reduced production – including in the vital textile sector –curtailed economic growth and discouraged foreign investment.

Three parameters can be used to judge the economy:

- **Growth:** Average annual GDP growth rates have been as follows[55]-
  - 1960s: 6.8 percent,
  - 1970s: 4.8 percent
  - 1980s: 6.5 percent,
  - 1990s: 4.6 percent
  - 2000s: 4.9 percent
  - 2010s: 3.2 percent.
  - 2014–15: 4.2 percent

  2015–16: 4.7 percent

  2016-17: 5.28 percent[56]

The government's figure of 4.7 percent was contested by noted economist Dr Hafiz Pasha who held that the real GDP growth was nearer to 3.1 percent.[57]

- **Employment:** With the present rate of growth of around 5 percent, Pakistan's economy generates employment for less than a million persons per year. The challenge is to accelerate growth to 7–8 percent if it is to generate employment for the more than 3 million people who are entering the labour market annually. This does not seem to be happening in the near to medium term. To do so on a sustained basis, the country would have to raise the level of investment from the current rate of 15.21 percent of GDP to about 25 percent of the GDP, with special attention on human and social development.[58] This level of investment is impossible to achieve without a simultaneous increase in the rate of national savings. The domestic rate of saving would have to be increased from the current

55. n. 28.
56. Relevant Economic Surveys of Pakistan.
57. "Number Fudging Allegations", editorial, *Pakistan Today*, June 9, 2016, https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2016/06/09/number-fudging-allegations/. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
58. Private sector investments declined from 10.2 percent of the GDP in 2014–15 to 9.8 percent of the GDP in 2015–16, signalling that the private sector was unwilling to make fresh investments and modernise existing plants. The public sector investment went up marginally from 3.7 percent of the GDP in 2014–15 to 3.8 percent of the GDP in 2015–16.

8.3 percent to about 20 percent of the GDP on a sustained basis. This will be possible only with policies that encourage savings and discourage consumption.

- **Poverty:** The net impact of Pakistan's economic development over the decades has been the rise in the incidence of poverty from 18 percent in 1988-89 to 33 percent currently. Applying a multi-dimensional poverty index (a combination of the levels of education, health and standard of living), the Oxford Department of International Development showed that in 2012–13, 44.2 percent of Pakistanis were poor, 23.7 percent were in severe poverty, and 15.1 percent were vulnerable to poverty.

In a nutshell, the kind of borrowing that Pakistan has indulged in is unsustainable and together with declining exports and remittances from overseas workers, the Pakistani economy is headed for a severe balance of payment crisis in the very near future.

High poverty levels are reflected in food insecurity. According to the World Food Programme (WFP) (September 2016):

- 43 percent of the population was food insecure, with 18 percent facing a severe shortage;
- about 15 percent of the population under the age of five was acutely malnourished;
- close to 43 percent children face stunted (low height for age) growth and were chronically malnourished. The World Health Organisation (WHO) puts the number of stunted children at 50 percent.[59] As things stand, Pakistan will have a generation of stunted children in the next 15 years, only adding to the cycle of poverty. Stunting and wasting have actually increased: among children under the age of five years, stunting has increased from 41.6 percent in 2001 to 43.7 percent in 2011, and wasting has increased from 14.3 percent in 2001 to 15.1 percent in 2011. There has

59. "Food Basics", editorial, *The News*, June 19, 2017, https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/211337-Food-basics . Accessed on September 27, 2017.

The WHO puts the number of stunted children at 50 percent. As things stand, Pakistan will have a generation of stunted children in the next 15 years, only adding to the cycle of poverty.

been no change in the percentage of underweight children since 2001, which is 31.5 percent.[60]

POPULATION

Thomas Robert Malthus, in his 1798 masterpiece "An Essay on the Principle of Population", put forward the argument that population growth was potentially exponential while the growth of the food supply was arithmetical at best. Malthus believed there were two types of "checks" that kept population growth in line with the growth of the food supply: "preventive checks", such as moral restraints and "positive checks", which led to premature death: disease, starvation, war, resulting in what is called a Malthusian catastrophe. The catastrophe would return the population to a lower, more "sustainable", level.

Modern day demographers, however, give far more importance to age structures rather than the total population. This is based on the reality that while the young and the old tend to consume more than they produce, the working age population tends to produce more than it consumes. Thus, countries that have a larger proportion of working age population relative to the young and elderly dependents is said to be undergoing a demographic transition that creates the conditions for a demographic dividend.

However, a demographic dividend is a time-specific window of opportunity, and does not last indefinitely. Over time, the age structure changes again, as the large adult population starts ageing and becomes less productive.[61] Thus, the demographic dividend only creates the conditions for an economic spurt that has to be harnessed. If harnessed, it could lead to potentially greater economic activity. If it is not capitalised upon, it could lead to massive unemployment and its attendant consequences.

60. Hilda Saeed, Moniza Inam, Zofeen T. Ebrahim, Madiha Latif, "Malnutrition: A Layered Problem", *Dawn*, January 17, 2015, http://www.dawn.com/news/1232897. Accessed on September 27, 2017.
61. Durr-e-Nayab, "Demographic Dividend or Demographic Threat in Pakistan", Islamabad: Pakistan Institute of Development Economics, Working Papers, 2006, http://pide.org.pk/pdf/Working%20Paper/Demographic%20Dividend%20Final.pdf. Accessed on September 28, 2017.

Pakistan's working age population of 15–64 years reached 52 percent in the early 1990s, 59 percent in 2006, and is currently estimated to be 60.4 percent, creating the possibility of a demographic dividend. The current share of 60 percent of the working age population would peak at 68 percent around 2045 by when it will start declining again as the population begins to age and moves out of the working age group. [62]

Thus, the demographic dividend only creates the conditions for an economic spurt that has to be harnessed. If harnessed, it could lead to potentially greater economic activity.

Thus, the once in a lifetime window for Pakistan for a 'demographic dividend' is roughly between 1990 and 2045. Of these 55 years, 25 have already passed without any visible pick-up in economic activity.

To actualise the demographic dividend, the basic question is whether those entering the labour market can be absorbed productively against the backdrop of an increasingly globalised and technologically advanced world.

Based on Pakistan's population projections, 3.1 million persons are expected to enter the labour force every year over the next four decades. However, at current growth rates, the economy can absorb only around one million people.

So what happens to the 2.1 million year on year for the next four decades and beyond? In other words, what happens if the demographic dividend is not realised ?

The flip side of an unrealised demographic dividend is that the massive 'youth bulge' could pose a serious threat to law and order, including, in Pakistan's case, of terrorism. The danger for Pakistan is that without sustained economic growth and without investment in education, the demographic dividend would degenerate into a 'demographic horde' with all its attendant consequences of frustration, alienation and violence. A more widespread risk is of youth radicalisation – the threat of millions of young, impoverished and unemployed Pakistanis succumbing to extremism. As the government's own

62. Ibid.

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Pakistan Vision 2025 puts it, "A large set of Pakistani youth is dissatisfied, frustrated and in a state of disarray due to low education levels and large-scale unemployment. This has led to serious social problems, including drug abuse, crime, mental disorder, terrorism and religious fanaticism."[63]

A crucial question is whether Pakistan is taking sufficient measures to deal with the non-traditional security threats. The short answer has to be no.

Just two examples will clarify this.

Even though the looming water crisis is such a critical issue, the government has stopped research funding of the Pakistan Council for Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) for water development projects, for 2015–16, which could find some solutions to this problem. Second, the federal government, instead of increasing the allocation for water projects, has actually reduced it by a whopping 27 percent in the Public Sector Development Plan 2015–16. Pakistan spends 0.25 percent of its GDP on water development. In comparison, it spends 47 times more on defence.[64]

In Punjab, the breadbasket of Pakistan, the financial allocation for the water sector in 2014–15 was around 5 percent of the total annual development plan of the provincial government. Of the Rs 250 million so allocated, only Rs 61 million was actually released, with the rest of the funds lapsing/ being diverted to other areas. Worse, 33 percent of the total number of water-related schemes were dysfunctional in the province.[65]

63. n. 28.
64. Jamal Shahid, "Despite Dire Need, Government Unwilling to Fund Research", *Dawn*, May 4, 2015, https://www.dawn.com/news/1179878. Accessed on September 28, 2017. See also Fawad Yousafzai, "Munda Dam Falling Prey to Red Tape", *The Nation*, June 20, 2015, http://nation.com.pk/national/20-Jun-2015/munda-dam-falling-prey-to-red-tape. Accessed on September 28, 2017.
65. "The Indus Equation", Strategic Foresight Group, Mumbai, 2011.

ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES

There is a lot of scientific uncertainty about the nature and effect of climate change, especially on issues like glacial melt, rainfall and resultant water availability in Pakistan. And there is a raging debate on how fast the Himalayan glaciers are retreating and to what extent this will affect Pakistan. According to a 2010 Dutch study, 60 percent of the Indus waters are made up of Himalayan melts (glacial and snow) and there is likely to be an 8.4 percent decrease in upstream water flows in the Indus due to climate change by 2050.[66] The impact, however, is already visible in terms of frequent flooding and spells of very high temperature. Since the river flows are heavily dependent on the Himalayan glacial melt, any impact of global warming on these mountains will have a double whammy impact – first, flooding due to the accelerated melting, and thereafter, decrease in river flows. According to the World Bank, it could aggravate the "already serious problems" of flooding and poor drainage in the Indus basin over the next 50 years, followed by up to a "terrifying" 30–40 percent drop in river flows in 100 years' time.[67]

The Global Climate Risk Index (CRI) 2016 released by the German think-tank German Watch ranked Pakistan eighth on its list of most affected countries during 1995–2014. It also listed Pakistan fifth among the countries most affected by climate change in 2014.[68]

One of the most devastating consequences of the inefficiency of water usage has been the destruction of the Indus delta. "With the reduction of the historical flow of water into the delta region to barely 0.50–0.70 MAF per year, the sixth biggest mangrove forest in the world has been reduced from 0.6 million to 0.25 million acres."[69] In addition, the drying up of the Indus delta has led to sea intrusion up to 225 km. The two *tehsils* of district Thatta, i.e., Kharo Chan and Keti Bander, have almost been eliminated from

66. Ibid
67. World Bank, "Pakistan Country Water Resources Assistance Strategy—Water Economy: Running Dry," Report No. 34081-PK, November 22, 2005, Agriculture and Rural Development Sector, South Asia Region, World Bank, p. xi.
68. German Watch, Global Climate Risk Index 2016, November 2015. https://germanwatch.org/fr/download/13503.pdf. Accessed on September 28, 2017.
69. Kamal, n. 12, p. 35.

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Pakistan in the past three decades and now only a few thousand fishermen reside along the coastal belt of Keti Bander and Kharo Chan. [70] Likewise, hundreds of villages in Badin district have been deserted and around 3.5 lakh people have been forced to migrate to other areas in search of livelihoods. As of 2012, apart from the traditionally at-risk districts of Thatta and Badin, even districts like Sanghar, Umerkot, Mirpurkhas, Nawabshah and Naushehro Feroz, parts of Hyderabad in Sindh, have also been classified as being at risk of increasing soil infertility as a result of salinity due to sea water intrusion. This is the accumulated 'environmental debt' (a term used by the World Bank) that Pakistan's future generations will have to pay.

Rapid urbanisation in Pakistan is likely to create additional problems when it comes to the availability of water, as the example of Karachi shows. The present supply of water to Karachi from Indus and Hub sources is approximately 650 Million Gallons per Day (MGD) while the demand for the 20 million population is estimated to be 1,080 MGD (54 gallons per capita per day) making a shortfall of 430 MGD. By 2020, the population of Karachi is expected to be around 23 million and the demand of water would be 1,242 MGD, taking the shortfall to 600 MGD. [71] With about 40 percent of water being lost through leakages and theft, and at current population growth rates, Karachi will need massive schemes every year but there are no additional sources of water available.

While massive shortages are one issue, the other is that of contamination. A study by the Institute of Environmental Studies of Karachi University showed high levels of faecal contamination and rare presence of chlorine

70. "Arabian Sea Eating up 100 Acres of Sindh Land Daily", *The News*, September 28, 2015, https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/14892-arabian-sea-eating-up-100-acres-of-sindh-land-daily. Accessed on September 28, 2017.
71. Shaikh Abdul Rasheed, "Provision of Safe Drinking Water: A New Challenge for Pakistan", *The Nation*, June 13, 2015, http://nation.com.pk/blogs/13-Jun-2015/provision-of-safe-drinking-water-a-new-challenge-for-pakistan. Accessed on September 28, 2017.

in the piped water being supplied to Orangi town, in Karachi. Only nine samples out of 46 were found fit for human consumption. [72] The other issue is of untreated water being released into the sea. "Rivers flowing through the city contain lead, chromium and cyanide, and more metals have been found in Karachi's harbour than in any other major world harbour. Karachi's own mayor has judged that 400 million gallons of sewage pour into the sea, untreated, every day."[73] The impact of this manifests in statistics like at least 30,000 Karachiites (of whom 20,000 are children) perishing each year from drinking unsafe water. In fact, it has been estimated that more people in Karachi die each month from contaminated water than have been killed by India's army since 1947. According to a report of the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR), the mortality rate of children under five due to contaminated water is 101 per 1,000 children. [74]

Surveys conducted by the Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources (PCRWR) of water sources in 25 cities across the country show that almost 90 percent of the water supplied to homes in Pakistan is contaminated, and at least 69 percent of water sources are contaminated as well. Almost 57 percent of the samples contain bacterial contamination, and almost 6 percent of the water sources are contaminated with arsenic while 15 percent are contaminated with chlorine. This is a serious challenge for the public health authorities and one that has not been tackled. [75]

Just one example would illustrate the scale of the problem. According to the UN Commission on Sustainable Development, 200,000 children die annually from diarrhoeal diseases alone in Pakistan. The total number of civilians, security force personnel, and terrorists who died between 2003 and September 22017 was 62,483.[76] These figures alone should give any government in Pakistan nightmares about the NTST that it faces.

72. "Water in Karachi's Orangi Town Contaminated with Faecal Waste: Study", *Dawn*, January 15, 2016, https://www.dawn.com/news/1233002. Accessed on September 28, 2017.
73. Michael Kugelman, "Introduction" in Kugelman and Hathaway, eds., n. 12.
74. Rasheed, n. 71.
75. "Quest for Clean Water", Editorial in *The News*, September 15, 2017, https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/230058-Quest-for-clean-water. Accessed on September 28, 2017.
76. "The Big Problem with Water", Editorial in *The Express Tribune*, September 27, 2017, https://tribune.com.pk/story/1517024/big-problem-water/. Accessed on September 28, 2017.

CONCLUSION

It is obvious that Pakistan is faced with hydra-headed problems: increasingly diminishing water supplies, an uneducated horde of young people, an economy on the drip, demographic pressures, lack of jobs, and a growing radicalised population. A massive youth bulge that is uneducated or poorly educated and does not have jobs will become cannon fodder for the various *jihadi* organisations. Agriculture that could have absorbed some of the youth is itself in crisis due to the diminishing water supplies. Such a combination will lead to unacceptable social chaos and anarchy that the army too will not be able to control or be immune from. No amount of nuclear weapons, non-state actors or Chinese assistance will help Pakistan in tackling these non-traditional security threats.

Deteriorating water security would be catastrophic for Pakistan where irrigated agriculture plays such a dominant part in the economy and on which 60 percent of the population is dependent. Any decrease in crop yields will affect both livelihoods and food security. There are no short-cuts here. Pakistan will have to make massive investments in its water infrastructure to stay afloat. At the same time, water scarcity in Pakistan will increasingly have serious implications for Indo-Pak relations and cries of India's alleged 'water terrorism' will increase.

As an editorial in the *Express Tribune* puts it: "In reality, terrorism and extremism… have never presented a truly existential threat to Pakistan. Neither has come close to bringing down the edifices of state and neither shows that capacity on current form nor is likely to in the foreseeable future. But the water problem just might do what all the forces of darkness have as yet failed to do."[77]

The current 'educational emergency' in Pakistan is a serious security threat because an uneducated or poorly educated population is a recipe for disaster in an increasingly technological and globalised world. It is the result of decades of neglect of the education sector and it will take decades to be overcome, provided a determined start is made immediately. For Pakistan's

77. Ibid.

leaders to continue to ignore the challenges is suicidal since more than half the population is below nineteen years of age.

Without basic change in curricula and textbooks, bigotry, violence and hatred will continue. The real fight against terrorism and to reclaim the moderate space has to begin here.

The education crisis, like the water crisis, has taken on proportions that would progressively make it extremely difficult for any government to tackle. With the population continuing to grow at an alarming 2.4 percent and a huge youth bulge, millions of children are entering the education market year after year. The colossal challenge for Pakistan is clearly educating all these millions to reap the 'demographic dividend' before the window of opportunity closes.

Pakistan has been avoiding economic collapse narrowly not because of structural changes or policy initiatives but by monetising its geographical position due to the international situation. Thrice in the last 70 years, Pakistan has been bailed out by the US just as it was going over the brink, all three times when the army was ruling. And all three times, the rulers did not use the opportunity provided by foreign bailouts to make the necessary structural changes to put Pakistan on the path of sustainable growth.

There may or may not be a fourth bailout but the crucial question is whether the leaders, civilian and military, have begun to recognise how deep-rooted the problem is and how the already yawning gap between Pakistan and the rest of the world, including its neighbours, is widening?

Twenty-five years of the once-in-a-lifetime demographic dividend window of opportunity have already passed Pakistan by without any visible signs of an economic upsurge. No thinking seems to have gone into understanding the needs of a changing age structure. The lack of investment in the education sector for decades is showing results today in terms of the quantity and quality of education and literacy rates, and especially, the poor statistics for female education.

Pakistan, thus, stands at a pivotal moment in its history. Ultimately, the question boils down to whether or not the Pakistani leadership, especially the

Pakistan, thus, stands at a pivotal moment in its history. Ultimately, the question boils down to whether or not the Pakistani leadership, especially the military, continues to see Pakistan's security purely in military terms. If it does, Pakistan will sink deeper into the quagmire.

military, continues to see Pakistan's security purely in military terms. If it does, Pakistan will sink deeper into the quagmire. Even if it changes its mindset and sees security in broader terms to encompass the NTSTs, it will take a Herculean effort to pull Pakistan back from the brink of the abyss, but at least it will have a chance.

Pakistan has made itself extremely vulnerable over the decades. None of the non-traditional threats is a product of a few years but due to lack of investment and governance over decades. In fact, never before in its existence of seven decades has such a combination of threats come together simultaneously. Pakistan faced an emergency situation in all these four areas about a decade ago. Today, it should be in the disaster management mode, but there are no signs that it is.

Only a leadership that has vision and comprehension of the multiple crises facing the country can deal with these NTSTs. Such a leadership will also have to have the courage and willingness to take resolute action to tackle each of the problems. Unfortunately, in the short or medium terms, such a leadership does not seem to be on the horizon.