In This Issue

We are presenting this issue of *Policy Perspectives* in a global environment where the pace of changes in all dimensions of human life has increased tremendously. The academic analyses need time to mature and academics are struggling to keep pace with these developments. On the other hand, readers remain keen to learn about important current events from experts of their respective fields. *Policy Perspectives*, therefore, includes reflections from seasoned academics and experts on policy issues and current affairs that are intriguing the minds and shaping the immediate as well as distant future.

The Russian invasion of Ukraine is one such event which has posed a number of questions ranging from strategic affairs to food security. The Journal has included perspectives from senior policy experts in Russia and Ukraine to take into account the origins of this conflict, its development, and impact.

The current affairs section is followed by research articles. The first article titled ‘Strategic Posturing of China in IOR’ reviews the modernization of Chinese military, particularly the Navy. China’s seaward economic growth has necessitated naval development and modernization for protecting its maritime economic interests. Naval modernization has made China’s strategic posture in IOR dynamic; it is challenging India’s proclaimed naval supremacy in IOR. This exploratory research discusses the nature of naval competition and the resulting balance of power, peace, and stability in the region.

The second article highlights the significance for ‘Pooling Regional Energy between China, Iran, Pakistan, Turkey, and Russia’. It assesses the energy requirements and potential of these countries in the context of their geostrategic location. The demand, potential, and supply of energy in these countries are seen to make a viable prospect for a framework, whereby these countries pool their energy for the benefit of each country. The current and proposed energy-sharing frameworks have already laid an infrastructure of pipelines or communication corridors. Based on these factors, the paper proposes a ‘Golden Ring Energy Corridor (GREC)’ to connect energy trade among these countries through pipeline, land, and sea routes. A SWOT analysis of the proposed corridor surveys various internal and external factors and suggests countermeasures for effective implementation of this corridor.
The third article is on ‘Renewable Energy-Based Distributed Generation in Pakistan’. Renewable energy (RE) is the agreed solution to improve energy security by provision of reliable power supply and fuel diversification. Still, the share of RE in Pakistan’s energy mix is significantly low. Distributed generation (DG) can solve problems faced by power sector in transmission and distribution of power, and recovery of losses. Effective solar PV systems, active role of the capital market, and environmental concerns are already driving energy markets towards net-metered solar systems. Apart from sunlight and wind, Pakistan has enormous potential for biomass fuel as well. Mini and micro-hydro power-based distributed generation can offer numerous opportunities in rural areas and sustainable energy sector.

The comment section of this issue includes commentaries on two important subjects. The brief analysis of ‘IMF Support Arrangement for Pakistan’ looks back at Pakistan’s prolonged engagement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). Despite obvious reluctance to go for this option, successive Pakistani governments were forced by harsh domestic realities to opt for it. Medium-term support arrangements began in 1982 in quest of economic stability. The current arrangement too aimed at restoring economic sustainability and laying the foundations for balanced growth. Under this arrangement, Pakistan has met harsh IMF conditions and has made difficult economic decisions among chaotic political environment. This comment looks at the prospects of economic sustainability and balanced growth and is mainly based on actions and projections proposed in the arrangement as updated in the sixth review.

The comment on ‘Hindu Nationalism’ discusses fascism with a particular focus on Hindutva and considers it present day fascism. Touching upon various political fascist systems over the last 100 years and the conditions under which mass murders occur, it indicates the political selectivity in exposing and discussing the tragedies in different jurisdictions. Still, there are important reflections in history on factors enabling fascism and genocide and there is a need to draw lessons and foresee outcomes. Approaching Modi’s contemporary political movement in India, this comment seeks to analyze if it can lead to mass killing.

The book review section introduces a very critical discussion by Sana Haroon in her recent publication titled The Mosques of Colonial South Asia: A Social and Legal History of Muslim Worship, while the dialogue part brings various themes from some important discussions at the Institute of Policy Studies.