

NEWS LETTER



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Computer models have shown that human-caused warming has contributed to intensifying rainfall, which is especially strong during the monsoon season.

Editor in Chief: Dr. M. Ejaz Sandhu

Editor: Muhammad Firas Shams

Designer: Tabinda Naz

Highlights

- From the Desk of Chairman

Focus Areas

- Think Tank Wing
- Education and Learning Wing
- Knowledge Management Wing



Shahid Javed Burki
Chairman

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute
of Public Policy at NetSol

Climate Change is With Us

My wife and I have lived in Washington for more than fifty years. Our children and grandchildren were born in the city. However, we don't recall the heat that we are experiencing in July of 2025 when air temperatures reached mid-nineties and the level of humidity is exceptionally high. Combine the two, and you get what meteorologists call the heat index. For several days in late July, the index has been hovering around 100

degrees. One result of this weather pattern is what is called "load shedding" when power goes out for hours. This has already happened twice in Washington this July. Consumers have rushed to the stores to buy small generators that at least keep the lights on in the house.

Washington's unrelenting heat is not the only consequence of climate change. In early July – to be precise on July 4 when Americans celebrate their Independence Day – heavy rains hit the state of Texas in the country's southwest. This is a desert area which remains dry most of the year. Texas in the country's southwest is a mostly desert area which remains dry most of the year. But the heavy rains that fell on July 4, resulted in the sharply rising water level in the generally sedate Guadalupe River that flows through the state. Upriver, the Guadalupe's rising waters caused havoc for hours, drowning people, destroying their houses and all that was in them. The search for the missing hundreds is still going on.

For decades now, scientists and weather experts have reached the conclusion that observable global weather changes have been caused by human activity. Science that arrived at that conclusion is simple. It focuses on the burning of fossil fuels that produce carbon dioxide which gets trapped in upper atmosphere and prevents world weather from becoming part of the global system. The burning of coal, gas and oil are not the only sources of the emissions of climate-altering gases. These emissions are also produced by the burning of fuel by motor vehicles and aircrafts.

On July 22, the International Court of Justice issued a strongly worded opinion saying that states must protect their citizens from the "urgent and existential threat of 'climate change.'" This statement constituted a major contribution for the global environmental

movement and to the countries at greatest risk of harm. Pakistan, as discussed below, is one of the countries that will suffer from the changes in the pattern of weather.

This was the first time that the court, which is the United Nations highest judicial body, has pronounced a judgement on climate change. The panel is based in The Hague. The court's unanimous decision held that the failure of nations to take action to protect the climate system may constitute an "internationally wrongful act." It also found that protection of the environment is "a precondition for ensuring human rights and cited government support of fossil-fuel production as a violation of these principles."

"The environment is the foundation for human life, upon which the health and well-being of both present and future depends," Judge Iwasawa Yuji, president of the court said. The United Nations General Assembly requested the court to look into this matter. An opinion was requested after a spirited, years-long campaign that led to a two-week hearing in December 2024 at which more than 100 countries, organizations and experts addressed the court. The court's 15 members were asked to answer to two main questions, including what countries are obliged to do, under existing international laws and treaties to protect the climate system and environment from greenhouse gases; and where the legal consequences are if they have caused considerable harm.

Poor nations, especially those that border rising oceans, argued for financial and technical help from the nations that were primarily responsible for producing global warming. Ralph Regenvannu, the climate envoy from Vanuatu, a small country in western Pacific, addressed the court in December 2024 saying that his country was on "the frontline of a crisis we did not create. He asked the court for

recognition that the conduct is “unlawful, that it must cease and that its consequences must be repaired.”

The court's judges to prepare themselves for the hearing, held a private meeting with a group of scientists from the International Government Panel on Climate Change, a U.N. body. The court's opinion went well beyond many layers had expected. The judges ruled that all states have the obligation to limit global warming to 1.5 degrees above preindustrial times, a threshold adopted in the 2015 Paris accord.

Large and powerful fossil fuel producers such as the United States and Saudi Arabia argued before the court that the 2015 Paris accord, in which nearly all countries agreed to limit greenhouse gases, was sufficient to address climate change. While this argument was presented by the administration headed by President Joe Biden, Donald Trump, his successor, withdrew from the accord. The Trump administration has adopted policies to end the federal government's ability to fight global warming by regulating greenhouse gas emissions. However, countries other than Saudi Arabia and the United States argued that since the Paris accord did not have any enforcement mechanism it had not resulted in halting the rapid pace of global warming, which is causing higher temperatures, rising oceans, heavier than normal rainfalls, and increasing dangerous storms. Rich countries such as the United States were also paying a heavy price. The heavy rainfall in the state of Texas caused severe floods in a river that flows through the area, taking hundreds of lives and destroying properties worth millions of dollars.

Environmental groups hailed the court's decision history. Regenvanu of Vanuatu said that his country would ask the United Nations General Assembly for a resolution to put the court's opinion into action.

While the experts who are studying how human activity is acting on global climate have plenty of evidence to work on. Some of that comes from the sub-Continent of South Asia where unprecedented climate events have begun to occur. These have occurred in all South Asian countries. One example of climate change is heavy monsoon rains in Pakistan in recent years. The country is also facing larger than normal water flows in the rivers because of the faster ice-belt in the mountains from which most of the country's rivers draw water. On July 20, 2025, a report in *The New York Times* filed by John Zoon, Ziaur Rehman and Salman Masood under the title “Monsoon Rains Cause Flooding, Killing Dozens Around Pakistan” They wrote: “This is the latest extreme weather to hit Pakistan, which has seen intense heat waves and floods in recent years. Scientists and official have linked these events to climate change. The monsoon in Pakistan began in late June, and heavy rains have killed at least 80 people and injured hundreds more, the national disaster authority said. More than 80 of the dead were children. Chakwal around 60 miles south of Islamabad, Pakistan's capital, was among the hardest hit areas.” An emergency public holiday was declared on July 17. Scientists have linked the heavy floods in recent years in Pakistan to climate change. Computer models have shown that human-caused warming has contributed to intensifying rainfall, which is especially strong during the monsoon season, which typically runs from July to September. The monsoon season in 2022 brought some of the worst flooding ever to hit Pakistan. More than 1,700 died, tens of thousands were left displaced and millions were recovering years later.



Shahid Najam
Vice Chairman

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute
of Public Policy at NetSol

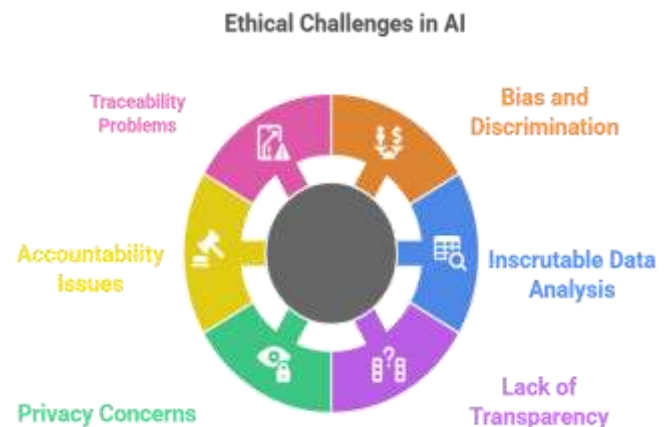
Artificial Intelligence - The Ethical Dimension

Technology has been profoundly impacting and shaping the trajectory of societal development in almost all walks of life ever since the dawn of human civilization. The continuous advancement and evolution from simple raw stone tools to, invention of wheel and development of agriculture to intricately complex and sophisticated systems of today including computers and genetic engineering represents intelligent and creative response of human beings to the emerging problems and the associated needs to provide integrated solutions for their effective redress. The contemporary world, however, with the advent of Artificial Intelligence (AI) is in the midst of witnessing technology's unprecedented intercession in human history redesigning and reconfiguring how mankind moves forward and determine its future.

AI terms was coined and advocated by Alan Turing in a publication in 1950 "Computer Machinery and Intelligence" proposing a test of machine intelligence. The concept was further refined and advanced by John McCarthy in 1956 in the Dartmouth Workshop which paved the way for establishing AI as a formal field of study and initiating AI Era. Today, the rapid and intense development and deployment of AI-driven tools and solutions finds widespread expression and integration across various aspects of society, economy, politics, socio-cultural and daily life especially for sustainable human development. Indeed, AI continues to

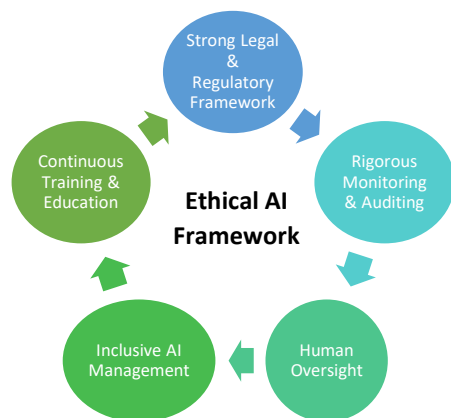
unfold huge prospects for development but at the same time presents serious ethical, social, and economic challenges that need careful consideration. The ethical dimension especially in the fields of defense, healthcare and education is, in particular, engaging increasing attention of the governments and other stakeholders to ensure the well-being of the people and the respect of planet earth's sustainability and environmental integrity.

These ethical challenges include the possibility of wrong decisions and ensuing actions stemming out of bias and discrimination inherent in inductive knowledge, inconclusive or inscrutable evidence-based data analysis for designing algorithms, lack of transparency, privacy and potential for surveillance, issue of accountability and moral responsibility for wrong decisions, and traceability to apportion responsibility due to the mix of human and technological interventions.



A comprehensive and inclusive approach is required to address these challenges and eliminate the risks of detrimental use and deployment of AI which, inter alia, involve the entire gamut of AI management and development from design, validation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation.

In this endeavor, continuous training and education to create a responsible techno-professional corps fully acquainted with ethical considerations and best practices, a strong legal and regulatory framework and rigorous monitoring and auditing of AI systems and institutions will be sine qua non to ensure data integrity and its robust management. Added to it, diligent human oversight will lead to integration of human values, transparency and respect for the security and privacy of the people. These issues are critically important for Pakistan where AI has already established its roots and warrant policy, institutional and regulatory regimes to make certain that ethical issues form integral part of managing, developing and deploying AI driven solutions.



Atrun Nisa

Research Associate

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy at NetSol

Pakistan and the IMF: A History of Dependency and Missed Reforms

Pakistan's engagement with the International Monetary Fund (IMF) spans over seven decades, making it one of the Fund's most,

persistent borrowers. Since joining the IMF in 1950, Pakistan has entered over 20 loan agreements aimed at addressing fiscal deficits, balance of payments crises, and economic instability. While some programs provided momentary relief, most have failed to trigger lasting structural reform.

Pakistan's IMF journey began in 1958, with a modest US\$25,000 Stand-By Arrangement. Over the next few decades, a familiar cycle emerged: mounting deficits, emergency IMF loans, short-term policy corrections—and eventual program suspensions. The 1970s and 1980s saw repeated borrowing amid political turmoil, post-war dislocation, and global oil shocks. A major Extended Fund Facility (EFF) in 1981 marked Pakistan's first large-scale structural reform effort, but weak implementation hampered results.

The 1990s witnessed a surge in IMF involvement with five separate arrangements, including the Enhanced Structural Adjustment Facility. Civilian governments struggled with rising debt, poor tax collection, and energy inefficiencies. Reforms were frequently delayed or reversed, leading to repeated suspensions.

A rare success story emerged under General Pervez Musharraf's regime (1999–2008), when economic stabilization, global support post-9/11, and rising remittances helped Pakistan exit IMF dependency by 2004. But the return to democracy in 2008 brought renewed challenges. The global financial crisis, rising inflation, and fiscal mismanagement prompted a US\$7.6 billion IMF bailout. Yet again, the program was suspended in 2011 due to unmet tax reform targets.

The 2013–2016 EFF under the PML-N government marked another success. Pakistan completed the program and saw

improvements in reserves and governance. However, fundamental issues—like circular debt in the power sector and a narrow tax base—remained unresolved.

In 2019, Pakistan returned to the IMF under the PTI government, grappling with a deteriorating external sector and mounting deficits. The COVID-19 pandemic and Ukraine war worsened the situation, leading to a US\$3 billion short-term SBA in 2023. In 2024, a landmark 37-month EFF worth US\$7 billion was approved, aimed at deep reforms in energy, taxation, and climate resilience.

Despite these efforts, long-term economic progress remains elusive. Experts cite poor policy continuity, lack of political will, and limited national ownership as recurring obstacles. Many reforms are implemented under duress and rolled back under public pressure. Accountability is often absent, and IMF targets—like broadening the tax net or privatizing state-owned enterprises—remain unfulfilled.

While recent programs show better performance, with rising reserves and a current account surplus in early 2025, the core challenge remains: using IMF assistance not as a temporary fix but as a catalyst for transformative change. Sustainable success will require political consensus, institutional reform, and alignment of IMF goals with Pakistan's development agenda.

Until that is achieved, Pakistan's IMF story will remain one of repeated rescue, missed opportunity, and unfinished reform.



Muhammad Firas Shams
Research Associate

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy at NetSol

The Changing World Order

The world we live in is becoming more competitive, unstable and contested, punctuated by regional crises and conflicts which have global ramifications, albeit a singular event is not sufficient enough to be the genesis of a change in the world order. The current order characterizes the tense coexistence of unipolarity, bipolarity and multipolarity, while parochial nationalistic pursuits seem to be challenging multilateralism. The post-World War II order is in a transitional phase, which encapsulates the steady rise of China as a new power in the colosseum of global affairs, contesting the established position of its capitalist alter ego, the US, in other words the “Thucydides trap” as international relations experts would describe it. A country's measure of total power is grounded in the following factors, these are inventiveness and technology, education, competitiveness and global markets, development, share of world trade, economic output, the power of a country's financial centers for capital markets, strength of a country's currency as a reserve currency and military strength. Each of the aforementioned factors are measurable and can help determine the decline or rise of a global power. For instance, Beijing's inventiveness and technology is on the rise and competitive enough to for Washington to clutch its pearls. Similarly, while cooperation platforms like BRICS herald the ushering in of de-dollarization, however in reality these countries are still not there yet, to replace dollar as a reserve currency.

On the other hand, conflicts also help us understand the pattern of whether a dominant power becoming moribund or the breakneck rise a new power. The ongoing brutal war on Gaza presents itself as a case study to analyze how the US and other powers conducted themselves or the policies adopted by them during this genocide. As depicted by history, Washington has been unconditionally throwing its weight beyond Israel and more importantly the controversial Netanyahu dispensation despite domestic and international censure. Washington's policy in the United Nations of vetoing numerous ceasefire resolutions or providing copious military aid to Tel Aviv at the expense of its reputation shows how the current world order is fraying as it serves the mighty rather than the marginalized or besieged. However, the fact that the US can get away with indirectly sponsoring genocide in Gaza or even dropping bunker busters from B-2 stealth bombers on Iran's nuclear facilities – Tehran was cooperating with the IAEA and negotiating a new nuclear pact with the Trump administration – or imposing outrageous tariffs on foes and allies alike, reflects how the world could be deemed unipolar in these instances, since China or Russia's role has been somewhat relatively limited. Particularly, if China aims to replace the US as the new super power, it needs to have a more proactive role in international affairs and crises like in Gaza, beyond mere condemnations and monitoring.

The handling of the 12-day war and the Gaza Genocide by the US also further accentuates the lack of trust the Global South has for the Western World and its order, the Global South including Iran, and Palestine continues to be hung out to dry. It challenges America status as a self-appointed peace broker especially in the Middle East. Simultaneously, more people in

the West are opposing the American war machine and its policies towards Middle East, especially the criminal silence and inaction on the Gaza issue. Domestically, the US has become a very contentious society, with people on both sides and nuances of the spectrum have stark political and social difference leading cultural, social, political, economic and ideological dissonance. The domestic situation of a world power especially it is led by a demagogue, could in return have impact on its position globally in the long-term. For instance, China have more or less a people centered policy, which provides them stability at home and latitude to exercise power regionally and globally through projects like the BRI and platforms like the SCO.

Additionally with protectionism, unipolar and anti-globalization politics on the rise, much needed multilateralism is in peril. The tariff war already exposed the crevices in the current world order, as the EU don't have a reliable partner across the Atlantic nor does China have a predictable and reasonable adversary. However, multilateralism seems to be thriving in the case of the recent exchange of salvos between two nuclear armed nations, India and Pakistan, as Trump takes credit for brokering a ceasefire between the two, a stance contested by New Delhi which insists the ceasefire was a product of bilateralism. The aforementioned scenarios give credence to how multipolarity, bipolarity, and unipolarity can all exist simultaneously in the current world order hinging on the issue.



Amna Amir
Research Intern

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute
of Public Policy at NetSol

Rise of the 60-Second Classroom

Imagine a 14-year-old scrolling through their phone after school. They watch one 30-second video on how black holes work, then another about the French Revolution, now animated and to-the-point. They scroll once again, and this time they land on a video that shows a math question similar to the one they had been struggling with all day. Within a minute and a half, they went from physics to history to maths, learning more than they ever realized. This is the power of short-form media content.

With over 200 billion Instagram Reels and 70 billion YouTube Shorts watched every single day, this form is quickly becoming one of the most common ways in which people engage with information online. This shift in our media consumption habits is gradually changing how we process information and how we learn. And as attention spans become shorter, educators are beginning to incorporate similar microlearning tools into teaching methods to adapt to this changing learning environment.

Such educational videos, ranging from a few seconds to a few minutes, have seen a surge on social media in recent years and cover every subject imaginable, from science to financial literacy. These videos package complex information into “bite-sized” segments, which makes learning accessible and less overwhelming. They offer quick, visual explanations that are easier to understand than

a textbook or a lecture. Their speed and clarity also make them an attractive learning tool in today's fast-paced world. And for those who stumble across these videos for the very first time, they offer an interesting, engaging gateway to a whole new subject.

This format is especially effective for building interest and reinforcing ideas. Many content creators focus on one concept at a time and use storytelling, visuals, or humor to cater to all different learning styles. This creates a learning space that is open to everyone, regardless of their preferences, abilities, and pace of learning. When used in formal school settings, this format of segmented short videos has been seen to improve retention and recall and increase student engagement by 24.7% and final grades by 9%.

But there are some drawbacks to it, too. Constant exposure to rapidly switching information reduces students' ability to focus on anything for long. Excessive screen time is also harmful to mental and physical health, especially for young learners. Furthermore, these videos often simplify content to fit the time limit, they rarely show the full picture, and when used alone, they can leave gaps in understanding. However, if used intentionally and with supervision, short-form content can be used to supplement formal education by meeting students where they are most engaged: on their screens.



Sharmeen Saeed
Research Intern

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute
of Public Policy at NetSol

Machine Learning: How Computers Are Learning to Think Like Humans

Most of us hear the term “Machine Learning” and instantly think of robots or sci-fi movies. However, the truth is, machine learning isn’t some far-off idea. It’s already a part of our daily lives and it’s quietly transforming the way we live, work, and even play.

So, what is machine learning exactly? In simple terms, it’s a way of teaching computers to learn from data, just like we learn from experience. Instead of programming every single step, we feed machines a lot of information and let them figure out the patterns on their own. Pretty smart, right?

Think about your favorite music app. Ever wondered how Spotify always seems to pick the perfect song? Or how YouTube somehow knows exactly what video you’ll enjoy next? That’s machine learning in action, learning from your behavior and tailoring content just for you.

But it’s not just about entertainment. Machine learning is helping farmers predict crop health, allowing banks to detect fraud instantly, and even helping doctors diagnose illnesses more accurately. It’s also powering self-driving cars, helping them read their environment and make split-second decisions on the road.

One of the most exciting things about machine learning is that it gets better the more it learns. The more data it sees, the smarter it becomes. It’s like giving your computer a brain that grows with every new experience.

Of course, it’s not perfect. If the data machines learn from is biased or incomplete, they can make unfair or flawed decisions. That’s why it’s so important to use clean, balanced data and to develop machine learning systems that are ethical and fair.

In the end, machine learning isn’t about replacing people. It’s about helping us do things better — faster, smarter, and more efficiently. Whether it’s making smarter business decisions, improving healthcare, or just recommending your next favorite show, machine learning is working behind the scenes to make life easier and more connected.

Next time your phone finishes your sentence or your playlist feels oddly perfect, now you’ll know — that’s machine learning quietly doing its job.



Laiba Iftikhar
Research Intern

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute
of Public Policy at NetSol

The Role of War in Society

War has been a disruptive and recurrent force throughout human history that has caused immense suffering and devastation to societies worldwide throughout human history. The victims of this intense armed conflict between states, governments, and communities are mostly the civilian population. The impact on individuals and communities is evident in the disruption of daily routine, extensive devastation, mortality rates, and the enduring psychological scars that persist even after the war ends.

Characteristics of war show that it involves at least two or more opposing armed groups, in

which one group belongs to an official fighting force of the government, such as a nation's military, civil units, or police force. There is an organized leadership directing the actions of both sides, even if it takes the form of organized armed defense or planned assaults such as guerrilla operations, partisan war, etc. Moreover, warfare is not spontaneous; it emerges from concerted military efforts. Each side follows a determined course of action regardless of region or timeframe.

Types of war can be grouped into different categories depending on who is involved and the nature of the conflict. Inter-state wars take place between two or more states (India-Pakistan). On the other hand, intra-state wars, such as the civil conflict in Syria, occur in one country only. Extra-state wars occur between state and non-state actors beyond existing borders (U.S. vs. Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan). Finally, sub-state wars refer to the conflict that is fought between non-state actors.

War has terrible and long-lasting effects. Wars cause nations to fall into poverty and harm their long-term economies progress. The refugee crises of Syria and Ukraine highlight how conflicts can result in mass displacement of people. In addition, societal frameworks such as education and healthcare are interrupted, and the family unit is attacked, causing decades worth of societal deterioration. The aftermath of war can affect people physically and mentally for a long time, especially where PTSD, anxiety, and relentless dread becomes the reality for many long after conflict ceases.

Politically, war can create new states and dissolve existing ones, and often results in authoritarian regimes, as observed in Afghanistan. Military operations contribute significantly to greenhouse gas emissions and pollution, not to mention they deplete natural resources. As a result, the environment suffers a great deal that can last for a long time.

Sometimes, it has positive outcomes, like removing an oppressive regime or technological advancement seen after WWII.

In the end, there's really no way to justify the huge human cost of war. Deliberately causing harm and death to people is just plain wrong and a violation of their basic human rights.



Imaan Fatima
Research Intern

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy at NetSol

A Nation Rebuilt: Burkina Faso's Road to Prosperity Under Traore

Burkina Faso, a landlocked country in West Africa rich in gold mining and other natural resources, was a former French colony that gained independence as Upper Volta in 1960, and is regarded as the "Land of Incorruptible People." This country suffers from an inadequate political system, just like other decolonized African countries, inadequate infrastructure, resource exploitation by foreign military involvement, poor health results, and a lack of educational and developmental possibilities. In September 2022, Ibrahim Traore, a military officer, gained leadership of Burkina Faso. Captain Ibrahim Traore's leadership has sparked social reform, economic regeneration, and a renewed sense of hope for Burkina Faso's future after years of poverty and conflict. "We decided to revolt and take our country's destiny into our own hands," said revolutionary leader, who then took the necessary actions for his country. Major advances include nationalizing important gold mines, establishing the nation's first gold

refinery, and investing in local sectors such as tomato processing plants, cotton production, and cement factories.

On May 22, 2025, in the center of Bobo Dioulasso, Burkina Faso's commercial hub, the President took a historic decision that astounded onlookers both locally and worldwide. Ibrahim Traore made a courageous gesture by donating over 104 billion CFA Francs worth of agropastoral and fisheries equipment to empower rural farmers and initiate a large food sovereignty initiative. He also boosted worker pay to increase input, and introduced free health care center in remote regions to provide basic health care services. Among the major development projects are Burkindlim (the first national bank and an instrument of economic inclusion), Red Gold, the \$120 million corridor, Yeleen (which will use solar energy instead of costly electricity), Bobo's Hospital, the Ziga 2 solution, and the Faso Mayo urban development project.

In addition, other projects include the urban water sector project, the livestock sector development support project, the artificial canals, and the most current initiative to build roadways from used car tires. In terms of security and administration, Burkina Faso is also dealing with extremist and insurgent organizations. Ibrahim Traore is developing national security forces and working towards political stability and a stronger national identity.



Mehr un Nissa Wahid
Research Intern

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute
of Public Policy at NetSol

Is She the True Owner of Her Honour?

Does murder protect honour or erase shame?

They tell me to protect my honour,
Then they do it *forme*.

Am I the true owner of my honour, my Lord?
Or was I born to pay the price for his sins?

He judges me for sinning differently,
When all I do is exercise my right.

Erasing me will restore honour, he claims;
My blood will be their redemption, he says.

Am I solely a commodity to be traded to stop
the wars *he* started?
To wash the cloth clean of shame *he* brought?

I'm a living, breathing, human,
I'm not an eraser for your shame.

Not someone to be chained
Nor, to your will, will I tame

Killing a woman to protect his/ family's honour,
going to jail for it, and in return making other
women of his household vulnerable, is it
honourable? Is the act of murdering in itself
honourable? Is that what "mardangi / ghairat"
truly is? The act of violence? Quite frankly,
there is no honour in killing or in being killed.

In everyday speech, "honour" carries an almost
sacred weight: a family's pride, a community's

esteem, a man's glory. Yet when asked, 'what is my honour?', the answers fracture and scatter. Somewhere in between, a woman's agency dissolves into property—her body a battlefield where family pride is won or lost, all for face-saving.

Men start wars and their women pay the price. Several stories, as that of Mukhataran Mai, are witnesses that regardless of whoever “disgraces” a family's honour, the price will always be paid by the women of the household in the name of justice –via practices of honour revenge, swara, wani, karo kari, and sang chatti they clearly show how they view their women. Are they a trophy? An object to be traded?

Pakistan stands at the 153rd, one of the lowest ranks of the Global Gender Gap index 2022, where honour killing is just one part of the gender-based violence (GBV) cases. The Balochistan Couple (Bano Satakazai and Ehsan-Ullah Samalani), Saba, Qandeel Baloch, Mukhtaran Mai Case (2002 – Honour Revenge). The names pile up across the globe as well, as grim testament: Ahlam (Jordan), Isra Ghayeb (Palestine), Kaisalya Shankar (India), and Mahsa Amini (Iran). Each story echoes the same brutal refrain: when women claim their rights, patriarchal fury demands they pay with their lives.

In many regions, tribal councils compete with, even supersede, the state's monopoly on legitimate violence. When the state allows parallel judicial systems to flourish, it fractures its sovereignty into multiple mini-states –each dispensing justice by its own rules. Families refuse formal courts, turning instead to jirgas and panchayats –as a swift and alternative dispute resolution that punish without hearings, and sentences without appeal. One cannot decide for an entity without making them a party to the offence or without listening to their viewpoint. True, councils wield undeniable

social, cultural, and traditional influence, but are they above and beyond law? Should their “decrees” be free of boundaries and ethical/moral codes?

Cherry-picking Islamic verses to justify gender oppression and heinous crimes, reveals an identity crisis that blurs the line between true religious principles and ingrained cultural norms. Those boundaries have blurred, or have been *kept* blurred –to keep control, and with that control, power-over minds, progress, and independent thought –the intellectual strength. The rules/confines of honour are set by the patriarchal system *for* these women. Matter of honour can be an act as small as waving hi to a co-worker to having a sexual relation or rejecting a proposal.

Moreover, these strictly male councils work with the patriarchal ethos that equate a woman's body with family honour. Heartbreakingly, women have as much a part in upholding such values without question and blind belief as that was how their ancestors worked and believed. And this is still happening in the reign of the first female Chief Minister of the province who declared violence against women her red-line –no concrete steps or policies have been seen.

Honour cannot be traded in blood or guarded via oppressive mindset. The answer demands we stop hiding behind “tradition” and start upholding universal human dignity. Only by asserting the state's genuine monopoly on justice—supported by institutions' influence as education, media, religion, and NGOs-can this diseased thought be fought against.



Zahra Khan
Assistant Manager Finance & Administration
 The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy at NetSol

One Course. Seventy-Three Visions. A New Future.

A seed was planted not in the soil, but in the minds of 73 curious, ambitious students at Beaconhouse National University (BNU) who would soon see agri-prenurship not just as a profession, but as a purpose. A vision sparked by the *Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy (BIPP)* and brought to life by the leadership of *Dr. Syed Iftikhar Hussain Shah* quickly evolved into a powerful movement driven by youth, purpose, and innovation.



At a time when Pakistan's agriculture sector faces mounting challenges from climate change to outdated practices, this course offered a new lens. It invited students to imagine:

What if agriculture could be smarter? More equitable? More sustainable?

These students weren't handed textbooks and lectures. They were handed possibilities. They explored real-world problems, designed feasible solutions, and worked in teams to bring entrepreneurial ideas to life. By the end, 73 students successfully completed the program, each carrying not just knowledge, but a vision.



Together, they didn't just complete assignments they cultivated ideas that brimmed with originality. The students engaged in a diverse range of innovative projects that reflected both creativity and real-world relevance. These included a *Vermicompost Business Research Proposal*, a conceptual marketing campaign titled *Kash-U-Kuma Soils*, and a full-scale model for *110 Dairy Farm*. Health-focused innovations like *SehatWheat* and *Nutri Meals for Diabetic & Heart Patients*, featuring the prototype *DiabBox – The Diabetic Wellness Line for South Asia*, highlighted their commitment to societal well-being. Agribusiness ideas such as *Green Root Organics*, *Paharri Roots*, *Brown Nest Farms*, and *Zaraat Pay* demonstrated entrepreneurial spirit rooted in sustainability. Strategic analyses on *Supply Chain Management of Potential Crops*

including sugarcane, cotton, maize, rice, wheat, superfoods, and herbal varieties were carried out to strengthen agrifood systems. The students also explored *Value Addition, Processing Procedures & Manufacturing Feasibility* in agriculture, while *Pakspice Hub Business Development Report* offered insights into agro-based enterprise. Additionally, a unique field-based project was undertaken on *Livestock Purchase and Sale*, successfully covering the transaction of 100 animals. Each of these efforts reflected a strong blend of innovation, practicality, and purpose.



BIPP didn't just support a course—it lit a fire. A fire that spread through brainstorming, business models, late-night discussions, and site visits. It created a space where students shifted from learners to leaders, from observers into innovators and where agri-prenurship was no longer a subject but a purpose.



The energy generated in that classroom is already spilling into the real world. Top ideas are being refined, mentored, and prepared for pilot implementation. Discussions around incubation support, policy advocacy, and investment readiness have already begun.

This initiative represents more than academic success. It's a blueprint for how Pakistan can empower its youth to lead from the front through innovation, sustainability, and inclusive development.

When you plant ideas in the right soil nurtured by belief, opportunity, and passion they don't just grow, **they bloom.**





Tabinda Naz
Assistant Manager IT/Knowledge Management

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy at NetSol

BIPP Round Up

The Shahid Javed Burki Institute of Public Policy (BIPP) is pleased to introduce its cross-sectoral green initiative, spearheaded by Dr. Iftikhar Hussain Shah, Consultant at BIPP. This initiative is designed to promote environmental sustainability through practical, evidence-based interventions across agriculture, corporate landscapes, academia, and community engagement.

Moreover, following the first monsoon spell, key activities and ecological assessments have been initiated across Punjab. In the agriculture sector, field evaluations at *Ameers Organica* in Kasur focus on soil health, crop resilience, and the performance of rainwater harvesting systems. In *Khyaban-e-Zafar Housing Society*, Lahore, corporate green infrastructure is being reviewed to assess monsoon drainage efficiency and the sustainability of landscaped areas.



Furthermore, academic collaborations have been launched with *Sahara Medical College (Narowal)*, *BNU Lahore*, and *Namal University* to integrate environmental awareness and sustainable practices into education, particularly in the fields of health and green pharmacy. Under the *Mission Khudkafeel* initiative, tree survival rates are being monitored and awareness campaigns are being organized at *Umar Nursery*, Kamahan, to highlight plantation outcomes and encourage community participation.



As part of its expanding environmental portfolio, BIPP has undertaken a forest restoration initiative at Namal University, spearheaded by Mr. Faisal Haroon, Consultant Agroforestry at BIPP. This initiative focuses on restoring the *scrub dry subtropical broad-leaved forest*, one of Punjab's seven key forest ecosystems, native to the Potohar Plateau and Salt Range.

The project site, located in the Salt Range hill tract surrounding Namal University, is characterized by a harsh climate, prolonged droughts, and limited rainfall. These conditions have led to sparse vegetation and degraded forest cover. To address this, BIPP has initiated the plantation of around 500 xerophytic species such as *phulahi* (*Acacia modesta*), *kikar* (*Vachellia nilotica*), and *ber* (*Ziziphus mauritiana*) using slope, trough, and pit planting techniques designed for dry afforestation and efficient rainwater harvesting.



Initial germination outcomes are promising, indicating potential for the successful revival of this endangered ecosystem. Protection from grazing and trampling remains critical, with local community engagement being actively pursued to ensure long-term sustainability and ecological resilience.



Furthermore, we are proud to celebrate the remarkable journey of Ms. Sabeen Gull, the first recipient of the Khalid Sherdil Scholarship, an initiative launched by BIPP to support talented students in pursuing higher education. Ms. Sabeen completed her Bachelor's degree in Food Sciences under BIPP's sponsorship, consistently

demonstrating exceptional academic performance and unwavering dedication. Recognizing her potential and commitment, BIPP extended its support to fund her MS program as well.

We are pleased to share that Ms. Sabeen has secured a Managerial position at KFC Lahore, a testament to her hard work, perseverance, and the transformative power of educational opportunity. She recently visited BIPP to express her gratitude and share her inspiring achievement.



Sabeen's story exemplifies the transformative power of education when combined with the right support systems. Her achievement not only reflects her individual capabilities but also emphasizes on the broader mission of the *BIPP Scholarship Program*, to empower young minds, especially women, to realize their potential and become agents of change within their communities.

On 29th of July 2025, BIPP organized an in-house plantation drive, engaging its staff members in a meaningful step toward environmental sustainability. The initiative aimed to promote green practices within the organization and reinforce the importance of ecological responsibility. The plantation initiative was coordinated under the guidance of Mr. Faisal Haroon, who supervised the

selection of plant species and oversaw logistical arrangements. This is a part of BIPP's ongoing efforts to integrate sustainability into its organizational culture, complementing its work in policy research, advocacy, and development planning with actions that promote long-term environmental resilience.





Mission Statement

BIPP's mission is to improve the welfare of the citizenry with particular emphasis on identifying policy measures that will lead to inclusive, people-centered growth with equity, political stability and sustainable development besides fully harnessing the potential for regional and global integration of the country. BIPP primary areas of interest encompass social, economic, environmental and political development and security, trade and foreign policy-related issues.

<http://www.sjbipp.org/>

admin@sjbipp.org

+92-42-35913304

138, Abubakar Block, New Garden Town, Lahore