**Conflict and grain**

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Pakistan is in a fix in terms of its relations with the US, China, and Russia on the Ukraine issue. News has surfaced that Pakistan should avoid appeasing the West according to the Minister of State Hina Rabbani Khar in a memo to the Prime Minister of Pakistan. She further emphasized that “We can’t get the full benefit of a strategic partnership with China in case Islamabad maintains a strategic partnership with the US.”

While Russia has strategic relations with India and supplies arms with defense agreements, Russia has started supplying the most needed oil to Pakistan as a gesture that it cares about Pakistan.

The help and support that China and Russia are providing though not enough to the extent that Pakistan can be bailed out of its debt and nor to meet other requirements of Pakistan, these two countries at least are not pressuring Pakistan as the US. Probably, they are waiting for Pakistan’s political situation to stabilize.

[Iran's Foreign Ministry confirms cyberattack but denies leak of documents](https://www.nation.com.pk/08-May-2023/iran-s-foreign-ministry-confirms-cyberattack-but-denies-leak-of-documents)

Even during the political crisis, China has worked out a plan for a railroad from Kashgar to Gwadar worth more than 50 billion dollars and Russia has supplied oil and allowed Ukraine wheat shipments to Pakistan under an agreement with Türkiye. To the great surprise of the world, some of the ships destined for Pakistan were diverted to European countries in violation of the international agreement that grain be supplied to the most needed countries of Asia and Africa.

This is because Europe has had a warm winter and is now facing a water shortage due to a lack of snowfall. This phenomenon has created several problems including a shortage of grain which threatens to divide the European Union.

Amid a recent surge in cheap grains and farm products from Ukraine, Poland, and Hungary announced temporary bans on imports on April 15, 2023, to protect their own farmers’ interests. Slovakia joined them on April 17, 2023, and Bulgaria on April 20, 2023.

Romania, another country that has witnessed farmer protests over the issue, has so far stopped short of a ban.

[Saudi Arabia’s first woman astronaut to blast off to space on May 21](https://www.nation.com.pk/08-May-2023/saudi-arabia-s-first-woman-astronaut-to-blast-off-to-space-on-may-21)

While Ukraine has acknowledged the concerns of European farmers, authorities in Kyiv say Ukrainians have it harder. But there are some signs of the crisis easing.

Top officials at the EU have condemned the measures but promised to solve the problem with money—proposing millions of extra euros to support farmers in the continent.

And after talks with his Polish counterparts in Warsaw, Ukrainian Agriculture Minister Mykola Solskyi confirmed on April 20, 2023, that the transit of Ukrainian grain and food products will resume through Poland.

With the grain shortage in the EU, Pakistan is in a good position. It was supposed that due to floods and weather modification techniques used by the USA for Europe to keep it warm during winter and cause floods in Pakistan, Pakistan will face grain shortage, but Pakistan has had a bumper crop of wheat and as per the statement of Prime Minister of Pakistan, we are in a position of exporting the wheat.

This can enable Pakistan to have relief in foreign policy and can try to balance its policy-keeping relations with the East and West. The US should revisit its policy and try to maintain good relations which are in the interest of both countries especially, at a time when the US’ primacy over the world has been challenged seriously.