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Preface

It is with great pride and a deep sense of continuity that I present **Book No. 118** of *The Advanced Contemporary Affairs*, a series that has been in uninterrupted publication since 1995. Over nearly three decades, this endeavor has sought to serve as a beacon of knowledge, insight, and critical engagement with the ever-evolving landscape of national and international affairs.

From its inception, this series has been guided and supported by the prestigious **Council on Contemporary Affairs – Pakistan**, a think tank dedicated to nurturing intellectual discourse, fostering analytical thought, and strengthening the culture of informed debate. The collaboration has ensured that *The Advanced Contemporary Affairs* remains not merely a collection of writings, but a purposeful academic resource aimed at empowering readers — especially the aspirants of Pakistan's competitive examinations.

Evolution of the Series

In its earlier form, the series compiled selected articles and essays from leading national and international newspapers and journals of repute. The idea was to place diverse voices, opinions, and analyses in one accessible volume, offering students, scholars, and readers a valuable window into contemporary debates.

However, as the demands of academic inquiry and competitive examinations have grown more complex, the format of this series has also been transformed. With this volume, we have adopted a more comprehensive and research-driven model. The present collection synchronizes not only newspaper articles but also the finest theses, research papers, journal articles, and reports of respected think tanks from across the globe. This integrated approach ensures that the material is not fragmented, but instead organized around a coherent and common theme, enabling the reader to grasp issues in their full intellectual depth.

Purpose and Vision

The purpose of this series extends far beyond the mere presentation of information. In a world characterized by rapid political shifts, economic upheavals, security dilemmas, and cultural challenges, the need for **thought provocation, thought building, argument construction, analytical reasoning, and structured brainstorming** has never been greater.

This series therefore aspires to cultivate in its readers the ability to:

- Identify key issues with clarity,
- Examine them through multiple perspectives,
- Build coherent and persuasive arguments,
- And ultimately apply this intellectual training in examinations, academic writing, and informed civic engagement.

Relevance for Competitive Examinations

For candidates preparing for Pakistan's competitive examinations — CSS, PMS, PCS, and others — the series provides an invaluable **treasure of knowledge**. The material included here can serve as a direct resource for **Current Affairs, Pakistan Affairs, Islamic Studies, and Essay Papers**. At the same time, it indirectly strengthens one's general understanding, vocabulary, critical judgment, and capacity for independent reasoning.

An added advantage of this book-series is its contribution to improving **English vocabulary and grammar**. By exposing readers to high-quality research papers, journalistic essays, and policy analyses, the series naturally enhances linguistic precision, expression, and comprehension — skills that are indispensable for essays and descriptive answers in competitive examinations.

To make the most of this resource, candidates should follow a **three-step approach**:

1. Extraction of Key Ideas

- While reading, highlight main arguments, statistics, and perspectives.
- Summarize each article or paper into short notes under relevant topics (e.g., economy, foreign policy, governance, climate).

2. Comparative Analysis

- Contrast national and international viewpoints presented in the material.
- Note down how different scholars or think tanks interpret the same issue. This builds the ability to handle multiple perspectives — a key requirement in CSS and PMS papers.

3. Application in Writing

- Practice incorporating these arguments into essays, Current Affairs answers, and Pakistan Affairs discussions.
- Use the material not as rote facts but as **building blocks for original arguments**, demonstrating clarity, balance, and depth.

By internalizing this procedure, aspirants can transform the book from a **repository of facts** into a **workshop of ideas**, sharpening the very skills that the examinations test: critical thinking, analytical writing, logical persuasion, and polished English expression.

A Continuing Journey

Book No. 118 is not just another addition to the series; it represents the **maturity of a journey that began in 1995**. It demonstrates our unyielding commitment to producing quality material at the **minimum possible cost**, thereby making advanced scholarship and critical debate accessible to all segments of society.

In presenting this volume, I invite readers not merely to consume the information within, but to engage with it actively — to question, to reflect, to critique, and to internalize. For in the final analysis, the **value of knowledge is measured not by its possession, but by its application**. Knowledge that is merely collected and stored remains static, like a library whose doors are never opened. It is only when knowledge is applied to real problems, transformed into critical arguments, woven into essays, or used to illuminate complex issues that it comes alive and fulfills its true purpose.

For competitive candidates, this means moving beyond memorization: instead of reproducing facts, they must demonstrate the ability to **synthesize diverse perspectives, evaluate evidence, and craft original, balanced arguments**. For general readers, the same principle holds true in their daily lives: knowledge should shape their worldview, guide their decisions, and sharpen their civic and moral responsibility. In this sense, knowledge is not an end in itself but a **living resource**, empowering individuals to act wisely, to contribute meaningfully to society, and to engage constructively in national and global discourse.

How to Use This Book for Exams

This book is not meant to be read passively. To maximize its benefits for competitive examinations, candidates should approach it as a **practical training tool**. Here is a step-by-step guide:

1. Read with a Purpose

- Go through each article and research piece while asking: *What is the core argument? What facts support it? What counter-arguments exist?*
- Mark important statistics, quotations, and key phrases that can later be used in answers.

2. Make Thematic Notes

- Prepare short notes under relevant headings (e.g., *Economy, Foreign Policy, Governance, Climate Change, Islamic World*).
- Summarize complex arguments into bullet points — this helps recall during exams.

3. Compare and Contrast

- Identify how local and international authors analyze the same issue differently.
- Practice writing short paragraphs that balance multiple perspectives, as this technique is highly rewarded in CSS/PMS exams.

4. Practice Application

- Convert the arguments into outlines for **essay questions**.
- Write short answers to past CSS/PMS questions using evidence and reasoning drawn from the book.

5. Revise Regularly

- Re-read marked passages and notes before exams.
- Use them to refresh not only factual knowledge but also **argument-building techniques**.

👉 By following this method, candidates will transform the book into a **living workbook** — not just a source of information but a tool for **analytical training, essay building, and examination excellence**.

Editor's Tip: How This Book Improves English Expression

One of the hidden strengths of this series is its ability to polish the reader's **English vocabulary, grammar, and writing style**. By engaging with high-quality material from newspapers, journals, and think tanks, candidates naturally enhance their expression.

◆ Benefits for Vocabulary

- Exposure to academic and journalistic terminology used in global debates.
- Acquisition of context-based phrases suitable for essays and descriptive answers.

◆ Benefits for Grammar

- Reading grammatically rich sentences trains the mind in proper structures.
- Improves command over tenses, connectors, and prepositional usage — often tested in exams.

◆ Benefits for Writing Style

- Provides models of **argumentative, analytical, and persuasive writing**.
- Helps candidates shift from simple narration to **mature academic style**.
- Builds variety in sentence structure and paragraph coherence.

📌 **Tip for Candidates:** While reading, underline new words, phrases, and sentence structures. Maintain a “**Vocabulary and Expression Notebook**” and practice incorporating them into your essay outlines and answer writing.