

The Pakistan Paradox

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In his 2015 book, *The Pakistan Paradox*, Professor Christophe Jaffrelot talks about a paradox of instability and resilience in Pakistan. While he divulges the political story of creation, consolidation, and setbacks Pakistan has faced, his list of paradoxes is not exhaustive.

Hence this snippet. If I have to title the story of urban development in Pakistan, I shall have to borrow the title: *The Pakistan Paradox*.

- The cities are sprawling, yet there are huge congestion problems within cities because of rising car-ownership,
- The people want the benefits of agglomeration, yet they want to stay in far-flung single-family house units,
- The cities are growing horizontally without any centralized feasibility, but the development

Lahore's OmniBus

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Lahore has not always been unfamiliar with public transport. Around the 1940s, the Lahore and Karachi saw a surplus making 'Lahore Omnibus Service' (LOS) which was packed after a decade of its successful operations and was one of the largest taxpayers. These double-decker buses assembled at Ferozepur Depot with engines from the Bedford Chassis had made moving around the city very convenient and had covered cities by breadth and width. The attempts by the government to seek loans from financially-too-good LOS had left the business model of LOS failed. Since then, Pakistan has seen uneven attempts at public-transport with loss-making efforts and deficit financing.

