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CLIMATE CHANGE



DON'T COUNT YOUR CHICKENS
BEFORE THEY HATCH



PROGRESSIVE THOUGHT IN THE
PAKISTANI RAJ



FROM THE **SWORD** TO THE **SCALPEL**

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APS

A Tragedy Never to be Forgotten

by Dr. Aaminah Siddiqui



The rarest moments of life are those when expression by language fails, words lose their meaning and no speech is rational enough to justify the weight of emotion, and to think, these moments are not rare anymore.

Death is a solid reality of life that only happens for us to witness in order to accept that life does go on, and nothing lasts forever. But death itself acts in prudence; when it happens where expected, and when it happens where least expected, both, leaving us with a lesson of its certainty.

On the 16th of December, 2014, death itself shook with the abs of its occurrence. When the skies were filled with angels welcoming souls into the Heavens above, Death watched the hurried feet of a mother running towards the gates, eyes brimming with tears, and a soul aching with pain, in search of the departed... and Death, gazed down upon its hands and perhaps, for once, felt ashamed of its job.

For once, life itself seemed to stop.

And we as a nation, have travelled so far, far enough to perhaps still live on with the burden of losing 148 young souls all at once, because of, and in return for – absolutely nothing.

What has caused us to become so resilient that we feel but we do not react? How many lives have been lost in this wait that every blow is like a tide that hits the rocks and dies back into the sea?

And in this war, we are not alone. A recent massacre in a University in Kenya has left the world shaken. It is almost as if the numbers were matched; 147 students killed mercilessly, leaving one wondering what has caused man to descend to this level of barbarism, that too in the name of religion?

If one seems to believe that the problem with the unrest in the Muslim world is too much Islam, it is safe to conclude that they suffer from

“ we as a nation, have travelled so far, far enough to perhaps still live on with the burden of losing 148 young souls, all at once, because of, and in return for –

a serious lack of it.

It is not a secret how the Arabs before the time of the Prophet SAWW were widely known as ignorant. They were known to treat their slaves worse than cattle. The females were buried alive, and if not, dealt with such cruelty that they wished for death.

This is where the beauty and the broad spectrum of Islam comes in; a Messenger of Allah SWT is sent to not just fix the lives of the Arab people, but also bring the message of Peace to the whole world. He came with the rights of women, orphans, slaves, neighbors, children, parents, the bosses and the employees. He delivered Allah SWT's perfect regulations on how to live your life, from what to eat and what not to eat, what to wear, and how not to dress. He spoke of education and marriage and health and property. There is more to Islam that has absolutely nothing to do with the image being painted by Anti-Muslims.

The true Islam is not the one that talks about murdering students in their schools. Nor does it preach suicide bombings and death threats to non believers without reason. The message of Islam is crystal clear, and comes with a note; "There is no compulsion in religion".

The solutions to this can be immediate actions, however not all can benefit in the greater run. What needs to be understood is that this problem is not local, or limited. It is like a cancer metastasizing with every passing moment, while we are busy treating symptoms, and not the disease.

The name of this cancer is Takfir-ism and several militant organisations are now working on this rule. From TTP, to ISIS, AQ, and now the Houthis, they perform in a preplanned, coordinated method, while pledging approvals to one another and hijacking the essence of the very religion they claim to be following. Disguised as staunch believers yet killing Muslims in the name of Islam is a whole new level of absurdity and this is what it's all about. There are several *Ahadith* available in reference to this menace, but the real question is, how do we counter it?

Pakistan too, has been suffering from this evil since over a decade now. While the Army battles these terrorists in the mountains, the clerics and scholars back in the cities



are liable to promote the correct image of Islam and denounce the actions of these so-called Muslims. Unfortunately, the response hasn't been as strong as anticipated. In spite of the presence of several scholars and various Islamic schools, only a mere fraction has condemned the attacks, and even of those, most have avoided naming the culprits. One is forced to wonder what keeps our scholars from standing up and speaking the truth in the face of these lies that are tarnishing the image of the very religion they preach.

There are two probable reasons:

1 - Our Imams and scholars need to be valued and protected. There have been reports of well known Scholars and Clerics being gunned down in the past years but as always, their loss has been easily and painfully disregarded. This is perhaps one of the main explanations for the lack of first scale responses every time there is a terrorist event.

2 - A serious lack of coordination between similar as well as varying schools of thought has caused the very religion of unity to collapse all over. This is a grave reality that must be countered at the earliest. In this struggle for Islam, prominent schools of thought have in fact drawn lines around themselves and refused to come together even for the sake of the country or the *Ummah* itself.

This is why in the current situation where every neighborhood has at least 3 different masajid connected to three different sects of Islam, all

Imams give khutbas to their own understanding regardless of the situation of the country and the minds of the people. While some give peaceful, productive sermons, there are a few Imams who cross the limit out of emotions, often resulting in a backlash which is a stark example of extremism.

Fortunately, the Prime Minister has called for a thorough analysis of the seminaries presently running throughout the country. For now, all running Islamic Schools have been asked to register themselves. Also, from the 1st of May, all mosques belonging to any sect will be calling out the adhaan at the same time.

It would also be another step forward if a board (Wifaaq) of picked Imams and scholars from all schools of thought can be selected to authorize the schools and masajid working across the country. No masjid should be constructed without registration from the Wifaaq. From students giving exams prepared by the Wifaaq and graduating with proper degrees attested by the Wifaaq to Friday sermons prewritten and approved by the Wifaaq, would solve a lot if not all the problems spreading all over the state at the moment.

The second solution comes by checking the mode of action that these terrorists acquire to carry out their atrocities; manipulation. By brainwashing youngsters and recruiting them for their evil purposes, these organizations currently work with great stealth and progress slowly but persistently. From online

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forums to pamphlets at schools and colleges, a number of students are easily convinced by the use of appealing statements, half pictured facts and fallacious claims. These orgs have not only succeeded in turning a great number of youth against the Army but have also convinced them that whoever supports the Army is basically a traitor to the country. By crying false tears to false claims of lives being lost in the operations, they play innocent while carrying out their terrorist activities at the same time.

If they target the brains of our kids, it is important for us to shield them prior to an offensive. Schools must start taking Islamic education seriously and should introduce Quran classes

and lectures at a young age so their minds can develop with a fondness of their religion. These classes and lectures can be endorsed by the Islamic Board (Wifaaq ul Madaris) that has been suggested earlier. In addition to that, and in perspective of the current events, it is also pertinent to reinstate boy scouts and girl guides in schools. This method of training is in accordance with international standards and not to be considered as a militant practice. It is extremely vital with respect to the present circumstances of terror threats everywhere in the country.

Safety, is second to trust. It is important for the authorities responsible for civilian safety, to take the masses in confidence. Some details must be provided and civilians must be recruited in official training camps to be registered as members of a workforce. This would allow a gateway into neighborhoods when these members would work as a conduit for the intelligence. It would also help revive the faith that a number of people lost in our military.

It is imperative that we must not let the menace of Takfiris spread any further. Countless lives have been lost and forgotten countless times. Still, it is hoped that the loss of 148

souls will never be over and done with. Perhaps these fallen stars of this nation will now write a different story. However, as it is, the steps taken by the government to address this grave problem are few and far between. To curb and hit at the very root cause of sectarianism and Takfirism, monumental effort is required, and therefore, there should be no delay and an absolute sincerity of purpose in the implementation of the few decisions that have been taken to address the issue.

Great nations are not the ones that suffer blows one by one, but their greatness is defined by their response to each blow that hits them. Our resilience as a nation has been extraordinary, but now Pakistan has endured enough. Victim to ethnicity, she lost a major chunk just two decades after independence. Suffered two wars and underwent never ending trials of corrupt, conscienceless leaders. This nation has great potential, a fertile soil that still produces even after constant floods, and drought. A soil, that produces generations meant to take over the world, in the form of child prodigies, and mothers, who send every one of their sons to war.

But Pakistan bleeds every day. And it is time to heal her wounds, because if not us, then who? If not now, when?

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CLIMATE CHANGE

Challenge, Vulnerability & Mitigation

by Dr. Syeda Benish Ali



For the last two decades, we have been witnessing changes in our weather and the occurrence of some unusual weather phenomena such as an early arrival of springtime, hotter summer and erratic precipitation and snowfall. These weather anomalies are the indicators of climate change.

Before proceeding further, the distinction between weather and climate must be described. Weather, in its common perception in terms of temperature, precipitation, humidity, visibility, wind velocity, cloudiness and sunshine, is the behavior of atmosphere over a short period of time. Climate, on the other hand is the pattern of weather in a particular area over relatively long periods of time. Likewise, weather changes are often quicker varying in minutes, hours, days or seasons while climate change refers to alterations in the long-term averages of daily weather.



Background

Climate change is not a new thing for this planet. Geological records show that the Earth has experienced major shifts in climate during its long history resulting from natural variations in the causative agents such as concentration of greenhouse gases (GHGs), continental drifting and wind patterns etc. Different physical and biological systems have shown adaptations to the gradual change. However, the current climate

change is largely the result of human activities and is also happening at a much faster pace, altering all of the systems in a way that it is dangerous to rely on adaptation alone.

Therefore, it is imperative to find out the determinants of current climate change and to devise effective strategies for the mitigation of its impacts. As noted earlier, the current climate change is largely attributable

to human activities. The most substantial of such activities is the increased emission of GHGs that in turn intensifies the greenhouse effect (GHE).

Greenhouse effect refers to the retention of infrared radiations emitting from Earth's surface after it absorbs energy from sunlight. This retention of energy keeps the Earth warm, and a moderate GHE has in

fact enabled the Earth to sustain life. However, the intensification of GHE caused due to increased accumulation of GHGs is dangerous.

GHGs are the compounds that contribute to GHE. Principal GHGs include carbon dioxide (CO₂), methane (CH₄), nitrous oxide (N₂O), chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) and ozone (O₃). Human activities, most notably the combustion of fossil fuels, agriculture and deforestation are causing an uninterrupted rise in the atmospheric levels of GHGs, particularly CO₂. The rising levels of CO₂ are intimately linked to the warming of planet exhibited by an increase in global mean temperature and associated climate change events. CO₂ emission varies geographically, industrial and developed countries being its largest contributors.

Implications of Climate Change

Persistent incidences of weather anomalies and climate-related hazards in the past two decades have shifted the concern over climate change from mere speculation to a challenging reality. Weather oscillations have already started to transform the natural and human systems in every corner of the globe, while forecasts are even more depressing.

The extent of climate change impacts will vary for different regions over time, depending on the capability of different systems to mitigate or adapt to change.

Some significant impacts include the following:

1 - Intensifying GHE is causing global warming. An increase of 10 Fahrenheit to global mean temperature has occurred during the past century, which is the highest in the past four centuries and the fastest rise in a thousand years. Since 1990, 10 hottest years have occurred; 2005 and 2010 being the warmest years on record. If the CO₂ emissions are not reduced, the temperatures could rise by 3-50 Fahrenheit by the end of this century. It is important to

point out that this is an average rise in global temperature; there could be a rise by 10 Fahrenheit in one area, by 120 Fahrenheit in another area and yet another area getting much colder.

2 - Many regions are experiencing alterations in the hydrological systems due to changes in precipitation and/or snow and ice melting.

3 - Although at present there are less number of extinctions attributed to climate change, there are strong evidences of changes in the geographical ranges, migration patterns, species interaction and seasonal activities of many biological species. If mitigation actions are not taken, one-fourth of all species could succumb to extinction by 2050.

4 - Significant negative impacts have been implicated for crop yield, particularly wheat and maize with consequent economic losses and food shortage.

5 - The worldwide burden of human ill-health is likely to increase as a consequence of heat-related mortality, decreased cold-related mortality and alterations in the distribution of some waterborne

diseases and disease vectors such as mosquitoes.

6 - Increased frequency and severity of climate-related extremes such as droughts, floods, cyclones, heat waves and wildfires will affect agriculture, infrastructure, health, forestry, transportation and more.

Implications for Pakistan

Pakistan, an under-developed country situated in the subtropical zone is among the most vulnerable regions to face the consequences of climate change. Climate-related hazards are already evident in Pakistan affecting different systems, as briefly discussed below.

1 - There are significant changes taking place in the hydrological system of water, attributable to the melting of glaciers, alterations in precipitation and snowfall patterns, droughts, reduced runoff and deforestation in the catchment areas. Key risks associated with these changes include:

i. An increased frequency of floods leading to large scale damages to infrastructure, livelihoods and settlements.



ii. Shrinkage of rivers in winter season. Indus river system - the lifeline of Pakistan, which was once sufficient to sustain one of the largest irrigation networks of the world, is now drying up.

iii. Deterioration of water quality owing to increased sediment load, pollutants loading during heavy rainfall and concentration of pollutants during droughts, resulting into reduced availability of usable water.

iv. Depletion of groundwater resources with consequent reductions in the water supplies for competing demands of drinking, domestic use and agriculture.

v. Inadequate supply of irrigation water due to droughts and shortage of surface water resources.

vi. Intrusion of seawater due to receding Indus river water, rendering lands barren for agriculture use.

vii. Reductions in hydroelectric power generation.

2 - A significant reduction in the yield of main food crop, i.e. wheat is expected largely due to shortage of water in winters and a decrease in the duration of growing season. Key effects include direct economic losses to farmers and national GDP in addition to acute food shortage.

3 - An increase in the frequency of heat-related mortalities is expected due to severe summer season. A northward extension in the range of disease vectors and changes in the pattern and frequency of waterborne diseases due to increasing water pollution is also anticipated.

4 - Loss of biodiversity is expected due to habitat loss, pollution and exploitation.

5 - Problems for vulnerable and sensitive ecosystems are expected to worsen as a result of climate change. For example, mangrove forests are the key component of coastal ecosystems



and provide breeding and nursery habitats for many biological species, including some species of economic importance. Reductions in the flow of Indus river water have rendered mangrove forests at a greater risk of disappearance. Upcoming droughts are likely to compound the existing threats to these fragile coastal forests.

Hence, the key outcomes of climate-related hazards are both biological and economical requiring effective strategies for mitigation.

Mitigation Strategies

Climate change is a global phenomenon and none of the countries, whether big or small, can fight the battle alone. Therefore, international bodies such as Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) have been established which regularly monitor various aspects related to climate change such as the patterns of carbon consumption, weather phenomena, climate-related extremes and regional and global effects. Additionally, a greater part of responsibility lies on the individual countries as well. Many countries have established indigenous bodies to assess the regional impacts of climate change and to devise effective strategies to mitigate. Following prospects are important to combat the impacts of climate change in Pakistan:

1- Improvement of watershed management, particularly through massive reforestation campaigns.

2 - Development of water reservoirs and infrastructure.

3 - Taking up measures for the identification of vulnerable areas.

4 - Improvement in the disaster monitoring and early warning systems.

5 - Integrated water resource management using integrated farming techniques.

6 - Improvements in water supply for agricultural and domestic uses.

7 - Efficient use of water in agricultural practices, industries and at homes.

8 - Timely cultivation and development of drought-resistant varieties of main crops.

9 - Promoting the use of alternate energy sources.

10 - Effective land use planning.

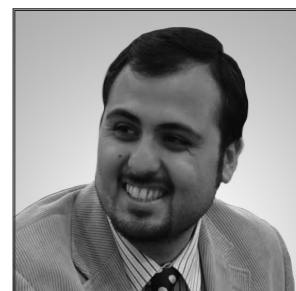
Pakistan is already facing multiple stressors such as energy crisis, poor infrastructure, insufficient medical care facilities, malnutrition, non-availability of safe drinking water and more. Climate change will exacerbate these problems leaving Pakistan as a very difficult living place for our children and grandchildren.

We have been very ruthless towards this land, and it still provides us air, water, food and safe place to live in. Though for how long will it keep on sustaining our livelihoods? Since our numbers have grown well over 180 million, we should now start thinking and acting rationally to make this land habitable for us and for generations to come.

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Don't Count Your Chickens Before they Hatch

by Muhammad Sharreh Qazi



One can never be sure of what happens in the nuclear realm because in this one gamble, every stake is worth national security and national existence. The US, however, decided to make sure that an entire region feel the tremors of power when it swings in full momentum. So they took two case studies; India and Iran and made sure South Asia feels the jolt but as they say, don't count your chickens before they hatch.

Benjamin Netanyahu was worried realizing how Obama administration has finally decided to seal the Iranian matter once and for all; so worried that he decided to address concerned and sympathetic individuals in the American helms of affair. With no significant pressure from such

filibustering, Bibi decides it's better to just silence for a moment and let this situation unfold prospectively. However, things are seldom what they seem to be when it comes to interstate diplomacy, particularly when it comes to nuclear diplomacy. The prime reason for Israel's paranoia is simple; even if Iranian nuclear ambitions can be substantially reduced with success of said framework, is there a possibility that there is a clandestine agenda operating with each delaying round of talks? Another view concerns a more dire set of circumstances which entail that Iran, like Israel, might play the nuclear ambiguity card whereby reduction or agreement to reduce would only be an overt agenda to allow flexibility for development

of deterrent capability in nuclear connotations.

For Israel, connecting the dots is a simple formula; with success in enrichment process, development of a successful space capability through satellite testing, increased covertness on facilities initiating diplomatic deadlock and a complex system of offensive and defensive military behavior. One can easily misinterpret that even Iran would like to remain a part of the global non-proliferation regime whilst maintaining enough threshold to communicate itself a substantial nuclear adversary. The decision not to withdraw from the NPT framework and to allow routine inspections of IAEA inspectors at designated facilities

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ambiguity card whereby reduction or agreement to reduce would only be an overt agenda to allow flexibility for development of deterrent capability in nuclear connotations.



allows enough compliance cover and indicate that Iran is acting in good faith. With Israel continuously maintaining that Iranian government is trying to buy time and is using delay tactics to allow as much enrichment as possible, they are also indicating that it is still unknown how much enriched fissile material has been diverted towards developing a military potential.

With the last round of negotiations finally reaching a landmark decision on agreement of negotiations between Iran and the remaining negotiators, there is a precedent of how things can go wrong. One must keep in mind the round of talks previously held in Moscow and Istanbul where similar landmarks were either negotiated and then abandoned or completely disregarded and an analogous set of policy frameworks have been negotiated despite certain contradictions that can introduce practical logjams. First things first, where the US and her allies indicate that UN resolution and state cooperated sanctions shall be suspended till further notice, the Iranian officials are indicative that sanctions shall be null and void demonstrating a major hurdle in approach as to how this arrangement is considered.

Even if we agree that sanctions shall be lifted in a phased and timed manner keeping in due consideration the effectiveness of the mechanism as well as practical compliance by Iran, the matter regarding enrichment would propose another challenge that where both parties agree to curtail enrichment from current levels to Low Enrichment capacity at 3.67 percent, the US maintains this barrier to be at 15 years while Iran maintains that it shall be for no longer than a decade. However, even if this is largely ignored and a median between the two deadlines is hypothetically considered, the fact that the US seeks regular IAEA inspections to ensure transparency while Iran holds IAEA visits to be more of a voluntary basis with provisional effect even in the premise of the Additional Protocol

that shall also be operative as long as the framework remains compliant. With most terms of approval already bearing down heavily on the idea of practical disposition of implementation, Israel's point of view might seem plausible considering that they themselves maintain a similar nuclear dimension.

The Iranian Supreme Leader was rumored to be unwell to the extent of being on the verge to succumbing to his illness and this indicated that negotiations might be halted or at least delayed but his well-being and indication to appoint a successor are all too real for assessing that practical implementation of the framework might be hindered for natural reasons. With the June 30 deadline in place, all these issues and the Comprehensive Iran Sanctions, Accountability, and Divestment Act currently providing a major economic blow to cooperation, Iran might be too skeptical if not worried for a regime change in the US scheduled 2016. With the Israeli Prime Minister lobbying through joint session addresses and declaring Iran a bigger threat than ISIS, Obama administration is likely to remain unprepared for a sound rebuttal if practical steps are delayed or otherwise deferred.

One more contention in this theory is right on the other side; India. With the American president visiting India to receive a traditional Indian welcome and an innovative guard of honor signifying change in Indian orthodoxy, Prime Minister Modi was all too impressed with what he had achieved. The Indus Valley is a magnificent region filled with awe and wonder; and two states at odds with each other since their formation. The most recent buzz in media community and major circles of discussion is the visit concluded by American President Barack Obama to the Republic of India with intentions to solidify their nuclear agreements initiated in the year 2005 by the then American administration under President George W. Bush and then Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh.



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The bilateral arrangement concluded under US Congressional Nuclear Regulatory Legislation specifically under Section 123 of the document, ensuring cooperation with other nations is also seen as a direct waiver to the Indian government to procure nuclear fuel and reactor oriented material which somehow, tilts the balance of deterrence maintained by Pakistan and India in Indian favor. This agreement is also seen in connection to the 2008 waiver from the Nuclear Supplier's Group (NSG) to India in importing material and fuel for their civilian nuclear reactors.

The question that has Pakistan and its mass media baffled is 'Why has the American President skipped meeting his most closest ally in the War on Terror and chose to visit the neighbor next door?' and the

answer is quite simple if all theories are sidelined for a moment that 'It was not in his schedule'. Most analysts are of the opinion that keeping in view India's past nuclear material diversion under 'Project Smiling Buddha', this waiver and bilateral permission would be like an open invitation for India to proliferate vertically and all that remains is to connect the dots; India acquires leverages in 123 Agreement, receives the NSG waiver, goes on to acquire Ballistic Nuclear Submarines, commissions an aircraft carrier, strikes deal to expand its air force with aircraft capable of delivering a nuclear payload, vouches for permanent position in the UNSC and eventually outguns Pakistan and upsets Minimum Credible Deterrence.

The intellectual community in Pakistan applauds the visit made by their Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif to the People's Republic of China and have marked it as a gesture to indicate renewed commitments and strategic partnership in the region. Where international analysts are of the view that Pakistan cried 'foul' in pursuance to the Indo US visit some are also of the opinion that Pakistan may be shifting paradigms post-Afghan Withdrawal. The key notion that almost all the analysts have tend to miss out or have bypassed either intentionally or accidentally is the fact that the reason why there was a decade long delay in the fulfillment of the 123 Agreement? The basic

contention for delay was American concerns over Indian reactor safety or almost 40, this power hungry market seems like quite an attractive investment scheme.

As far as imported uranium is concerned; the main bone of contention for this visit, the Indian reactors are swiftly being placed under IAEA safeguards and especially under Additional Protocol which would allow the IAEA to monitor clandestine nuclear activity and would record any diversion if made by India within the framework of this agreement. Pakistan sees this account with shaky trust and is skeptical about India showing honest compliance and keeps the Pokhran-I tests into its ocular horizon. However, this agreement should be seen as a double edged sword used by the US; on one instance it provides waivers and allows acquisition of nuclear fuel and material by India whose reactors are already under fueled and on the other, the Additional Protocol and like safeguards mechanisms have covered facilities that would have been easy choice for material diversion. These facilities include Nuclear Power Stations in Tarapur, Narora, Rajasthan, Kakrapar and Kundankulam that were not under Additional safeguard but noteworthy is the implementation of IAEA safeguards on Nuclear Material Stores Away From Reactors and Uranium, Oxide Plants and all civilian reactors and storage facilities as well as fuel fabrication plants not under IAEA safeguards would be covered before the actual transfer of material is put underway.

With much hue and cry over NSG waivers and UNSC permanent membership status for India, Pakistan needs to note with concern that China - a long standing strategic partner revered by every sector of Pakistan has yet to propose similar NSG authentication for Pakistan, keeping in mind that China too is a member in the NSG. Furthermore, with China reluctant to invest in nuclear domain because of unknown or undisclosed reasons and with Chashma Reactors being the only evidence of Chinese miniature investments, Pakistan



With much hue and cry over NSG waivers

and UNSC permanent membership status for India, Pakistan needs to note with concern that China - a long standing strategic partner revered by every sector of Pakistan has yet to propose similar NSG au-

should reconsider or revise their strategic partnership with the People's Republic. Moreover, with India being a larger market and a bigger regional stakeholder both in terms of business opportunities and human resource, Pakistan should also adjust to this reality and revamp its domestic contours to offer an equitable, if not equal, opportunity to foreign investors. As far as deterrence is concerned, Pakistan also needs to remain confident because if the 123 Agreement can take an eight year delay, transfer of material to India can take much longer and where the permanent membership of India is concerned, the Chinese veto would come in quite handy. This saga of worry and perplexity from the visit would become a real danger once the deals and agreements are actualized, till then, it is what it was in 2005, a document requiring reassurances.

Where international analysts are of the view that Pakistan

cried 'foul' in pursuance to the Indo US visit, some are also of the opinion that Pakistan may be shifting paradigms post-

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From the Sword to the Scalpel:

Pakistan's Campaign Against Militancy

by Jawad Falak



A bomb blast in the interior of Sindh traumatized the beleaguered nation of Pakistan. Already the horrifying attack on school children by TTP militants in Peshawar on December 16, 2014 had sent shockwaves throughout the world. Recently the Pakistani fight against the TTP made serious headway with Pakistan getting custody of Latif Mehsud from Afghanistan. Earlier security forces in Baluchistan foiled a major terrorist attack ahead of Ashura. Coming on the back of the success in Operation Zarb-e-Azb, it looks as if the Pakistani counter militancy effort is making significant progress. Yet there have been lapses and breaches along with success. The appalling attack on Wagah is another such example. Yet this does not undo the entire advancement of the anti militancy struggle. As history shows such unconventional conflicts are parts of a long and hard struggle where “final” or comprehensive victory takes several years to achieve, a

fact supported by the chief of U.S. Central Command in 2002. For more evidence we can observe in our own neighborhood the Sri Lankan struggle against the LTTE, popularly known as the Tamil Tigers, which lasted at least 25 years.

It is preferable to not use the term “terrorist” as the term is not value-free. As the famous saying goes “One man’s terrorist is another’s freedom fighter”; on top, the lack of a universal definition for terrorism makes it problematic to employ this term. Also the utilization of this term in government propaganda gives a notion of one sided bias.

To assess the situation and its remedy, it is essential to analyze the functioning of militant non state actors and the powers that support them. More often than not, proxies, guerillas, militants, insurgents or likeminded groups work in a similar fashion. It is crucial to formulate

a phased approach, detailing the stages of progress or regress of militant organizations. These phases then can be used later on, as benchmarks to analyze at which juncture the militant organizations have reached, as well as a basis on which to devise appropriate countermeasures.

PHASE 1: This stage usually deals with the formation and initiation of militant groups. Militant groups gravitate around ideological bedrock which gives a pretext for their actions. It could be an ethno-national philosophy or more far reaching sociopolitical belief like Marxism or violent fundamentalism. The low level foot soldiers could be allured by such beliefs as well as factors like social deprivation and disillusionment with the current sociopolitical order acting as catalysts. The upper tiers of such organizations could be an id ally motivated group or individuals driven by congruent interests or a mix of both. Foreign handlers with strategic imperatives in mind can participate in a critical manner by acting as stimulants in addition to providing material and technical

More often than not, proxies, guerillas, militants, insurgents or likeminded groups work in a similar fashion. It is crucial to formulate a phased approach, detailing the stages of progress or regress of militant organizations.

support.

PHASE 2: After formation, militants would start functioning by engaging in activities like guerilla warfare, bomb attacks, assassinations, hostage taking, extortion, cyber attacks, targeting of national monuments etc. The scope of militant actions is limited by the amount of manpower and material available to the group. Such acts usually act as a tool to “advertise” the group by means of showcasing its existence and capabilities. Usually groups in this stage, wages hit-and-run attacks from safe havens outside the state, with which they are at war. Mostly these safe havens are provided by a foreign power. This helps the group evade retaliatory action from the target state.

PHASE 3: After the attacks help the groups reach a suitable threshold, they move to the next stage by establishing strongholds on the enemy’s territory from which the non state actors intensify their operations against the rest of the state. They seldom try to take over entire countries; their target is only those parts where the state’s writ is weak. These strongholds help group recruitment efforts as well as providing internal safe havens.

PHASE 4: The fulfillment of the previous phase gives rise to a variety of options to the group and their foreign backers. They could both consolidate their gains and use them as leverage during negotiations with the enemy state or they could separate their captured area from the enemy state. They can also consider enlarging their localized insurgency into a country-wide civil war. Here most ethno nationalist organizations are typically at a disadvantage as compared to militants espousing transnational or interethnic ideologies like Marxism or religious fundamentalism.

It is at the second phase, in which, the militants are most weak and strong at the same time; strong in the sense that they have a foothold in the enemy territory and weak because they have to use conventional

warfare against an enemy which is more powerful, and enjoys conventional superiority. If the groups face defeat here they are more often than not pushed back to phase one; that is, if their foreign employer is not discouraged of their future usefulness.

Most countries succeed at Phase Two where they are fighting on their home turf and utilizing their superior conventional military might to crush the enemy. The greatest challenge comes in the first phase when the enemy is out of reach of the state and a “war of shadows” has to be waged to degrade the enemy and prevent further attacks. Here, the counter-intelligence and counter-terrorist activities play the main role. Counter insurgency is utilized in phase two, and is generally unable to provide the finishing blow to the target non state actor. Important examples are the Iraq and Afghanistan occupation by the West as well as the conflict between the USA and the Vietcong. A noteworthy exception to this rule would be the Sri Lankan victory over the LTTE in 2009. However two factors went in favor of the Sri Lankan government; the geography, and the fact that the foreign backer of the LTTE, India, had turned against them.

The greatest challenge comes in the first phase when the enemy is out of reach of the state and a “war of shadows” has to be waged to degrade the enemy and prevent further attacks.

Furthermore the Sri Lankans faced a single unified force in its civil war.

Pakistan’s struggle is much different. It faces a variety of enemies sometimes allied across a variety of elements. It faces an ethno nationalist revolt in the form of Baluch, and to a minute extent Sindhi separatists, as well as misguided “religious extremists” in the form of the TTP, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi, Al Qaeda, Sipah-e-Muhammad etc. It also faces



fighting between militant wings of political parties in its main seaport and commercial centre of Karachi.

The first type of insurgency has largely been limited to a small number of areas, mainly inner Baluchistan. Most of the activities have been limited to target killing of both Baloch and non-Baloch non combatants, small scale attacks on security forces, IED attacks, kidnappings, extortions, bombing of installations & landmarks and other low level activities. While the Army has been used on some occasions in the past, recently the police and paramilitary organizations like the Frontier Corps have been used to deal with this threat. While the conflict has erupted nearly four times since the independence of Pakistan, the current wave of militancy seems to be in its last throes due to infighting, successful operations by the security forces and overtures by the federal government.

The second militancy mainly under the aegis of the TTP, although more recent than the Baluchistan separatist terrorism, has been more troubling for the state. While the Baluch separatists have been limited to some areas, the TTP had not only made strongholds in the

Tribal areas of FATA but also have well entrenched cells in the densely populated metropolises in the rest of the country. Conceivably, this is the factor which gives them the capacity to wage well coordinated and devastating attacks in the rest of the country. Also while the Baluch separatist interests are largely related to Baluchistan, the TTP and its affiliates wish to overthrow the Pakistani state and replace it with their own government.

Apparently, the TTP were at Phase two. However, strong measures by the state which were a mix of COIN, political measures as well as espionage have helped weaken the militancy as well as to deprive them of their last strongholds. The infighting that emerged between the TTP after the death of its leader Hakeemullah Mehsud has helped the TTP disintegrate, in addition to the surrender of its various groups. The TTP leadership has now fled to Afghanistan and is making new hideouts, having been pushed back to Phase One. However the reports

for being corrupt and inefficient and largely the blame for this falls on the politicians. Instead of forming a force to maintain law and order, sadly political governments have used the police as a tool to pursue their own agenda. The replacement of the Karachi operation team is such an example that otherwise were performing amicably in curbing the TTP threat in Karachi.

Such political interference has been a major reason in making the local law enforcement less effective while also giving valuable time to anti state and criminal elements to gain a respite from otherwise deadly pressure.

And this is not the only place where the political leadership is responsible; the miserable failure of the successive governments to provide the citizens of Pakistan with justice and economic opportunity has led to the frustration aggression principle to go full throttle. In many cases the internal failings of the government are more to blame

rather than external interference by hostile neighbors.

However this cannot discount the significance of the impact of the support of foreign powers to militant non state actors. After all in Phase 1 these organizations are dependent above all else on their foreign benefactors. India which is considered to be the archrival of Pakistan has been known to use Afghanistan "as a second front to finance trouble for Pakistan". Furthermore, the current security advisor to the Indian PM is Ajit Doval who wishes to "destroy Pakistan". RAW has an affinity to utilize terrorists to do its bidding. It would not be prudent to limit foreign interference to India alone. Another of Pakistan's neighbor Iran is, notorious for utilizing militant proxies. Its main focus for formation of militants is on members of the Shia community of which Pakistan has the second largest population per capita. Another foreign threat is the USA which has long standing relations with militant non state

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of their demise are apparently premature.

The TTP has several cells operating in the country like in Karachi as well as splinter groups like Ahrar-ul-Hind. Now, as the enemy has been pushed back to Phase one, massive counter-insurgency operations like Operation Zarb-E-Azb, will not be as effective as they previously were. The need of the time now will be to improve counter intelligence efforts to avert attacks as well as destroy these cells. Counter intelligence efforts are mostly dependent on local law enforcement and it is this area where the state is seriously lacking. The Pakistani police are notorious





actors. Its footprint can already be found in the Afghan Mujahideen from whom the TTP claim descent. A CIA agent known as Raymond Davis was found to have links with the TTP. Such assistance would be a revitalizing agent for these beaten militants.

It is optimal to pursue a diplomatic course with all these foreign powers, specifically India, in order to stave such a misadventure by their respective intelligence agencies. Instability in either Pakistan or India or any other adjoining country will cause the entire region to suffer. While everyone would hope that the issue is settled with such a course through mutual cooperation, yet in such matters it is always advantageous to “hope for the best and prepare for the worst”.

It would be prudent to analyze the inclination of a hostile power's espionage activities; foreign intelligences would not consider using already failed fronts to pursue its agenda. In addition the new Afghan government may not be as

accommodating. Furthermore, the current procedure of “clear, hold and build” by the Pakistani state will disallow any militant reemergence in FATA. However, although the TTP has been severely damaged, it cannot be taken for granted that the danger of TTP waging attacks on the western border has completely faded away. It is nevertheless reasonable to assume that RAW or any other hostile espionage agency will seek out new arenas to wage proxy warfare. The three areas of Gilgit Baltistan, Southern Punjab and Interior Sindh stand out as highly potential targets due to a deadly mix of geographical proximity to India, underdevelopment and social tensions.

Interior Sindh rivals Baluchistan in underdevelopment due to the criminal negligent attitude of the political elites. It would provide an optimal atmosphere for any hostile intelligence agency to cultivate a nationalist militant outfit along the lines of the BLA. Both Gilgit Baltistan and South Punjab are potential targets due to high sectarian tensions between Shias and Sunnis in these areas, while the has shown, now and again, it's savagery in inflicting destruction on innocents whose only crime is to belong to another school of thought. Now from the shadows, the Sipah-e-Muhammad, classified as extinct by many, is again rising. The regional civil war in the Middle East is also having an impact as several Pakistani Shias are reported to be leaving in order to protect religious sites in Iraq from the threat of ISIL. This evokes the time of the Soviet-Afghan War where several young men left to fight the Soviets in Afghanistan that led to radicalization of the society according to some. In this case the chances of a future threat are extremely high because these militants will be trained to fight members of opposing sect rather than a foreign invader. Such a condition can be reproduced in the local environment of Pakistan.

It is therefore necessary to take appropriate action to safeguard against such threats. While counter-intelligence will be necessary to thwart any



attempt to spread terror but every victory will be merely a delay not a cure. The problem may surface in another place, another time or may as well rise in the same area. The solution to the problem of this militancy lies in the sphere of politics, economy, social environment, technology and legislature in addition to the military.

Political: It is high time that the political authorities get their house in order and start delivering to the masses. There are also steps needed on all levels. The need of the hour is that the tribal areas of FATA were made a fully fledged province with full rights or be made a part of the KPK province instead of a

While it is easy to blame militancy on warped religious teachings or sub nationalist feelings, in essence, militancy boils down to a ‘revenge psyche’. Individuals believe themselves aggrieved by the state and use violence to ‘settle the score’.



While the military sphere does not have the final solution for militancy, it can play a vital role to weaken and control militancy.

semi-autonomous region. The same is true with Gilgit Baltistan. There is also a need to integrate Balochistan, FATA, Sind & other vulnerable areas to the mainstream in such a manner that the common denizen can feel himself/herself a stakeholder. The government needs to announce effective poverty eradication projects in the underdeveloped parts of the country like Balochistan and Sindh through collaboration with local partners and NGOs. It is also vital to declare an education emergency in addition to an overhaul of the education system.

Economic: Social fault lines are exacerbated by economic backwardness. Unemployment, lack of economic opportunities, divide in incomes are some factors which contribute to conditions bolstering militancy. Therefore, it is necessary for an economic uplift of the entire country. A bottom to up approach utilizing methods like redistribution of land, cottage industry promotion, should be used instead of a trickle down approach.

Social: There is also need to combat the sympathetic mindset prevalent in the society. While it is easy to blame militancy on warped religious teachings or sub nationalist feelings, in essence, militancy boils down to a 'revenge psyche'. Individuals believe themselves aggrieved by the state and use violence to 'settle the score'. It is here that the ideology is used to justify acts of violence. The same trend has been passed from the previous ages when bandits would be hailed as modern day Robin Hoods by some in the society fighting an unjust, corrupt and unsympathetic government. There is a need to arrest

this trend in the society. There is also a necessity to formulate appropriate laws to govern religious institutes and prohibition of sectarian material. The problem of sectarianism should also be tackled with more effective measures like inter sect debates and gatherings as opposed to the usual slogans and speeches of unity. There is a dire need to tackle the hate material freely present in our society. There is also a necessity to step up de radicalization efforts to treat citizens returning from fighting abroad. If this battle is to be won, it will be won in the hearts and minds of the local populace.

Technological: The dearth of technology and equipment has been a major impediment in tackling militancy. Major examples are the metal scanners at the main fruit market in the federal capital Islamabad and the sole fingerprint scanner available to the FIA. Efforts should be made to provide state of the art machinery to law enforcement agencies as well as promotion of research and development to develop new technologies to counter militancy.

Legislative: It is a necessity to formulate appropriate laws to govern religious institutes and for the prohibition of sectarian material. There is also a need to "free" the local law enforcement from the grasp of politicians that has been successfully done in the KPK.

Military: While the military sphere does not have the final solution for militancy, it can play a vital role to weaken and control militancy. This role can vary from use of suitable show of power to induce the opposition

into a comparable capitulation or retreat, to the exercise of perception management & counter narrative measures like information warfare to deny the opposition's ideological / nationalist basis to attract following. The denying of foreign support by methods like discovering and eliminating handlers and financiers of terrorism are also necessary.

These recommendations are merely the tip of an iceberg, there is a critical need for all the intellectuals and members of society to come together to put forward their advice on how to tackle social evils.

Ultimately, it can be concluded that while operations like Zarb-e-Azab have been effective in breaking the backs of militants in Phase 2, it is now imperative to nip the new emerging, as well as surviving threats in the bud. For this purpose social, political and economic reforms along with counter-intelligence measures are needed. It should never be forgotten that this is the age of Fourth-Generation Warfare, in which the strength and vitality of nations are used against them by their enemies. It is the duty of the authorities to guarantee that such a course does not occur in their reign.

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Progressive

thought in the Pakistani Raj

by Hasan Qureshi



Pakistani political thought since Independence has existed along a wide and diverse ideological spectrum. However, the overarching framework within which the conversion of political thought into political action occurs and is practiced- is still embedded in a colonial governance mindset. Therefore, this piece separates the two –political thought and politics– and argues that the former is vibrant, progressive, diverse and indirectly anti-colonial, whilst the latter, being the operation and function of politics and government, may be seen as possessing a large amount of characteristics of the system of government and ideas of governance which were prevalent under the colonial British Raj.

Firstly, I examine two main themes to explain the continuing colonial nature and attitude of the Pakistani state and its politics the dominance of 'feudal' Pakistan (especially in Punjab) in politics; and the early role played by Pakistan's bureaucracy both heavily contributing to colonial mindset in politics and governance. I also examine the states' response to the crisis in East Pakistan which I argue is a prime example of the prevalent colonial mindset. Secondly, I explain why I believe political thought in Pakistan is very different to the colonial nature of the state (through which political thought is given national action), by exploring the main streams of thought which have been popular Nazria-e-Pakistan, Deobandiat, socialism, and secularism, (although there are a very many more, and many strains which combine two

or more). Here, I also explain that, contrary to common misperceptions that the Pakistani state has 'used' Islam as a tool of control, the emphasis on the importance of Islam in political thought and ideology has been a bottom-up exercise and demand of the vocal masses, funneled and expressed through the leaders of popular movements. This makes the usage of Islam in politics a characteristic of free political thought, rather than an instrument of a colonial legacy state.

Lastly, possible explanations are listed as to why political thought which has little to do with the colonial past, and in many ways is antithetical to Pakistan's colonial historical experience, then exists and operates within a system of

THERE IS LITTLE doubt that from its inception the early Pakistani state operated as a continuum of its predecessor, the British Raj, both in structure and action.

politics and governance which has many similarities with the British Raj structure.

There is little doubt that from its inception the early Pakistani state operated as a continuum of its predecessor, the British Raj, both in structure and action. Though there is ample evidence of a different other



leading Muslim Leaguers – this has not been realized for a number of reasons.

Prime amongst these was the dominance of the feudal structure in Pakistan and in the Muslim League. A look at the composition of the Muslim League since its founding in 1906 indicates a strong bias towards landowning Muslim families, mainly from the former United Provinces and Punjab. The League's foundational reasons themselves were to protect the primacy of access to jobs, land, power and wealth of these Muslim families in these provinces. These landowning and industrial interests had long been intertwined within the colonial structure and its politics. Favor and grants from the colonial authorities to these powerful families kept them contented and in turn they 'subdued' the populace to retain control for the Raj. Thus, a complex top-down colonial structure of favors, grants, diktats and patrimonialism dominated the relationships of everyone from the patwari to the high representatives of the Crown. The colonial state emphasized order and control above all, and was not averse to the use of force as a common tactic to quell legitimate dissent and opposition.

In Punjab, where the League was less popular during Pre-partition, the Unionists were even more a product of vested feudal interests. Before its members' eventual assimilation into the League, it controlled Punjab (in alliance with its partners), through the provincial legislature, lording over the societal structure. Particularly in rural areas where direct colonial authority had little penetration, the Unionists provided de-facto authority. By wooing the pirs, who in turn had the loyalties of the rural, largely Sufi-oriented population through the pir-mureedi system of religious devotion and guidance, the Unionists, and thus the colonial authorities retained legitimacy - both religious and legal. It was a similar situation in interior Sindh and Sardar-controlled Balochistan where a large majority of feudal elites were also in close partnership with colonial authorities and gained wealth and

power through patronage. As with the vested interests in the League, feudal interests here too retained their power and thus their colonial mindset after Independence in 1947, with there being no popular alternatives to their dominance in politics. Many feudal interests from those parts which became India post-partition (such as from UP and Bengal/Bihar to a lesser extent) migrated to Pakistan to form the Muhajir community (centered in the then capital Karachi), involving themselves in the learned professions and crucially, the bureaucracy – bringing with them a colonial mindset. This continuing legacy of colonialism was rarely a part of the political conversation of Pakistan, ignored to a large extent in favor of the more



pressing popular debates of the time centered on the practical needs of a newly created nation.

Thus, Pakistan's early political class was largely dominated by colonial minded elites who had a vested interest in continuing the practices of the colonial state to retain their own authority. The few powerful personalities against this colonial mindset were themselves dependent on these entrenched feudal structures for funds, administrative support, political mobility and for providing intermediary networks to the rural population. There was little they could do, as instituting reforms against this colonial mindset and its adherents would have also destabilized a fledgling Pakistan further, when it most needed stability.

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Eventually, the progressive minded leadership which had been at the forefront of the Pakistan Movement faded away or was replaced by the mid-1950s.

The dominance of feudal structures is still a powerful force in rural Pakistani politics today. However, the survival of the colonial mindset and usage of its methods of rule, patrimonialism, rent-seeking and patronage could not have been possible without the help of another very powerful body – the bureaucracy.

The bureaucratic-feudal alliance was most apparent during the 1950's and subsequently during the Ayub era. After Partition a large number of bureaucrats from the former Imperial Indian Civil Service (ICS) took charge of the Pakistan Civil Services (CSS). The ICS, having been a thoroughly colonial organization had been deeply entrenched in a colonial mindset and structure. This mindset was brought over to the CSS and little efforts were undertaken to modernize its methods of service delivery or adapt its relationships with the populace and the political elite to better suit an independent decolonized jurisdiction. The legal structure under which the CSS operated was not adapted, with Pakistan using the same colonial statutes and legal frameworks of the British Raj - written for a different system of governance. This was further compounded by the retention by the Pakistani government of senior British bureaucrats in the higher echelons of the CSS to facilitate a smooth transfer. Thus, the CSS, despite early on developing into a highly efficient organization, still operated as a colonial bureaucracy, in partnership

with the feudal structure, compounding the legacy of colonial rule. Due to the vast capacities of state where the bureaucracy has control and influence, the fact that this body was unable to shed its colonial legacy is an important reason why the practice of Pakistani politics and government is of a colonial nature even today. Any political power in government, whatever its political thought, cannot negate the continuing legacy of colonial rule, because the implementation (even the formulation) of policy is undertaken by a patrimonial, colonial minded bureaucracy. Only through reform of the CSS can this change occur.

Here, it would be amiss not to mention the Pakistani Army and its overarching umbrella (the Establishment). There is a long running argument

The colonial nature of the state has led to its policies being formed through a colonial mindset. This is especially true of domestic policy against dissent.

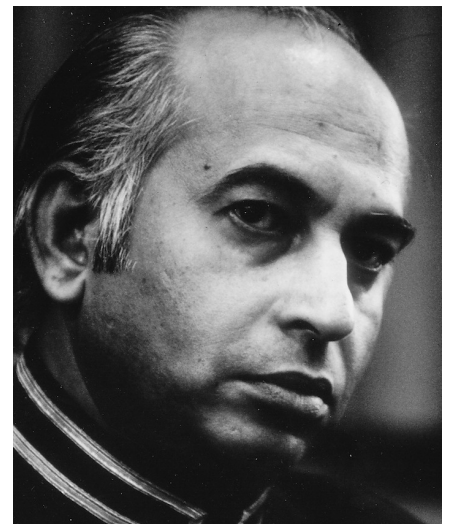
that the Army as an organization has been an important actor in maintaining a colonial mindset of rule in Pakistan. This is a misleading argument as many commentators superimpose their experiences of 'rogue' militaries in other developing nations onto Pakistan. It is correct that from ranking officers to the jawan, there is a relationship with the feudal structure in Pakistan – primarily that of kinship. This is natural, as a sizeable composition of military officers does come from the prevalent feudal structure in Punjab (yet an even larger number of officer's hail from KPK). But, this relationship has always been between individuals, and never the Army as an organization. Naturally, these individual relationships have allowed the feudal structure to gain

some favor from these individuals in the Army, however this has not been the norm. In fact the opposite is true, as the Army as a collective has repeatedly come into conflict with the feudal structure and its colonial mindset, as the feudal structure has sought to entrench itself in Pakistani politics and the Army has sought to modernize and establish a direct relationship with the masses, on whose continuing support it most relies upon. The conflicts between the Army and the PPP, and the Army and the PML-N are prime examples of this; a struggle between a feudal colonial mindset versus an increasingly open, outward looking and progressive military. The Army's relationship with the bureaucracy is also somewhat misunderstood, as the CSS has bettered as an organization most during periods of military rule. However, despite efforts to break down the feudal structure and its colonial mindset, the Establishment, in which the Army is the main actor, has repeatedly failed for the same reasons that early progressives failed – the entrenched nature of the feudal elite without whom governing becomes near impossible and for which there have been very few suitable alternatives to fill a possible vacuum (until recently in the form of the PTI).

The colonial nature of the state has led to its policies being formed through a colonial mindset. This is especially true of domestic policy against dissent. The 1971 crisis in East Pakistan was the result of both a colonial attitude towards an 'other' population of subjects and a colonial approach in attempting to solve the problem once it had arisen. The crisis grew out of the refusal of the PPP under Z. A. Bhutto (himself a son of the feudal structure in Sindh & Balochistan in West Pakistan) to accept the legitimate demand of the Awami League to create a majority government - having won a majority. This would have meant a loss of power for the feudal structure in West Pakistan. The colonial mindset would not allow an 'inferior', quasi-colonized, non-Urdu speaking part of the country to sit in government, just as colonial officials in the British Raj

were always reluctant to grant power to the 'natives'. This, despite the fact that an Awami League government would not only have constituted a negligible impact on the daily lives of millions of West Pakistanis, but would have considerably improved long deteriorating relations between East and West. Once the crisis had indeed arisen, the government of Yahya Khan, in partnership with Bhutto, implemented a policy straight out of the colonial officers handbook – when negotiations fail, use force. But West Pakistan did not have the resources of a British Empire to call upon, and a clamping down on dissent in East Pakistan was used as an excuse by India to enter into the conflict - only too happy to take advantage of the chaos. But, ultimately the ego of a colonial legacy prevalent amongst powerful elite was the cause of the crisis.

The colonial mindset of the Pakistani state and its politics detailed above stand in stark contrast to the most popular strands of political thought, with these being post-colonial, indirectly anti-colonial (without being expressively anti-colonial), progressive, competitive and open to both debate and interpretation. Political thought in Pakistan has been influenced by everything other than colonialism – Islamic thought and history, Marxism, regional politics, ethnicity, social issues, and more. Here, I explain the rationale and motivations behind some of the most popular strains of political thought in Pakistan, explaining why they are anything but a legacy of colonial rule.



Nazria-e-Pakistan (the most common name attributed to the theory) is by far the most popular political theory in Pakistan. This thought and its variants have been dominant since the Pakistan Movement and continue to be so. Even those who subscribe to other non-indigenous theories believe in part or whole in the concepts of this theory. The theory stems from the writings, speeches, and events of the Pakistan Movement – more precisely to the writings and actions of Syed Ahmed Khan, Allama Iqbal, Quaid-e-Azam M. A. Jinnah, and their contemporaries. Yet it also traces (or is sometimes artificially traced) its rationale to earlier events in Sub-continental Islam, e.g. the idea of Muhammad bin Qasim being the first Pakistani. The ideas are a potent mix of Islamic jurisprudence (mainly Sufi in nature, though some Salafi and Deoband concepts too), Islamic political thought (plus Islamic Socialism in its economic form), Allama Iqbal's philosophy, language, patriotism and current regional geo-political realities. It advocates that after the success of the Tehreek-e-Pakistan (Pakistan Movement) in realizing Pakistan, there needs to be a movement for Takmeel-e-Pakistan (Completion of the Pakistan Idea), meaning that the creation was but the first step, and the realization of a just, socially responsible, inclusive, progressive, developmental and Sharia-abiding state is the objective – what some term 'the laboratory of Islam'. It is not a reaction to colonialism as were and are some political theories in India, neither does it stem from colonialist ideas. In fact, because the Pakistan Movement is perceived as having been in reaction to Hindu dominance, rather than British rule, there is little the theory has to offer in relation to colonialism.

The colonial mindset of the Pakistani state and its politics detailed above stand in stark contrast to the most popular strands of political thought.



Neither is this ideology (or any other which I detail here) a product of the state, or have emanated from the state/bureaucracy/elite. The state in Pakistan has been a follower, rather than a propagator, of political thought, reacting to and using the most popular theory of the day to gain legitimacy. And Nazria-e-Pakistan is the most frequently used. The Army, for example, as an organization, has for a long time adopted and espoused this thought – one of the main reasons for its close relationship with the majority of Pakistanis.

Another popular theory (albeit less so than the above) has been what I term Deobandiat (not exactly the same as original purely religiously centered Deobandiat). This is an older, but more radical version of Sub-continental political Islam – influenced heavily by Salafi thought in its modern sense. It originated in the Darul Uloom Deoband in India, and gained traction and evolved at first in opposition to the Pakistan Movement and Nazria-e-Pakistan. The original reasoning was of an outright rejection of the concept of territorial nations in Islam, hence its initial opposition to the creation of Pakistan. However, since 1947 the

theory (that which exists in Pakistan) has accepted the notion of Pakistan, but is still popular among adherents as a more fundamental and reactive version of Islamic thought. The polarized version of Deobandiat is in the form of the Afghan Taliban and its affiliates. Once again, this strand of political thought has little to nothing in relation to colonialism, being grounded in purely religious and cultural reasoning. Neither is there any evidence to show that it was fostered explicitly in opposition to colonial thought, having grown out of opposition to other strains of Islamic thought in Hind.

Other non-religiously inspired political thought also exists and thrives in Pakistan. Socialist thought in Pakistan - Z.A. Bhutto and the early PPP being its most vocal advocates along with luminaries such as Faiz Ahmad Faiz - can trace its ideological concepts to Marxism, the Cold War, and Maoism. However the popularity of this strain in Pakistan came about as a reaction to social conditions in Pakistan – roti, kapra, makaan, Bhutto's popular slogan, called for the economic uplifting of the poor, not a proletariat revolution against capitalist/colonial elite. This, again, was a reaction to social conditions

prevalent in Pakistan at the time, having very little to say about colonial rule. Secular thought in Pakistan is also devoid of any relation to colonialism, being a reaction to more religiously grounded theories, and heavily influenced by Western liberal democratic/populist thought. Though espoused by only very small but wealthy and powerful elite, it is nevertheless another example of the wide and vibrant political scene in Pakistan, independent of any colonial legacies.

These are but a few and the most prominent strands of political thought in Pakistan. There are many other less popular strands and still more which combine many theories. The conclusion though is that none are a legacy of colonial rule. They are grounded in the realities and challenges of modern Pakistan, and inspired by philosophical thinking which has little to do with colonialism. Moreover, unlike the colonial mindset of the state, they are open to debate, interpretation, change, and vibrant (if sometimes violent) discussion.

Finally, the role of Islam in the Pakistani state deserves discussion. One of the main arguments by analysts who define Pakistani politics as a legacy of colonial rule is that the Pakistani state has used Islam in the same way that colonial authorities used religion as an instrument of societal control. I agree that the politics of the Pakistani state are a legacy of colonial rule; however this (the Islam question) is not an argument in favor. As stated above, the state in Pakistan has always been a follower of political thought, espousing the dominant ideology of the day. This includes the arguments on the role of Islam and the proper form of Islam, which are arguments in political thought, and do not emanate from the politics of the state. In fact, the Pakistani state could not even if it tried (which it has under Bhutto and Zia-ul-Haq – failing miserably); impose a single definition or strain of Islamic thought in Pakistan (though the state does publicly espouse Islamic values in general). This is because, unlike many other geopolitically important Muslim

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majority countries (with exceptions of course), Pakistan does not impose restrictions on Ijtihad. In many other Muslim majority countries such as Saudi Arabia and Iran (and their spheres of influence), there is a specific strain of Islam and Islamic thought espoused by the state, filtering down to the populace in the form of Taqlid (to follow someone), with restrictions placed on Ijtihad to uphold the state dialogue, and thus control. In Pakistan, perhaps because of the legacy of liberal Muslim rule in Hind, where diversity of thought was required and upheld, no such restrictions exist. Thus, Islamic thought in Pakistan comes from below and makes its way to the top. Diverse strains of thinking emanate from groups, Imams and scholars, and are thus popularized – Islamic thought in Pakistan is a free and competitive market. In this cornucopia of strands of thought, the state (or as often argued, the Army) cannot ever hope to espouse just one brand of Islam. Trying to, is an exercise in futility – there are so many strands of Islamic thought in Pakistan that the state would always be alienating the majority. Therefore, Islamic thought in Pakistan is similar to political thought (when one can distinguish between the two), in that it is independent of the state and its colonial legacy.

In conclusion, the question arises as to how such independent political thought can co-exist with and then work within a state whose politics and mindset are of a colonial legacy. Surely over 68 years independent political thought would have had an impact on changing the colonial nature of the state? The answer is that it has to an extent; however the

Pakistani state and its politics are still largely stuck in a colonial mindset. It is not within the scope of this piece to examine why this is. However, I can make some tentative suggestions; (i) that the actual process of governance is not handled by those who exercise independent political thought, but is the purview of the state, namely the bureaucracy, which is a living colonial legacy with a colonial mindset, (ii) that the conflict between the colonial nature of the state and the non-colonial nature of political thought has not been popularized as an issue, and therefore not dealt with directly, (iii) that feudal interests in political parties (which are of a colonial mindset) are too powerful/indispensable for those within those parties with independent political thought, therefore maintaining the status-quo and preventing change, (iv) that, once a political party with independent political thought gains power, the advantages it gains by keeping the status-quo (i.e. through corruption) are too good for it to be motivated to bring change, (v) that the institutional and structural constraints of the parliamentary political system negate the possibility of serious change, (vi) all of the above, or a combination of the above. This list of possible reasons is definitely non-exhaustive, and more analysis is needed to examine why this is the case - providing my initial analysis of the legacy of colonial rule in state politics, and the independence of political thought from colonial influences is found to be valid.

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China Pakistan Economic and Defense Pact

by Shiekh Fahad

Pakistan China relationship started since early 1950's and started maturing in 1972 by formation of strategic alliance between the two countries. Maintaining close relationship with China is part of Pakistan's foreign policy as China is Pakistan's strategic partner in the East. It helps Pakistan maintain balance of power in the region, and with one of the leading nations like China by her side, Pakistan has gained significant importance in the region.

Sino-Pak relationship is an all-weather partnership and has been time tested, be it economic cooperation, military pacts or moral support in leading organizations, like the United Nations. The deep sea port of Gwadar plays an important role in further strengthening the ties of Pakistan and China. Recently Pakistan and China have been trying to revive the legendary Silk Road which is one of the oldest known trade route in the world.

Gwadar Sea Port Development

Gwadar Port is one of the most important deep sea ports in the world. It comes under the jurisdiction of the government-owned Gwadar Port Authority. It is strategically located near the straits of Hormuz and will give China direct access to Arabian Sea through which 40% of world's oil passes. Work on Gwadar Port was started in 1998 by a Chinese firm. It was divided into two phases with a total of 13 berths.

Work on Phase I started in 1998 and was completed in December 2006,



with a construction of a total number of four berths. It was inaugurated by former President Pervez Musharraf. After the completion of Phase I, Phase II development of the port was awarded to a Singaporean firm, PSA International, in February 2007. From 2007 till 2011, the progress made with regard to the development of the port, by the Singaporean firm, was very slow, due to which, Pakistan asked China to develop the port. In 2013, the Port development was awarded to a Chinese state-run company, called China Overseas Port Holding Company (COPHC). In almost two years, the Chinese firm was able to complete the construction, with a total of 9 berths, including two oil terminals. China's support has been critical in building the Gwadar sea port, which will benefit both countries.

China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) or Modern Silk Road

China Pakistan Economic Corridor has the potential of making Pakistan one of the most strategically important countries in the region. Recently, the Chinese President visited Pakistan for the inauguration of the Gwadar port, one of the key components of CPEC. The President of China announced a total of \$45 billion investment in energy and infrastructure projects. This mammoth investment will provide job opportunities for

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locals, develop infrastructure, and provide power and energy to energy-starved Pakistan. This will also help contribute in the economic development of Pakistan.

China will also benefit from this economic corridor, which will greatly reduce China's trade route from 12000 kilometers via sea, to 2000 kilometers via land i.e. from Kashgar to Gwadar. It will also help revive the ancient trade route known as the Silk Road, which started nearly 2400 years ago. In future, China can also use Gwadar to build a naval base which will increase influence of China in the region. Furthermore, all the oil shipments from the GCC countries will be shipped via Pakistan to China. Also, non-oil goods could be imported to the world using Gwadar as a transit route, making Gwadar equally or more important than the Suez Canal of Egypt.

The CPEC project will include new infrastructures, like road links, 1800 km railway links from Gwadar to Kashgar, and a network of oil pipelines, connecting all the way from Gwadar oil terminals to Kashgar in Xinjiang, China. A new airport, special tax-free economic zones, energy power plants and a dry port in Kashgar is also included in the

project. The total cost of CPEC is USD 75 billion, out of which USD 45 billion has been provided by China to make it operable by 2020.

Defense Pacts and Maritime Interest

Military relationship between Pakistan and China are extremely strong, and are primarily based on geopolitical alliance, aimed at countering Indo-American influence in the region. Recent developments on Gwadar port and CPEC have made this relationship much stronger than before.

China is one of the main defense equipment suppliers to Pakistan Armed Forces. They have not only sold defense equipment but have also transferred the technologies to Pakistan. The defense technologies that China has shared with Pakistan include, aircraft, such as multi-role fighter aircraft JF 17 and trainer aircraft Karakorum K8, cruise missile technology, space technology, Al Khalid tanks, ballistic missile systems, fast attack naval crafts, etc. China has provided Pakistan tailor-made advanced weapons, making Pakistan one of the strongest armed forces in the region.

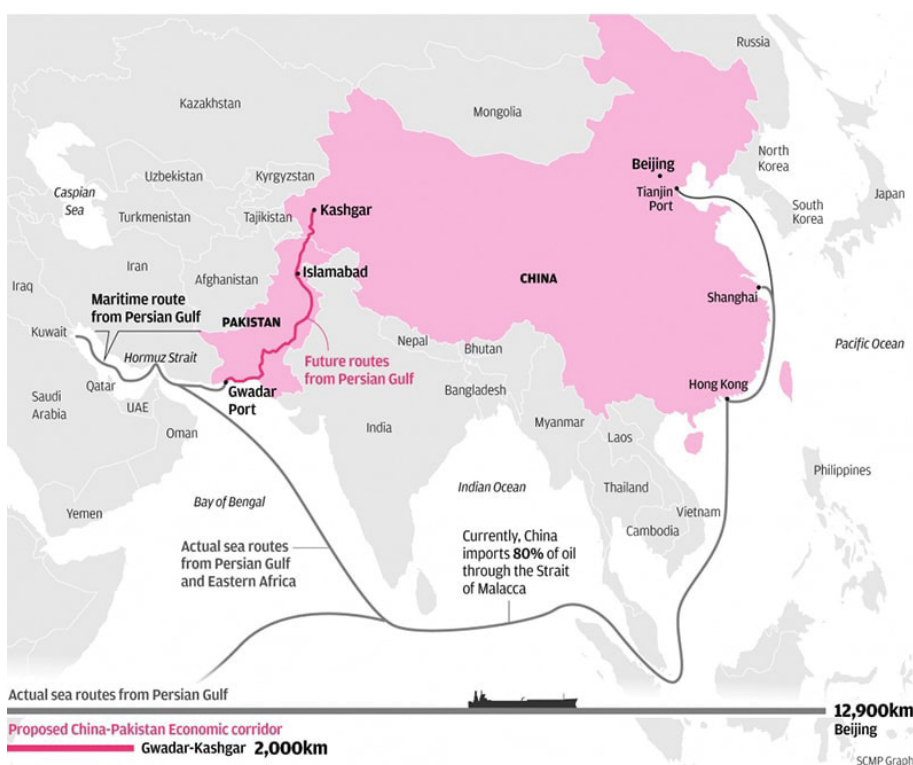
Military relationship between Pakistan and China are extremely strong, and are primarily based on geopolitical alliance, aimed at countering Indo-American influence

China and Pakistan have found common ground in terms of maritime interest in the region. Gwadar port can be used for joint naval patrols in the Indian Ocean, further increasing the naval outreach of China and Pakistan in the region. Gwadar port will increase the countries' naval movements and further expand defense cooperation, especially in the naval field.

Fundamentals to Make CPEC a Success

In order to make CPEC a success, there are some fundamental issues, which should be taken care of; these include terrorism, provision of special security, creation of new special economic zones, etc. Foreign rivals who want Gwadar port to fail, have already started highlighting issues on mainstream, as well as social media, through their Pakistani aides-de-camp, about missing persons. Campaigning under the banner of "Un-silencing Baluchistan", they are working to escalate the issue of Baluchistan liberation. On the other hand, terrorist organizations like the foreign-funded Baluchistan Liberation Army are also looking for an opportunity to target pipelines and trade routes of CPEC, once full-fledged construction begins.

Political rivals have started to downplay CPEC's success and have started creating issues regarding the route, stating alternative trade routes passing through Makran Coastal Highway, over to Lahore-Karachi motorway and all the way to Kashgar. Some political parties want the trade



route to start from Baluchistan to Kashgar, via KPK only, and have started clamoring about not getting their fair share. In fact, the purpose of alternative route is to provide security for the corridor, and these routes are much more secure than the route passing through KPK at the moment. However, the government must address all these grievances, and make suitable amends, by taking all the provinces on board.

Pakistan should also tackle corruption to control the expenses of the project and ensure that projects don't get delayed due to corruption and unethical practices. Building new economic zones for CPEC will benefit Pakistan in the way of industrial development and create employment opportunities for local people. Awarding sub contracts to local companies rather than completely depending on Chinese contractors will also benefit Pakistan.

Chinese are shy investors; Pakistan should provide them guaranteed security, and take all possible measures to ensure the completion of the project on time, to build the investor's confidence. China may shelve the project if they see non-performance from the government, and that will hurt Pakistan's image on the international level. Curbing terrorism, providing security for the trade corridor and ensuring the project is executed and completed on time, are the key fundamentals to make China Pakistan Economic Corridor a successful trade route in the region.

Renewable Energy and Power Shortfall

Since 2007, Pakistan has been hit by severe power outages due to mismanagement and improper planning for future power demands. China Pakistan Economic Corridor has brought with itself, attractive renewable energy projects, which in the long run could provide Pakistan to cope up with future power needs and reduce the power shortfalls in the country. Currently there is approximately 4600 MW shortfall



Gwadar port can be used for joint naval patrols in the Indian Ocean, further increasing the naval outreach of China and Pakistan in the region.

in Pakistan out of 12000 MW actual requirement of electricity.

CPEC has also announced a solar power project which will generate 900MW electricity within a year's time. New hydro power projects will generate approximately 800 MW of energy, and wind power plant projects are also under consideration, with feasibility study under way. This means that alternative energy will generate approximately 2000 MW, along with new coal fired projects, which will be able to make up for the shortfall.

Future Plans of Gwadar Port

Future plans of Gwadar port includes building of bulk storage oil tanks, oil refinery, establishment

of petrochemical industries, ship repair yard, shrimp farming, vessel building yards, cold storages and ice factories, and recreational water sports activities. These kinds of industries and activities will further increase employment opportunities in the country, which will improve the economy and place Pakistan amongst one of the leading economic countries in the region.

CPEC will play an important role in making Pakistan one of the most attractive transit trade routes in the world. This trade route, in future, can link central Asia via Afghanistan, and give the Central Asian countries an easier access of sea route to Far East and Australia. Hence, CPEC has a strong potential to revive the old Silk Road, with Pakistan being center stage in the entire revival process.

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Swaying the hearts & minds in Balochistan

by Mohammad Talha



The insurgency in Balochistan has become a permanent fixture in the Pakistani security culture. To date, four major uprisings have been quelled through heavy handedness of the past governments but the continuous attrition through the Parthian tactics of hit-and-run and death by a thousand cuts is wearing down the State.

The all-weather strategic partnership with China has shoved Gwadar in the fore. Located on the south-western Arabian Sea coastline of Pakistan, in Balochistan province, the deep-sea port city is situated near the Strait of Hormuz - the key energy shipping lane. Gwadar is the projected end point of China ambitious economic

corridor in Pakistan, linking western China with the South Asia, Middle East and Africa.

The dire security situation of the Baloch province has prompted the military to raise a special security division, made up of nine army battalions under the command of a major general rank to secure Chinese developmental efforts in the region.

To emerge as a victor in this asymmetric warfare, the military must discard the heavy-handedness it has routinely favoured in its past dealings in Balochistan. Unlike the religiously motivated terrorists, ethnic groups are insidious and more difficult to dismantle. The political

and social taint to their clamour gives them more credence vis-a-vis religious zealots. The strategic calculus and tactical thought-patterns of ethno-nationalist militants diverge remarkably from the religiously motivated groups like Taliban or Al-Qaeda, which the security forces have ousted from FATA. More pragmatism coupled with patience has been routinely displayed by the insurgent groups fighting for 'real-world' objectives rather than those who are supposedly fighting to uphold God's will.

The tactical and operational principles of the Baloch insurgency are as follow:



1 - The continuation of political activities through banned nationalist outfits and leftist groups to humanize the insurgency, incitement of masses, and propaganda.

2 - Fighting a protracted war against the state actors, however arduous it is. State symbols, security apparatus, energy installations, and civilians from other provinces are lawful targets.

3 - The hit-and-run attacks executed using large numbers against a relatively fewer number of localized targets.

4 - Subsuming oneself in the local populace or cross the border in case of any dire threat from the security forces.

5 - Debasing the State by labelling the insurgents killed in military operations as the victims of 'enforced disappearance'.

6 - Routine collaboration with the banned Sunni sectarian outfits, totally non-aligned with the communist ideals, to enhance fighting capacity.

Mr. Sharif, the baton wielder is an able strategist, an unconventional warfare tactician, whose unique training regimen is widely lauded for the results it produced in tribal agencies. Initially he dampened the resolve of militants, foremost by creating distrust-and-divide within their ranks, and later by launching a comprehensive joint military offensive. Based on the

recommendations of security establishment, the government also lifted the presidential moratorium on executions as a punitive measure, and also permitted the setup of military courts to deal exclusively with terrorists. As a result, the terrorist attacks dipped by 30% in 2014.

However, the counter insurgency tacticians of Pakistan military must understand that the war in Baluchistan is 'population-centric', and therefore, the control of people's hearts and minds is necessary. The separatists are able to carry on their guerilla activities because of their superior control on human terrain. It can be because of the widespread support for insurgents amongst the locals, or because of their ability to inflict reprisals on the populace in case of non-compliance.

A professional counter insurgency force is obliged to study and internalize the backdrop of its operational theater i.e. the social, cultural, economical, political and ideological elements of the people among whom the military force is operating. It is as imperative as the study of geo-physical terrain in modern warfare. The close reading

“ To emerge as a victor in this asymmetric warfare, the military must discard the heavy-handedness it has routinely favoured in its past dealings

of the environment is mandatory so that the deeper social drivers of conflict can be identified, the grievances that only the locals can perceive. For this, a professional military force should integrate trained social scientists within their folds to undertake research among the local population. The deployment of academics will also help in the planning of counter insurgency operations and policy formulations. Lack of research literature on Balochistan socio-economic issues has exacerbated the crisis, a void that can be cemented with the help of human terrain scholars.

The counter insurgency principles

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that have been imbibed by the Pakistan military are the adaptations of four universal cornerstones known as “clear, hold, build, and transfer” in localized context. These are the basic principles that are used to push the insurgents from the designated hotspot, defend the area, construction of institutions for the area populace, and finally giving the charge to locals. The unrestricted traits of the third principle i.e. build makes it the most difficult to implement, as it is primarily a political and social concern of the government. It is also a perception changer and diffuses goodwill in the locals. For the build phase, active participation of the government has to be sought.

Historically, the adaptation of COIN has proved to be difficult for the government of Pakistan, in large part due to the civil – military distrust. Dismal past records of the previous governments speaks volumes about how this build will be carried



out. On the recommendations of Mushahidullah Syed, PPP government introduced Aaghaz-e-Haqooq-Balochistan package but sadly despite some great proposals, there is dismal progression on this project. Same thing happened with the NFC Awards share of Baluchistan, which was distributed amongst the political jiyalas.

As a learning organisation, the military has adjusted itself quite rapidly, and the comparisons of previous military operations reveal that. A positive shift of complementary initiatives from the elected representatives has also been observed in the current government tenure. The measures that can be exercised in the counter insurgency operation against the ethno-nationalist militants are:

1 - The proper organisation of the administrative units, in tandem with the military operations. This initiative will ensure the unity of efforts. The local governmental units should establish a permanent presence to deal effectively with the legitimate grievances of the population. Officers who can understand the cultural and social make-up at the sub-district level should be given the charge. The exploitation of power vacuum is what the non-state actors seek and only a modernized, free-of-feudal clutches local administration can deter them.

The organized police service in Balochistan, according to the 2004 ADB report, constitutes 4% of the land area. The thin police coverage in the province depicts weakened writ of the State. The negligence of the government to take responsibility in this regard will be akin to relegating the role of Pakistan army as a glorified police force.

2 - General amnesty and rehabilitation initiatives should be routinely launched under the auspices of the federation. The financial incentive has proved to dampen the vigor of back trodden poverty afflicted insurgents. The monetary disbursement policy of PKR 10,000 by the district administration to those laying down the arms should

be complemented with technical training and job placements. The research on the success rate of such schemes should also be done for further policy formulation in this domain.

3 - A proactive neutralization of enemy propaganda and spread of the State narrative simultaneously on the mainstream and alternative media. The infusion of deliberate misinformation leads to the radicalization of youth. The measures taken by the Indian government to extirpate the voice of dissenters can be studied and integrated with our policy making.

4 - An active peacemaking process through developmental efforts in smaller political units. The primary focus should be on the areas smitten with negative sentimentality towards the State for example Khuzdar, Turbat, and Makran belt. This ambit can be further expanded to encompass the complete territory of Balochistan gradually.

The short-circuiting of counter insurgency process, as has been routinely done in the past will be detrimental for Pakistan's territorial integrity. Only the cooperation of political forces with the military can ensure the survival of Pakistan, nothing else. The sufferings of Baloch are genuine and forsaking them at this juncture will result in the further widening of ethnic fault lines in Pakistan.

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Pakistan's Foreign Policy-

Balancing the Odds

by Nadia Humayun



Rock balancing is a unique form of artistic expression that involves the use of different shapes, sizes and textures of rocks, by arranging them on top of one another to create a distinctive structure, without the help of additional support such as wires, adhesives or other such materials. The only force that holds the structure in place is the force of gravity. The artist has to keenly observe the rocks to find even the slightest of cavity or indentation on which the rock can rest. It is a taxing exercise, which requires a lot of skill and patience to create the right balance – that zero point or center of gravity that will hold the different pieces of rock together.

To say that Pakistan's foreign policy, is like the art of balancing rocks, because of its unique geo-political existence, is not an exaggeration. Pakistan's ideology, its history, security and existential concerns,

economic concerns, and the fact that it is a melting pot of ethnicities, with a multitude of social, cultural, religious and political motivations and alignments, drives its foreign policy. Experts argue that Pakistan's foreign policy should be above factors such as individual morality, political and religious ideology, and should be based on our strategic and vital national interests. Given Pakistan's history and the other aforementioned anomalies, is it possible to devise an individual foreign policy, thoroughly grounded in cold hard reality? What is that pivotal point, the center of gravity of our external policy that can balance reality, perception and the nation's desires?

Two notable events, of great relevance to Pakistan's external policy, happened recently. Trouble brewed up in the Arabian Peninsula, when the Yemen based rebel group Ansarullah,

commonly known as the Houthis, attempted a coup d'état against the legal government of Yemen's president Abd Rabbuh Mansur Hadi, in September 2014, which finally led to his resignation in January 2015. Upon president Hadi's request, the Arab states, headed by the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia, intervened, and launched an offensive against the Houthi rebels, on March 25, 2015. KSA's disquietude over the matter

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China, in the recent past has often shown concern over the escalation of terrorism in Pakistan. China can and will rollback any deal, unless it is guaranteed safety in return for its economic projects in Pakistan.

should not be a matter of debate at all, as Iran's culpability in this whole situation and its territorial expansionist aspirations are not a secret from anyone; Iran has also been known to support the Houthi rebels. This is not the first time either that so called sectarian trouble brewed up right in the neighborhood of the Kingdom (recall the Bahraini

uprising of 2011), therefore, KSA and the Gulf countries' apprehension is not misplaced and does not stem from paranoia.

When Riyadh requested Pakistan to provide technical and logistic support, as well as man-power to fight the rebellion, a joint session of parliament was called by Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to discuss the issue. PM Nawaz Sharif opened the debate in the parliament by asking the esteemed members for 'guidance', which they sufficiently provided by their (often, unnecessarily) wordy speeches. However, no clear policy statement was given by the government before the commencement of the session, and after five days of debate, a unanimous resolution was passed that advised the government to stay neutral in the Gulf conflict. Surprisingly enough, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf decided to end their months long protest in favor of joining the parliamentary session on Yemen, and were the biggest

proponents of 'neutrality' beside the Pakistan Peoples Party and the Muttahida Qaumi Movement. A few days afterwards the unanimous parliamentary resolution on Yemen and the apparent disappointment of the Gulf Cooperation Council, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif gave a policy statement of sorts, reiterating ties of friendship and brotherhood with the Kingdom; "Pakistan does not abandon friends and strategic partners, specially at a time when their security is under threat", he said.

Political analysts believe that Pakistan's foreign policy is predominantly dictated by its military leadership, and lately, there has been a kind of truce between the government of Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the military leadership of the country over major policy matters, after an initial rocky start. Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have always had extremely close brotherly ties, being decades old military and strategic allies, enjoying

wide-scale military cooperation, including military training, defense production and sharing, and holding joint military exercises. KSA has always somehow had a role in Pakistan's internal politics, much to the chagrin of many. Pakistani troops have been present in the Kingdom since March 29 for the annual joint military exercise, Samsam-5, and recently, a PMLN minister and information secretary, Senator Mushahidullah Khan reported that a large number of Pakistani troops are already present in different cities of the Kingdom to defend the holy places. Given these aforementioned facts, and historical perspective, why then the issue of sending military aid to Saudi Arabia upon their request,

was such a matter of deliberation?

There are several theories that come to mind. One theory is, that the KSA in particular, and the other Gulf States in general, have nonetheless enjoyed all-weather friendly ties with Pakistan but these countries have a tendency of 'investing' in individuals, rather than the state, to push things around. To send such an important matter of foreign policy for parliamentary blessing, especially in the absence of a clear policy statement by the government, and anticipating the outcome, a powerful message was sent to our allies and friends to invest in the 'institution' – the state, rather than individuals.

The second theory is, since assuming the office of the Chief of Army Staff, General Raheel Sharif has reiterated several times his resolve to purge the country of terrorism. As the military operation, Zarb-e-Azb's scope has become clearer over the months, this deep cleansing process has not only included the known terrorists, their organizations, their financiers and handlers but also political mafias, and warring separatist factions in the country. Can we conceivably assume that the ambit of Zarb-e-Azb is an all-inclusive one, and which includes proxies of our sworn enemies, as well as those of our 'friends' and strategic allies? Does this hint at a major policy shift or is it merely a word of foreboding to all and sundry, that Pakistan will not be

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This is not the first time that so called sectarian trouble brewed up right in the neighborhood of the Kingdom (recall the Bahraini uprising of 2011), therefore, KSA and the Gulf countries' apprehension is not misplaced and does not stem

a playground for proxy wars?

The third reason and the second notable event of major relevance to Pakistan's foreign policy, as mentioned earlier, was the two-day visit of the Chinese President Xi Jinping to Pakistan on 20th April, 2015. This visit, which was the first of its kind in the past 9 years by a Chinese head of state, was to fortify mutual cooperation between the two friendly countries, and sign energy and infrastructure development deals of the net worth of \$46 billion. The main focus of this deal was the revival of the Pak - China Economic Corridor and the development of the Gwadar port. In Xi Jinping's own words, his visit to Pakistan was like "visiting the home of his own



“ Presently, the combined military strength of the Arab coalition is more than enough to crush the Houthi rebellion but a more overt role by Iran, can tip the regional balance and can significantly enlarge

brother”. Familial feelings aside, China, in the recent past has often shown concern over the escalation of terrorism in Pakistan. China can and will rollback any deal, unless it is guaranteed safety in return for its economic projects in Pakistan.

The flare-up of the Yemen conflict, followed by the request from our Saudi allies, at such a juncture, when mutual cooperation deals between China and Pakistan are underway, could only have one logical outcome; to ensure that China is provided with a terrorism free environment, and which is only possible if Pakistan stays clear of any new conflagration. If Pakistan decides on a more active role in the Yemen conflict, it could have a spill-over effect in the country in terms of sectarian strife; the

strategic rather than sectarian origin of the conflict, notwithstanding.

Despite everything, all is not lost between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia; far from it, in fact. Pakistan's relationship with the brotherly Kingdom is still more than cordial. A high level Saudi spokesperson recently commented that Pakistan's decision to stay neutral in the Gulf conflict was “its internal matter”. Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and the Chief of Army Staff General Raheel Sharif, along with other top military brass, paid a one day visit to the Kingdom, on a quest to mend ties and discuss other matters of bilateral interest. KSA is the largest buyer of Pakistani Al-Khalid tanks and purchase deals of the indigenously made Pakistani JF Thunder aircrafts, along with transfer of technology, is in the pipeline. KSA's nuclear program is rumored to be chaperoned by Pakistan, and it has repeatedly vowed to defend the territorial integrity of the Kingdom. One can safely deduce from the aforementioned facts that Pakistan's exact external policy on Yemen maybe oblivious to all except KSA, and it is still counting on Pakistan to play a more active role if the war escalates.

Presently, the combined military strength of the Arab coalition is more than enough to crush the Houthi rebellion but a more overt role by Iran, can tip the regional balance

and can significantly enlarge the theater of war. The nuclear deal between Iran and P5+1, especially has the potential of boosting Iran's confidence to fulfill its expansionist designs in the region, despite the timeframe paraphernalia attached to the deal. On the flip side, a possible outcome of Iran's nuclear deal could be its distancing from Russia and China, which is again a significant anomaly. This development can vastly declutter Pakistan's external policy to make it more lucid.

To sum it all up, the recent development in Pakistan's foreign policy, no matter how ambiguous it seems to the casual eye, has a clear message: Pakistan, as a responsible state, places the well-being of its citizens above everything. Pakistan enjoys friendly ties with several countries on the firm grounds of mutual respect. Pakistan intelligently follows its strategic pursuits, based on geopolitical facts rather than wishful thinking.

It seems that Pakistan has finally found its center of gravity – the focal point of its external policy, which is a right blend of its ideological background, historical perspectives and its strategic interests. It is imperative now to keep this balance, for the well being of Pakistan, and the only way it can be ascertained is if the nation stops oscillating between the extremes of belligerence and pleasing subservience.



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