

# **WHITHER PAKISTAN?**

**GROWING INSTABILITY  
AND IMPLICATIONS FOR INDIA**

**Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses  
New Delhi**

### **Cover Illustration :**

Maps on the cover page show the area under Taliban control in Pakistan and their likely expansion if the Pakistani state fails to take adequate measures to stop the Taliban's advance, which may lead to the fragmentation of Pakistan. Maps drawn are not to scale.

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ISBN: 81-86019-70-7

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First Published: June 2010

Price: Rs 299/-

Published by: Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses  
No.1, Development Enclave, Rao Tula Ram Marg,  
Delhi Cantt., New Delhi - 110 010  
Tel. (91-11) 2671-7983  
Fax.(91-11) 2615 4191  
E-mail: [idsa@vsnl.com](mailto:idsa@vsnl.com)  
Website: <http://www.idsa.in>

Printed at: A.M. Offsetters  
A-57, Sector-10, Noida-201 301 (U.P.)  
Tel.: 91-120-4320403  
Mob.: 09810888667  
E-mail : [amoffsetters@gmail.com](mailto:amoffsetters@gmail.com)

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# FOREWORD

Pakistan has invariably evoked a great deal of interest among India's strategic affairs community. Because of historical, geographical, economic and cultural linkages, developments in the neighbourhood have important implications for India's politics, economy and security. This is especially true in the case of Pakistan. Recent developments in Pakistan have been a cause of concern for all the countries concerned about its future. Given the need for better understanding of developments in Pakistan, IDSA launched its Pakistan Project in the year 2009. The project team began its work in March 2009 and has been meeting regularly to discuss various developments in Pakistan. The team has developed through exemplary collaboration its first report on Pakistan. The report was reviewed by a panel of experts in January 2010 and finalized with their inputs and suggestions.

The basic argument that flows from the report is that Pakistan is likely to remain unstable because of inherent weaknesses in its political, economic and security policies. The absence of any long-term shared vision of Pakistan, the over-securitization of the state apparatus because of its obsession with India as a threat and an enemy, and the state's ambivalence towards the phenomenon of Islamic radicalism will keep Pakistan in a state of chronic turmoil. It is necessary therefore to develop a set of policy alternatives to deal with the consequences of an unstable Pakistan, on a long term basis.

This report brings to fruition the year-long effort put in by the project team under the leadership of Dr Arvind Gupta, Lal Bahadur Shastri Chair at IDSA. I congratulate the team members on their efforts and am sure that this report will be widely read and appreciated.

June 2010  
New Delhi

N. S. Sisodia  
Director General, IDSA



# LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

AFP	Associated Foreign Press
ANP	Awami National Party
BLA	Baloch Liberation Army
BLUF	Baloch Liberation United Front
BRA	Baloch Republican Army
BSO	Baloch Students Organisation
CAR	Central Asian Republics
CBM	Confidence Building Measures
CD	Conference on Disarmament
CGWIC	China Great Wall Industry Corporation
CHASNUPP	Chashma Nuclear Power Plant
CIA	Central Intelligence Agency
CII	Council for Islamic Ideology
CJ	Chief Justice
COIN	Counter Insurgency
CTBT	Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty
CZEC	China Zhongyuan Engineering Corporation
DCC	Development Control Committee
DG	Director General
DMG	District Management Group
ECC	Employment Control Committee
ERL	Engineering Research Laboratories
ETIM	East Turkestan Islamic Movement
FATA	Federally Administered Tribal Area
FDI	Foreign Direct Investment
FODP	Friends of Democratic Pakistan
FSS	Fixed Satellite Service
FTA	Free Trade Agreement
G T Road	Grand Trunk Road
GDP	Gross Domestic Product
GHQ	General Headquarters
HGSS	Hughes Global Satellite Systems
HM	Hizbul Mujahideen

HuA	Harkat-ul-Ansar
HuJI	Harkat-ul Jihad-e-Islami
HuM	Harkat-ul-Mujahideen
IAEA	International Atomic Energy Agency
IDP	Internally Displaced People
IJI	Islamic Jamhoori Ittihad
IJT	Islami Jamiat-e-Tulaba
IMF	International Monetary Fund
IRI	International Republican Institute
ISI	Inter-Services Intelligence
ISIS	Institute for Science and International Security
ISPR	Inter Services Public Relation
IST	Institute of Space Technology
ITU	International Telecommunications Union
IWT	Indus Water Treaty
JAeH	Jamaat Ahl-e-Hadis
JCSC	Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee
JeM	Jaish-e-Muhammad
JI	Jamaat-e-Islami
JSQM	Jiye Sindh Qaumi Mahaz
JuA	Jamaat-ul-Ansar
JuD	Jamaat-ud-Dawa
JuF	Jamaat-ul-Furqan
JUI	Jamiat-i-Ulema-e-Islam
JuM	Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen
JUP	Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan
KANUPP	Karachi Nuclear Power Plant
KKH	Karakoram Highway
KRL	Khan Research Laboratories
Kt	Kiloton
KUI	Khuddam-ul-Islam
LeJ	Lashkar-e-Jhangvi
LeT	Lashkar-e-Taiba
LHC	Lahore High Court
LoC	Line of Control
MDI	Markaz ud Dawa-wal-Irashad
MMA	Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal
MoU	Memorandum of Understanding



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MPA	Members of Provincial Assembly
MQM	Muttahida Quami Movement (previously Mohajir Qaumi Movement)
MuD	Markaz-ud Dawaa
MWe	Megawatt electric
MWth	Megawatt thermal
NAP	National Awami Party (Precursor of ANP- Awami National Party)
NCA	National Command Authority
NDC	National Development Complex
NLI	Northern Light Infantry
NPT	Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty
NRO	National Reconciliation Ordinance
NSAP	Nuclear Security Action Plan
NSG	Nuclear Suppliers Group
NWFP	North-West Frontier Province
OIC	Organisation of Islamic Conference
PAEC	Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission
PAL	Permissive Action Links
PINSTECH	Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology
PLA	People's Liberation Army
PML	Pakistan Muslim League
PML-N	Pakistan Muslim League - Nawaz
PML-Q	Pakistan Muslim League - Quaid
PNA	Pakistan National Alliance
PNRA	Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority
PPP	Pakistan Peoples Party
PVPV	Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice
PWR	Pressurized Water Reactor
RSSS	Remote Sensing Satellite System
SAARC	South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation
SAFTA	South Asian Free Trade Area
SASSI	South Asia Strategic Stability Institute
SC	Supreme Court
SGCS	Satellite Ground Control Stations
SLV	Satellite Launch Vehicle
SNERDI	Shanghai Nuclear Engineering Research and Design Institute
SNPTC	State Nuclear Power Technology Corporation

SPD	Strategic Plans Division
SSP	Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan
SUPARCO	Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission
TeJ	Tehriq-e-Jafaria
TeKI	Tehriq-e-Khuddam-ul-Islam
TIP	Tehrik-e-Islami Pakistan
TJ	Tabligh Jamaat
TNFJ	Tehrik-e- Nifaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafariya
TNSM	Tehriq-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi
TTP	Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan
US	United States (of America)
WAMY	World Assembly of Muslim Youth
WAPDA	Water and Power Development Authority

## PREFACE

Pakistani journalist Ahmed Rashid, writing in BBC News Online on January 3, 2010 observed that people in the south Asian region “will be holding their breath in the new year” as the new year would present “Afghanistan and Pakistan with their most difficult set of challenges since the end of the Cold War”. He went on to paint a bleak picture of Pakistan and said that it was facing “a triple crisis” of “acute political instability”, “an ever worsening economic crisis” and the army’s questionable “success rate in dealing with its own indigenous Taliban problem”.

Earlier, writing in *New York Review of Books* on June 11, 2009, Rashid had said that “Pakistan is close to the brink” and that it was heading towards “a permanent state of anarchy”. One could expect, he warned, “a slow, insidious, long-burning fuse of fear, terror, and paralysis that the Taliban have lit and that the state is unable, and partly unwilling, to douse”. Writing in the *Friday Times*, its editor, Najam Sethi said that, “Pakistan is in a state of siege. But the veritable enemy is not India or Russia or Iran or America. The enemy is within Pakistan”.

The media comments in Pakistan on the country’s future are full of despondency and despair. The army which till the other day was being described as the villain is being perceived again as the saviour of Pakistan. The civilian government is in power, but the Army controls Pakistan’s security and foreign policy. As the endgame in Afghanistan unfolds, the Army is becoming even more assertive and hoping to use its influence on Taliban to its

advantage. Nevertheless, some of the radical elements are upbeat about the prospect of withdrawal of US troops and are launching regular attacks on security forces of Pakistan thus complicating the security situation even further. The economic situation is in a state of disrepair. What is happening inside Pakistan? Is it really heading towards collapse? What are the implications of these developments in Pakistan for regional security and for Indo-Pak relations? This report of the IDSA Pakistan Project looks at the current developments in Pakistan and tries to do some crystal gazing into the near and medium term future of the country.

The political, security and economic situation in Pakistan has changed dramatically over the past decade. In 2007 Musharraf appeared strong and unassailable until he made the cardinal mistake of sacking Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry to protect his actions from judicial scrutiny. With hindsight one can say, it was that which marked the beginning of the end of Musharraf. The lawyers were galvanized into action. Suddenly everyone started talking about the empowerment of civil society in Pakistan. Musharraf panicked. He imposed emergency and martial law for the second time in his tenure in November 2007.

Under a deal which led to the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO), Benazir Bhutto returned to Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif returned following yet another deal. Benazir was

assassinated subsequently during the course of the election campaign—allegedly by TTP militants. This highlighted the seriousness of the militant threat to the state. Elections were postponed and held later in February 2008. The PPP and the PML-N, the two implacable foes, fought the elections on a common issue to restore the judges.

It all seemed to be going well for Pakistan until friction developed between the PML-N and the PPP over Zardari's vacillation on the issue of rehabilitation of the judges. Nawaz Sharif launched a country-wide agitation in March 2009 over this issue. The US was alarmed. Eventually, the two rivals made up, possibly under pressure from the military and the US. The sacked Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry was reinstated. Under his leadership, the Supreme Court declared NRO illegal and reversed the Presidential order to appoint judges to the apex court. The judicial activism that Pakistan has witnessed since Justice Chaudhry's restoration has also posed a critical challenge to the PPP-led coalition government.

Pakistan has continued to be unstable despite the return of electoral politics. The internal security situation has continued to worsen despite the government's wholehearted commitment to fight terrorism. The civilian government, like the military government before it, struck deals with the Taliban in Swat in April 2009. This emboldened the TTP to extend its reach to the capital, Islamabad. A series of high profile terror attacks in Lahore, Peshawar and other places underscored the gravity of threat posed by the militants to the state. In fact, the year 2009 was the most violent year in Pakistan's recent history. The Pakistani Taliban nurtured by Pakistani agencies, turned against them. More than a 100,000 Pakistan army troops are now engaged in fighting the Taliban in the tribal borderlands.

Yet, in 2009, the newly elected US President Barack Obama launched his AfPak policy which

made it conditional for Pakistan to take strong action against the militants in return for enhanced military and economic aid. Under US pressure and faced with growing Talibanisation, the Pakistan military launched massive military operations against the Pakistan Taliban in Swat, Buner and Dir in the Malakand Division of NWFP in May-June 2009, and subsequently in North and South Waziristan in the FATA region. This created a human crisis of large proportions, namely the displacement of two to three million people from the areas where military operations were undertaken. A massive ongoing rehabilitation effort will be required to address this humanitarian issue. The Pakistani army launched a military offensive in South Waziristan (October 2009) to flush out the Pakistani Taliban and claimed some success. Despite the reported killing of top Taliban leaders like Baitullah Mehsud and Hakeemullah, various reports from Pakistan suggest that the Taliban have not been destroyed in the military operations, but are lying low in the hills and could resurface later. The Pakistan army is likely to remain committed in the FATA region for an indefinite period and the country faces the prospect of long term insurgency in the region.

In December 2009, President Obama spelt out his revised AfPak policy, wherein he indicated that US troops would start withdrawing from Afghanistan from July 2010. This has brought a different political dynamic into play in Afghanistan. India was deliberately kept out of the conferences on Afghanistan held in Istanbul and London (January 2010) to ensure greater Pakistani involvement in the process of US withdrawal from Afghanistan. There was a clear-cut approach in these meetings to engage with the Taliban through an official policy initiated by the Afghan government. According to this plan the Afghan government will set up the National Council for Peace, Reconciliation, and Reintegration and start talking to the Taliban. The Afghan President has

asked the UN Sanctions Committee to remove the names of some Taliban leaders from the consolidated list, urged the Saudi king to play a prominent role in the reconciliation process and sought support from Pakistani authorities in this effort. To soothe Pakistani nerves, he even called Pakistan a 'conjoined twin', during his visit to Islamabad in March 2010.

Meanwhile, Pakistan has stepped up its counter-insurgency operations and nabbed some top leaders of the Taliban inside its territory. Its operations in Bajaur and Waziristan have also shown some signs of success. Some analysts have interpreted Pakistan's operations against the Taliban as pressure tactics to bring the Taliban leadership to the table for dialogue. However, this is a partial demonstration of its commitment to root out radicalism from Pakistan. Pakistan has not done anything to address Indian concerns. Anti-India jihadi elements continue to remain beyond the purview of the security operations in Pakistan and are openly allowed to make provocative speeches against India. Thus, there is no significant change in Pakistan's overall approach to radical Islamist forces in the long term. Ironically, for the moment the radical elements do not seem to be in a mood to oblige the Pakistani establishment at the moment and are continuing their raids on security forces with impunity. Pakistan's ambivalence over the issue of jihadi terrorism has aggravated the security situation and made it worse.

The security crises have come at a time when Pakistan's economy is not in good shape. It is surviving on foreign aid and IMF loans. The country's leadership is once again seeking a waiver of foreign debts. High energy prices and acute power shortages are affecting the country's manufacturing sectors. The disturbed security situation comes in the way of foreign investment. The foreign donors, the Friends of Democratic

Pakistan (FoDP), have been less than forthcoming in coming to its aid in this hour of need.

India-Pakistan relations have been on a roller coaster ride since the Mumbai terror attacks on 26 November 2008. The composite dialogue was suspended and India demanded decisive action against the perpetrators of the Mumbai attack based in Pakistan. Instead of taking action against the LeT and its chief Hafiz Saeed, the Pakistani government failed to build a strong case against him and others in the courts. In a surprise development India agreed to delink the action on terror by Pakistan from the composite dialogue and even included a reference to Balochistan in the India-Pakistan joint statement issued at Sharm-el-Shaikh on July 14, 2009. Later, the foreign secretaries of the two countries held talks in New Delhi on February 25, 2010. India made it amply clear that these talks should not be interpreted as the resumption of 'composite dialogue' but reiterated its position that talks must focus on the issue of terrorism alone. Given Pakistan's recalcitrance over the issue of bringing the perpetrators of the Mumbai attack to justice, the fate of the composite dialogue remains uncertain.

Pakistan is descending into a state of uncertainty and prolonged chaos. Indian policy makers will have to figure out how to deal with a country which is becoming increasingly unstable. An unstable Pakistan will have far reaching and adverse consequences for regional security. It is doubtful whether external involvement, benign or otherwise, will reduce instability in the region. Pakistani leaders and society have to revisit their policies and take strategic decisions which promote stability and cooperation rather than confrontation. One cannot say for sure that Pakistan will disintegrate soon, but the portents suggest that it may turn into a "Lebanonised" kind of state with vast areas where the writ of the government may not run. The present report examines the

developments in Pakistan at some length with a view to understanding their implications for regional security and for India-Pakistan relations.

Chapter I deals with the political developments in the country; Chapter II focuses on the developments in the various provinces of Pakistan; Chapter III examines the foreign policy of Pakistan; Chapter IV deals with the Talibanisation and radicalisation of Pakistan society; Chapter V takes stock of the economic situation prevailing within Pakistan; Chapter VI provides an analysis of the civil military relations in Pakistan in the changed context; Chapter VII gives an account of the counter-insurgency measures taken by the Pakistan military; Chapter VIII traces the evolution and development

of Pakistan's nuclear Weapons and missile programmes; Chapter IX deals with India-Pakistan relations; Chapter X offers a futuristic account of Pakistan 2020; and the final Chapter XI provides options for India to deal with Pakistan.

The report has been prepared by a group of experts which includes Arvind Gupta, Sushant Sarin, Ashok Behuria, Sumita Kumar, Alok Bansal, Smruti Pattanaik, P.K. Upadhyay, C.V. Sastry and Harinder Singh. The group was assisted by Medha Bisht, Kartik Bommakanti, Shamshad Khan and Imtiyaz Majid.

It is hoped that the report will be found useful by the policy makers and the wider audience. ■

## CHAPTER I

# POLITICS IN PAKISTAN: A DISCORDANT QUARTET?

From a single-window clearance (an all powerful president who was also the army chief) to a messy quartet— that is the state of Pakistani politics today.

The quartet comprises of the following: an unpopular but Machiavellian president who controls the ruling party and until 2010 had immense constitutional powers\*; an increasingly assertive prime minister; an army chief who holds the veto on issues concerning national security and foreign policy and acts as the arbiter of political differences from behind the scenes; and a hyper-activist judiciary, led by a chief justice (CJ) who enjoys substantial popular support and is perceived by the common man to be the panacea for all the ills of Pakistan because he is known for taking suo moto notice of anything that he considers important, i.e., from oil prices and forced disappearances to constitutional matters having grave political ramifications.

In a sense, the latest democratic interregnum in Pakistan that started after the general elections in February 2008 is even more complicated than the earlier one in 1988-1999. At that time, it was only a troika in which the prime minister and the president sought the support of the army chief to fix each other. The opposition was ready to destabilise the government and the judiciary was pliable, obedient

and subservient to the powers that be. Now, things have changed. Today the troika has been replaced by a quartet with the emergence of the judiciary as an important player in Pakistani politics. However, this quartet is unstable because the relative strengths of various constituents of this quartet keep shifting. The judiciary is quite a potent a factor in Pakistani politics because the opposition is looking at this institution as an effective instrument to be used against the government in its quest to return to power. It is no longer interested in attaining power by holding on to the coat-tails of the military. At the same time, since it expects to come back to power soon, it is in a dilemma as to whether it should encourage judicial interference in executive and political matters.

Another critical factor is the civil-war like situation on the western border of Pakistan. The military operation against the Islamist radicals and the Baloch separatists is likely to keep the army too occupied to play an active role in the politics of the country. The deep involvement of the US in military and political decision-making in Pakistan further complicates an already complex situation. Given that Pakistan cannot survive without massive US economic and military assistance, the Americans are exercising enormous influence on the politics of Pakistan.

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\* As this report was going to the press, the National Assembly of Pakistan passed the 18th Amendment Bill unanimously on 8 April 2010. The Bill was subsequently passed in the Senate on April 15, 2010. The Bill clipped the powers of the President. However, President Zardari is still likely to retain his hold over the government as the head of the ruling party.

## Elections and the Numbers Game

The general elections in February 2008, and the political deals that preceded these elections, were supposed to avoid precisely such a messy political scene. It was felt at that time that General Pervez Musharraf desperately needed credible political support to be able to deliver on the War on Terror. The king's party – Pakistan Muslim League-Qaid (PML-Q)– was not able to develop the kind of political consensus that was needed to marshal public support against the Islamists. The Americans were convinced that only a government led by a liberal political force like the Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), working in conjunction with Musharraf and the army could provide the political environment to isolate the Islamists. The idea was to provide a level playing field to all political parties and ensure a largely free and fair election, the result of which would be acceptable to all the stakeholders.

Of course, to keep a check on the PPP, it was necessary to ensure that no party should secure a majority and a coalition government would come to power, in which the king's party would hold the upper hand in the national assembly. This was to be achieved with the help of the local administration packed with loyalists, which would intimidate voters and harass the candidates by the brazen misuse of state resources to favour the ruling party. Accordingly, pre-poll sops were provided to the electorate; the media and the judiciary were used against opposition candidates and electoral lists were changed to incorporate pro-government electorates. But the assassination of Benazir Bhutto, the outrage caused by the imposition of the second martial law by Musharraf, the sharply deteriorating economic situation, the return of Nawaz Sharif from exile, and the resentment fuelled by the War on Terror completely changed the political equations in Pakistan.

Even so, the composition of the new National Assembly and the four provincial assemblies after the elections was exactly as Musharraf would have like it to be. The National Assembly, and three out of four provincial assemblies (Sindh being the only exception), were so hopelessly hung that it did not seem possible for the PPP, which emerged as the single largest party in the national assembly, to form a government without the support of Musharraf's minions. It was assumed that since the main political rival of the PPP was the PML-Nawaz, the former would be left with no choice but to forge an alliance with the political allies of General Musharraf. Indeed, the political grapevine held even before the elections that Musharraf wanted a PPP-led coalition that would include the PML-Q, Muttahida Quami Mahaz (MQM) and Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) and/or Awami National Party (ANP).

## Results: A Short Analysis

The results of the 2008 elections were more or less along expected lines (See detailed results in Table 1.1 & 1.2). The polls were relatively fair because the political circumstances of the time militated against any move by the government that would rob the polls of their legitimacy. The polls also threw up a few political surprises. The performance of the PML-N was quite astounding despite the disarray in the party just before the elections. It was difficult for it to even field candidates on many seats, and yet it emerged as the second largest party in the National Assembly (90 seats out of 342). PML-N gained massively in central Punjab, and made its presence felt in north and south Punjab. It also won a few seats in the Hazara belt of NWFP, even though it had no representation in Sindh and Balochistan. PML-N stood up to its reputation as the 'GT Road party', the party that dominates the Raiwind-Rawalpindi belt along the Grand Trunk road. It is important to note here that the centre of gravity of Pakistani politics lies there as well.



## National Assembly

### Party Position Including Reserved Seats

Monday, June 01, 2009 10:23

Province	FATA	Federal Capital	NWFP			Punjab			Sindh			Balochistan			Total General Seats	Total Ind. Joined Party	Total Non Muslims Reserved	Total Women Reserved	Grand Total
			General Seats	Ind	women	Total	General Seats	Ind	women	Total	General Seats	Ind	women	Total					
	<b>12</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>148</b>	<b>35</b>	<b>183</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>17</b>	<b>272</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>342</b>	
1 PPPP	0	0	9	1	3	13	45	6	12	63	33	0	7	40	4	1	1	6	126
2 PML-N	0	2	4	0	1	5	60	4	16	80	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	90
3 PML	0	0	5	0	1	6	28	0	7	35	4	0	1	5	4	0	1	5	53
4 MQM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	19	0	5	24	0	0	0	0	25
5 ANP	0	0	10	0	3	13	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	13
6 MMA	0	0	4	0	0	4	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	3	7
7 PML-F	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	3	0	1	4	0	0	0	0	5
8 BNP-A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	1
9 PPP-S	0	0	1	0	1	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1
10 NPP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	1
11 Ind	11	0	1	0	1	2	0	0	0	2	1	0	0	1	0	0	0	0	17
<b>Total</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>43</b>	<b>136</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>181</b>	<b>61</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>75</b>	<b>13</b>	<b>1</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>257</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>60</b>	<b>339</b>	

Postponed=1 NA-42

## Provincial Assemblies

### Party Position Including Reserved Seats

Monday, June 01, 2009 10:24

Province	NWFP Assembly					Punjab Assembly					Sindh Assembly					Balochistan Assembly							
	S#	Party Name	General Seats	Ind	women	Non Muslims	Total	General Seats	Ind	women	Non Muslims	Total	General Seats	Ind	women	Non Muslims	Total	General Seats	Ind	women	Non Muslims	Total	
			99	22	3	124	297	66	8	371	130	29	9	168	51	11	3	65					
1	PPPP	18	5	6	1	30	82	4	19	2	107	72	0	16	5	93	8	1	2	1	12		
2	PML-N	5	2	2	0	9	111	30	4	170	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
3	PML	5	0	1	0	6	67	0	16	2	85	8	0	2	1	11	14	0	4	1	19		
4	MQM	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	39	0	9	3	51	0	0	0	0	0	0	
5	ANP	33	5	9	1	48	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	2	2	1	1	0	4		
6	MMA	10	0	3	1	14	2	0	0	0	2	0	0	0	0	0	7	0	2	1	10		
7	PML-F	0	0	0	0	0	2	0	1	0	3	6	0	2	0	8	0	0	0	0	0	0	
8	BNP-A	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	5	0	2	0	7		
9	PPP-S	5	0	1	0	6	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	
10	NPP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	3	0	0	0	0	0	0	
11	NP	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	0	1		
12	Ind	11	0	0	0	11	4	0	0	4	4	0	0	0	0	0	12	0	0	0	12		
<b>Total</b>		<b>87</b>	<b>12</b>	<b>22</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>124</b>	<b>268</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>66</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>371</b>	<b>130</b>	<b>0</b>	<b>29</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>168</b>	<b>49</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>65</b>		

The PPP did quite well in south Punjab but overall, its performance in Punjab was not too impressive, despite the sympathy wave occasioned by Benazir's assassination. The PML-Q won in the constituencies where it had put up very strong candidates. The results showed that if the PML-N and the PML-Q had combined to contest the election, perhaps, there would have been a repeat of the 1997 when the PPP could not win a single seat in Punjab. Also, the shift towards conservative politics in Punjab was too obvious to miss and this might have played a role in the decline of the PPP's influence, because it is seen as a liberal and secular party. The results in Sindh were entirely along expected lines with the MQM dominating constituencies in urban Sindh – Karachi, Hyderabad, Mirpurkhas and Sukkur – and the PPP sweeping rural Sindh. An interesting development was the victory of the ANP on two seats in the Sindh provincial assembly. With Karachi emerging as the largest Pashtun city in the world, this could well be the start of a bitter political rivalry between the Mohajirs who support the MQM and the Pashtuns who back the ANP.

Balochistan threw up the usual hotchpotch result. With the Baloch nationalists boycotting the elections, the tribal sardars won either on account of their influence or with some help from the military-bureaucratic establishment. The split in the JUI between the moderate and the pro-Taliban hard-liners, the division within the Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) and the boycott by the Jamaat-i-Islami had a telling impact on the performance of the religious forces in the province.

### **Reverses for the Religious Parties in NWFP**

The results in the NWFP were quite interesting. The defeat of the divided MMA at the hands of the left-leaning ANP and the PPP was widely touted as evidence of Pashtuns of Pakistan rejecting

fundamentalism and extremism. However, this victory of moderate parties in NWFP was not so much a defeat of the radical Islamists as it was popular rejection of political forces who were aligned with Musharraf— either openly like PML-Q and the PPP-Sherpao or surreptitiously like the JUI. The anti-incumbency factor also played a critical role and it was more a vote against the MMA than support for liberal and secular parties. Moreover, the ANP and the PPP adopted an ambiguous stand on the militancy in the province. While they condemned violence by radical elements, they were equally critical of Musharraf's policy of deploying army in the tribal areas. The Pashtun nationalists played it safe by saying that the conflict was a conspiracy against the Pashtuns who were peace-loving and the suicide attacks were orchestrated by the army to give legitimacy to their plans to enslave them. Both the ANP and the PPP offered to open a dialogue with the Islamists to bring peace to the state.

There are other important points that need to be noted about the elections in NWFP: the voter turnout was under 20 per cent in a large number of constituencies in the province, particularly in the Malakand division where the ANP and the PPP swept the elections; their victory was not as big as the MMA victory in 2002; and finally, if the MMA had not split, the mullahs might have got more seats than they ultimately managed to get. Despite internal divisions, the massive shift of public support away from them and the boycott of the elections by their core supporters, they still managed to come second in nearly 35 provincial assembly constituencies.

### **Rise and Fall of Zardari**

It goes to the credit of Asif Ali Zardari that he converted a hung assembly into a two-thirds majority by doing the unthinkable and forging an alliance with the PPP's main political rival,

the PML-N. He also roped in the ANP, the JUI and later, the MQM, into the ruling coalition. By forging such a broad-based alliance and forming almost a national government – Zardari destroyed whatever hopes Musharraf might have harboured of packing the next government with his political underlings and establishing his control over the PPP government. Even in the provinces, unlike any of his predecessors, Zardari allowed parties other than his own to head the governments. The ANP formed the government in NWFP and the PML-N in Punjab in coalition with the PPP. In Sindh, where the PPP enjoyed a simple majority on its own, he roped the MQM into the government in a spirit of political reconciliation. Balochistan was perhaps the only exception where the entire PML-Q was hijacked and a PPP man installed as chief minister.

While Nawaz Sharif was not exactly comfortable with this arrangement, he was left with no other choice because this coalition seemed to have captured the national imagination. Sharif also did not want to push Zardari into the arms of Musharraf. Of course, the PPP - PML-N alliance was not expected to last very long. Once Musharraf was forced to leave in August 2008, it was going to be just a matter of time before the alliance collapsed. Even before this, Nawaz Sharif's party had walked out of the government, within a few weeks of joining the cabinet, on the issue of the restoration of the dismissed chief justice Iftikhar Chaudhry. However, he continued to support the government from the outside while pressurising Zardari to remove Musharraf. Once this was achieved, Nawaz pulled out of the alliance and decided to sit in opposition. And yet, the coalition continued in Punjab and the PPP remained part of the cabinet, albeit with lot of resentment against the PML-N. By this time, Zardari had consolidated his hold at the centre to a point where he could easily survive with allies like the ANP, the MQM and the JUI in the national assembly.

That Zardari is a shrewd political operator is quite well-known. The manner in which he outmanoeuvred Musharraf and replaced him as president, stitched together an unlikely coalition, reached out to old and bitter political rivals, consolidated his control over the PPP, tried to assuage the alienated Baloch nationalists, took a tough and unambiguous stand against the Taliban and other radical Islamist groups and made the right noises on relations with India and the US, should have all worked in his favour.

However, Zardari's past continues to haunt him. He remains a pet object of hate among the powerful chattering classes in Punjab, Pakistan's political powerhouse. They have launched a sustained campaign against his personal character and his alleged proclivity to use public funds for his own benefits. Even the Baloch nationalists do not trust Zardari. Despite attempts by him to give a healing touch to Balochistan, there are not many takers for his offers in that restive province. They argue that his government is incapable of changing the military establishment's policy of repression and that he cannot be trusted with anything.

Zardari's vacillation over the restoration of the chief justice cost him dearly in terms of popular goodwill. Of course, he tried to defuse the crisis by restoring many of the deposed judges through the back door by making them take a new oath. He even invited Iftikhar Chaudhry to take a fresh oath and rejoin the bench as an ordinary judge because there could not be two chief justices. This was seen by the lawyers as adding insult to injury and only firmed up their resolve to continue with their agitation.

### **Mishandling of the Judges Issue and Loss of Face**

Zardari's hubris coupled with the self-serving advice given to him by his legal advisors like Farook Naek, Babar Awan and Latif Khosa, ensured a very

expensive political miscalculation on the issue of restoration of the judiciary, and in particular Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry. Ideally, he should have restored the judges within days of his party assuming power, thus taking advantage of the national mood and it would have tilted the balance firmly in his favour and put the army on the defensive. His indecisiveness on the restoration of the judges issue shifted the ire of the public and civil society from Musharraf to Zardari in a matter of days. The deteriorating economic, political and security situation only increased the alienation and anger of the people with the PPP. And Nawaz reaped the benefit of it all.

After the lawyers' first long march fizzled out in June 2008, Zardari was confident that he could get away without restoring Iftikhar Chaudhry as the chief justice. That is why, by the time, the second long march was announced for March 16, 2009, Zardari had in his complacency committed some major tactical errors. These included the move to use the February 2009 Supreme Court judgement disqualifying Nawaz and Shahbaz Sharif from holding office to dismiss the PML-N led government in Punjab which confirmed the popular suspicion that the PPP had contrived a politically motivated judgement against the Sharifs.

This step, in a way, forced Nawaz Sharif to go on the war path with the government and throw his political weight behind the second march. But for this, it would have petered out like the first long march. The failure of the PPP to install its own government in Punjab was another devastating blow. The civil bureaucracy, including the police, failed to control the mounting agitation. Even the army and America put pressure on Zardari to accept the demand and restore Chaudhry as the chief justice. Ultimately, his government had to eat the humble pie and announce on March 16, 2009, that all the judges would be restored. Chaudhry

was finally restored as CJ after the retirement of the incumbent chief justice on March 21, 2009. Be that as it may, there can be no two opinions that Zardari's political standing was greatly damaged by this episode. In these changed circumstances, he had to contend with an enormously powerful political opponent like Nawaz Sharif who seemed to have captured the pulse and imagination of at least the people of Punjab.

As if this was not enough, Zardari made another attempt in February 2010 to establish the primacy of the executive in matters concerning appointment of judges to the Supreme Court (SC). He overrode Iftikhar Chaudhry's recommendations and elevated Justice Khwaja Sharif, CJ of Lahore High Court (LHC) as SC judge and Justice Saqib Nisar as Acting CJ of the LHC through a notification. The Supreme Court CJ took suo moto notice of the notification and immediately formed a three-member bench for hearing the case, which held that it was in violation of Article 177 of the Constitution and overturned the presidential order. Prime Minister Gilani met the CJ and averted the crisis. Finally the notification was withdrawn and all the recommendations of the CJ were implemented.

### **The NRO Issue**

The SC headed by Iftikhar Chaudhry has not missed any opportunity to create problems for the Zardari government. In its verdict on July 31, 2009, the Supreme Court declared the provisional constitutional order (PCO) and other such orders (proclaiming emergency, promulgating ordinances etc.) issued by Musharraf in November 2007 as "unconstitutional, illegal and void ab initio". Thus, the NRO promulgated under these orders lost its legitimacy and the court asked the National Assembly to "reconsider and, if thought fit, to enact, all the 37 Ordinances including the NRO, as Acts of Parliament" within 120 days. In a way, it offered an opportunity to the national and

provincial parliaments “to legitimize the acts, actions, proceedings and orders, initiated, taken or done, under those Ordinances.....with retrospective effect”. However, the talks between the PPP and the PML-N did not make much headway. The Standing Committee of the National Assembly on Law & Justice, in its meeting held on October 29-30, debated this issue and on November 2, 2009, the Committee recommended that, the proposed amendments in the Bill for enacting the NRO might be passed by the Assembly later. However, the Bill was withdrawn and automatically the NRO lapsed in November 2009. The Supreme Court started hearing the joint petition against the NRO by Mobashir Hassan, Roedad Khan, Qazi Hussain Ahmad, Shahbaz Sharif and others against the NRO in early December 2009, and in its ruling on December 16, 2009, held that all cases suspended under the amnesty would now revert back to their status as of October 5, 2007 and would be automatically reopened.<sup>1</sup>

The PPP-led government announced the death of the NRO even before the Supreme Court verdict. Both Gilani and Zardari came out with statements that they were ready to work with the PML-N on all issues. It also needs to be mentioned that as President, Zardari enjoys immunity from being prosecuted. Since the PPP is in power, it is well within the competence of the government to withdraw any case against anyone. The fact that Zardari has already spent eleven years in jail without a single case being proved against him gives the government enough reason to withdraw these cases.

However, in view of the declining popularity of Zardari the NRO verdict has undoubtedly dented the reputation of his party and government. He is

portrayed in the Pakistani media as an unscrupulous and corrupt politician and rumours of conspiracies to dislodge him from power abound.

### **Future Bleak for Zardari, 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment Passed**

Constitutionally, Zardari may be on a firm ground. However, there is a widespread belief in Pakistan today that moves are afoot to either remove him from office or reduce him to a harmless figurehead. In the current quartet, the army is unlikely to move openly against the president. What is more likely is a clash either between the president and prime minister or else between the president and chief justice.

It was even widely speculated in Pakistan that the instability which followed the NRO issue might offer Gilani the opportunity to move against Zardari either by not backing him in the event of any eventuality, or else by raising the banner of revolt with the support of a section of the party, the opposition and/or the army and the Americans. For some time, Gilani has been asserting himself on various issues, i.e., reshuffling the bureaucracy, dismissing the NSA, not signing the summary for posting a DMG officer as ambassador to France, resenting presidential interference in government affairs, wanting to reshuffle his cabinet, smarting at the attitude of ministers who do not care much for him because they ostensibly enjoy the confidence of the president etc. And the fact that he extracted an almost impossible concession from India on the Balochistan issue in Sharm-el-Sheikh in July 2009 enhanced his popularity and boosted his confidence giving rise to a possibility that the army

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<sup>1</sup> For details see the Full Text of the Supreme Court Order cited in *Dawn*, December 17, 2009. The original text available at: [http://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/web/user\\_files/File/Short%20order.pdf](http://www.supremecourt.gov.pk/web/user_files/File/Short%20order.pdf)

and the opposition headed by Nawaz might team up with Gilani, to unseat Zardari and bring about a change in government.

However, the stories of discord between Gilani and Zardari were laid to rest with Gilani coming out openly in support of Zardari in December 2009 over the NRO issue.<sup>2</sup> After the SC ruling against Zardari's notification on judges' appointment in February 2010, Gilani asked everybody in Pakistan to give democracy a chance rather than setting a deadline on his government.<sup>3</sup> In certain quarters there is a view that the army is more comfortable with Gilani who, unlike Zardari, may not kowtow to the Americans on every issue. But Gilani has his limitations. Despite a massive image building exercise in the media, Gilani is not exactly a mass leader. He does not have any independent power-base of his own and once he deserts Zardari, there are chances that he will only end up in the stranglehold of Nawaz Sharif or the army only to be used and then disposed of unceremoniously. In this context, Gilani's statements in the media cited above reveal that he is clearly disassociating himself from any plan to remove Zardari from power by force. In fact, he has already issued unambiguous statements to the press that "instead of being used by the establishment or other forces, who desperately want him to play the role of Farooq Leghari in the current situation, he would simply quit like an honourable prime minister", in case Zardari is "made to leave the Presidency at the gun

point or through the courts".<sup>4</sup> Despite Gilani's open statements of loyalty towards Zardari and the PPP, he has to deal with many imponderables in the coming days.

In the meanwhile, the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment has been passed in Parliament undoing the changes brought about by Musharraf during his dictatorial rule. Zardari's office is now shorn of all the powers and most probably, he may now like to head the government as prime minister. In that case, the differences between Gilani and Zardari will very likely come to the fore. The PPP government could be destabilised if the opposition and the army choose to manipulate these differences. There have been newspaper reports about a 'minus one' formula being advanced by forces opposed to Zardari to get rid of him heralding difficult days for Zardari in future.

### **Army Retains its Influence**

Apart from the prime minister and the judiciary, Zardari also cannot ignore the army which continues to retain its influence and has refused to take direction from his government. All moves to gain some degree of control over the army have been spurned so far. The army reacted vehemently against the Kerry-Lugar bill which asked the civilian government to ensure its control over the army, in return for the financial doles from Washington, which Pakistan wants desperately. The fact that the army's resistance

<sup>2</sup> Commenting on the SC's decision to strike down NRO, Gilani stated: "It will be tantamount to double jeopardy to ask him to resign on the grounds of cases for which he has already undergone 12 years' imprisonment". Reported *Dawn*, December 19, 2009. He also reportedly said, "These are not new cases. He (Zardari) remained in jail for 12 years and Rs 4 billion to Rs 5 billion were spent in pursuing cases against him (though the charges were never proved)". *Daily Times*, December 19, 2009.

<sup>3</sup> "It is necessary for all of us to defend democracy and not set a deadline for its fall. The country cannot afford to live with weak democracy. It is a panacea for the country's problems. Even the worst democracy is better than the best of dictatorship," *Daily Times* quoted Gilani, as saying on February 22, 2010.

<sup>4</sup> Rauf Klasra, "Gilani to side with Zardari through thick and thin, Vows not to become another Farooq Leghari", *The News*, January 2, 2010. (Available at [http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily\\_detail.asp?id=216481](http://www.thenews.com.pk/daily_detail.asp?id=216481))

found a popular echo in Pakistan demonstrates the ability of the military establishment to influence public opinion effectively on the issue of national security. After the departure of Musharraf, popular confidence in the army has been restored beyond doubt. Moreover, the military operations against the Taliban have only added to the army's reputation and made it indispensable for the US, which wants its continued help in fighting the war in Afghanistan. The arrest and killing of top Taliban leaders in early 2010<sup>5</sup> have improved the image of the army and made it even more popular.

However, the people may not like the army to takeover. The army may not also be interested to step in at this hour, when the internal security situation looks so dismal and the economy is in doldrums. It is engaged in a suicidal battle on the tribal borderlands and is probably not inclined to take the risk of running an increasingly ungovernable country. Therefore, unless there is a cataclysmic development, the army is unlikely to stage a coup. As reports from Pakistan indicate, it is likely to take every measure possible to increase its influence by aligning with Nawaz and the CJ to checkmate any effort by the Zardari government to subject it to civilian control. The army chief was seen to be playing a dominant role in laying down the agenda for the Pak-US strategic dialogue during March 23-25, 2010. Federal secretaries were summoned to the GHQ prior to the dialogue to brief the army chief on issues of national concern, and the fact that General Kayani accompanied the Pakistani delegation as, what the US media called,

its star member, indicate that the military will not allow its influence over the security and foreign policies of Pakistan to wane.

### **Civil Society and Media**

The lawyers' movement and the role played by the media and civil society organisations in building up public opinion against the régime has created an impression that these two are important factors in Pakistani politics. However, their influence is over-estimated.

Civil society is a weak link in Pakistan politics. There are so many forces working at cross-purposes within it that their net effect adds up to nothing. There are critics who would argue that civil society in Pakistan is neither civil nor representative of society. It can also by no means be assumed that the civil society represents only the liberal, moderate and progressive sections of the population, because a number of Al-Qaida and Taliban sympathisers and right-wing Islamist religious parties also form part of it and wield a lot of influence in the media and society. They have their own network of NGOs for promoting 'human rights' and undertaking welfare activities. So much so that even the Lashkar-e-Taiba and its front organisation, Jamaat-ud-Dawa, calls themselves welfare organisations. Even a self-confessed associate of Osama bin Laden, Khalid Khawaja, is running a 'human rights' organisation.

No doubt, the progressive section of the civil society has been very vocal but their importance need not be exaggerated. The success of lawyers'

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<sup>5</sup> On February 17, 2010, Pakistan announced the arrest of a senior Taliban leader Mulla Abdul Ghani Baradar from Karachi. On February 18, 2010, Taliban 'commander' Jalaluddin Haqqani's son Muhammad Haqqani, was killed in a dronestrike in Danday Darpakhel village four kilometres north of Miranshah. On February 21, 2010, police arrested Maulvi Kabir, one of the top ten most-wanted Taliban leaders and a former Governor of Nangahar province of Afghanistan, from Nowshera. Musa Khan, another senior Taliban 'commander' was arrested in Damghar area of Kabal tehsil of Swat District on February 25, 2010. Tehrik Taliban's deputy chief Maulvi Faqir Mohammad was killed in a drone strike on March 5, 2010 and an Al-Qaeda commander Abu Yahya was arrested in Karachi on March 6, 2010.



movement, therefore, cannot be taken as an indication of the sway of liberal forces in Pakistani society.

As for the media's role in civil society, a large number of top journalists in both the print and electronic media work with the so called 'establishment' and toe the line set for them by their handlers. For instance, so long as the military establishment was ambivalent about the Taliban, these journalists took the line that the Taliban are their own people and that there should be negotiations with them. But as soon as the army started fighting the Taliban, the media changed its line and branded the Taliban as Indian agents engaged in anti-Islamic and anti-Pakistani activities to give a bad name to Pakistan.

Of late, the media is out to prove that they have the power to make and break governments. It is now open season in Pakistan for Zardari-bashing over the Kerry-Lugar Bill and the NRO. A majority of journalists are from a conservative, Punjabi urban lower middle-class background, and have a deep antipathy towards Zardari. So much so that people who never had a good word to say about Benazir Bhutto during her lifetime, are now extolling her virtues, only to use her name to portray her husband as a *charlatan*.

There is a clear attempt underway to destroy the credibility and legitimacy of the presidency and given the profile of journalists who are spearheading this campaign of vilification, there are reasons to believe that powerful sections in the military establishment are backing this media campaign.

### The Progress Report

The PPP government's record has been rather

unimpressive during the last almost two years of its rule. Right from the beginning, it has spent much of its energy in saving the government, fighting the Taliban and the jihadi insurgency that has asserted itself in a major way and defending the government's foreign and security policies. It has not been able to focus its attention on satisfying the electorate. Due to the worsening security situation in Pakistan in 2008-2009, there has been an overall decline of the Pakistani economy and the prospects of its revival appear rather grim. This was acknowledged by the junior finance minister while presenting the national budget in June 2009: "Terrorist attacks have undermined Pakistan's macroeconomic stability and dampened growth prospects".<sup>6</sup> This is not to deny that the PPP-led government has tried to introduce some populist measures like the Benazir Income Support Programme (BISP) and many foreign aid agencies have expressed their interest in funding such programmes. However, there is no well-defined strategy to rescue Pakistan economy from the morass it is in today. Its dependence on external assistance makes it immensely vulnerable to political pressures from the outside. In view of the rising popular antipathy towards Pakistan establishment's supposed surrender of national sovereignty to external powers, such dependence may in the long term pose critical challenges for the Pakistan state.

On the terrorism front also, the people of Pakistan believe that the civilian government has been largely guided by the army's policies under American pressure and this has earned the government a bad name. On the foreign policy front, it has only managed to continue the policies of the Musharraf government, without much success. For example, it has not gone beyond making some

<sup>6</sup> Minister of State for Finance Hina Rabbani Khar made this remark during the course of the presentation of the budget on June 14, 2009. *Dawn*, June 15, 2009.

friendly overtures to India through the media. In its relationship with the US it has not managed to convince the people of Pakistan about the necessity to befriend the US. On the issue of the Baloch movement also it has failed to apply the healing touch. Above all, Zardari's government is touted as a non-functioning lame-duck government, at the mercy of the army and America. It has not made any effort so far to come into its own and take independent measures which can restore its image among the people of Pakistan.

Against this backdrop, while the Zardari government's fortunes are on the decline, Nawaz Sharif's political acceptability is on the rise. Nawaz has taken a principled stand on the issues relating to removal of Musharraf as president, restoration of judges, and the repeal of the 17<sup>th</sup> amendment and restoration of the 1973 constitution. He has demonstrated his ability to be responsive to the popular pulse and is waiting patiently to return to power at an opportune time. It is also reported that he is cosying up to the army at a time when Zardari government is losing the confidence of the army, the real power-broker in Pakistan. Thus the Zardari government's loss is likely to translate into Nawaz's gain in future.

### Trends and Conclusions

- The popular euphoria after the elections has died down. The civilian government has failed to deliver on its promises to the people. The political situation in Pakistan is much worse today than early 2008, when the elections took place. The government appears to have no control over the foreign and security policy of the state and it is fast losing popular support. It has absolutely no control over the ISI and the army.
- The political situation in Pakistan is fluid and there are indications that the army, the judiciary, the opposition led by Nawaz Sharif and the media are coming together against the Zardari government. The role played by the US may decide the fate of Zardari in the long run.
- The army remains the most important centre of power in Pakistan today. It remote controls political situation in the country from behind the scenes. It retains its reputation as a political power-broker and holds the veto on issues of vital national importance.
- Zardari appears to be under siege and while he still controls the PPP, attempts are being made to sideline him even inside his own party. Gilani could emerge as a potential challenger to Zardari but whether he will be able to take the party with him is not clear.
- Crucial allies like the MQM, the JUI and even the ANP are growing restive. The government could easily be destabilised if one or more of these allies withdraw support. While this will not necessarily mean fresh elections, the government will be totally at the mercy of political forces who support it from the outside.
- Nawaz Sharif is emerging as the most popular and powerful politician in Pakistan today. With a clean chit from the judiciary. He can once again re-enter Parliament and become prime minister because the bar on his third term, imposed by Musharraf government, has been lifted with the passing of the 18<sup>th</sup> Constitutional Amendment Bill.
- However, Nawaz Sharif is likely to lose much of his popularity if he were to take over power today because the political, security and economic problems confronting the state appear insurmountable. Moreover, it is unlikely that Nawaz will make any major

change in the security policy of Pakistan. The popular belief in Pakistan that he will stand up to the Americans is unfounded.

- The judiciary is increasingly encroaching on to the domain of the executive, something which could lead to repeated clashes between these two institutions in the future. Whether the judicial activism being witnessed today will survive the current CJ Iftikhar Chaudhry, and whether the politicians will be able to use the judiciary to settle score with their rivals remains to be seen.
- The religious political parties appear to be losing ground to the extremists. They have been marginalised by the radical groups who have taken up the mantle of Islamisation from them.
- The US exercises a dominant influence on the politics of Pakistan. In order to create the conditions conducive to their strategic interests, the US will have to create long term stakes in Pakistan by progressively empowering the democratic forces and reducing the influence of the army. However, this is a tall order, given the American dependence on the Pakistani army for their war in Afghanistan.

### Implications for India

- Publicly, none of the main political parties in Pakistan are against normalisation of relations with India. But perhaps they are not ready to settle all outstanding issues with India in right earnest. All of them advocate a very rigid stand on the issue of Jammu and Kashmir (J&K).
- Even then, it is interesting to note that both Zardari and Nawaz Sharif have advocated a better relationship between the two countries and expressed their willingness to delink trade and cultural exchanges from the Kashmir issue. However, there has been no substantial step taken by the Zardari government in this regard because of the continuing instability in Pakistan and the government's disinclination to address Indian security concerns (post-Mumbai-attacks).
- On the terrorism front, a consensus seems to be developing among the political parties against the Pakistani Taliban. However, there is no such agreement on the issue of jihadi terrorism fostered by Pakistan in Kashmir. The government continues to be in a state of denial about the activities of various jihadi outfits operating out of Pakistan. It is considered almost unpatriotic to act against these forces. Therefore, it is unlikely that there will be any major action taken to dismantle the infrastructure of terror that is directed against India.
- President Zardari has made some bold statements in favour of normalisation of ties with India. But whether he can convert the military and political establishment to his viewpoint and sell peace to the people of Pakistan is still unclear.
- While India has no choice but to deal with the government and the military establishment, all efforts must be made to engage with other political forces inside that country. If India plays its cards well, it could gain some leverage inside Pakistan. ■

## CHAPTER II

# PROVINCES OF PAKISTAN: POLITICS, MILITANCY AND ETHNIC NATIONALISM

This chapter focuses on political developments in all the four provinces of Pakistan and examines the impact that these may have on national politics and the stability of the government. It will also seek to analyse the nationalist and sub-provincial movements in the provinces and estimate their potential.

### Dynamics of Provincial Politics

Provincial nationalism has been looked at with suspicion by the ruling class ever since Pakistan came into existence. In an attempt to foster an overarching 'Pakistani' identity, based on Islam the 'establishment' has tried to suppress regional, ethnic and provincial identities, lest they promote fissiparous tendencies. Local languages like Sindhi, Balochi, Pashtu and even Punjabi have been discouraged and Urdu has been imposed as the *lingua franca* to forge a sense of common nationhood. In fact, it was the imposition of Urdu upon the Bengalis that led to widespread protests in erstwhile East Pakistan and gave a fillip to Bengali nationalism which culminated in the creation of Bangladesh in 1971.

Further, the smaller provinces of Pakistan have several complaints against the largest province – Punjab. After the division of Pakistan in 1971, the 1973 constitution tried to address the issue of provincial autonomy. But no meaningful action was

taken to translate the rhetoric of provincial autonomy into reality. The smaller provinces (in terms of population) – namely Balochistan, Sindh and NWFP (now Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa) – have continued to suffer from a feeling of deprivation and exploitation by the largest province, Punjab. Ironically, despite the secession of East Pakistan, the problem of one of the federating units dominating all others has continued to haunt Pakistan. While earlier, East Pakistan outnumbered the whole of West Pakistan, after 1971, Punjab has had a higher population than all the other three provinces put together.

Throughout the 1970s and the 1980s, Pakistan had to contend with restiveness, even rebellion, in one or the other province. In the 1970s, a full blown insurgency broke out in Balochistan. The Pakistan army brutally crushed it – the fourth such outburst in that province. The NWFP was also in ferment with the Pashtun nationalist party, the National Awami Party (NAP), led by Wali Khan, articulating the aspirations of the Pashtuns in Pakistan. The 1980s saw insurgency breaking out in Sindh. The Sindhi nationalists were influenced by GM Syed's *Jiye Sindh* movement. Moreover, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's execution by Zia-ul-Haq alienated the Sindhi masses. Even as the Sindhis went on the warpath in the interior areas of Sindh, a Mohajir movement started in the urban areas, perhaps as a counter to

Sindhi nationalism. The Mohajir Quami Movement (MQM)<sup>1</sup> started dominating urban Sindh, particularly Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur and Mirpurkhas. A large number of Urdu-speaking people had migrated from various provinces in India at the time of Partition in 1947 and settled in these urban areas.

The 1990s saw the return of electoral politics after Zia-ul-Haq's death. Many of the disgruntled and separatist elements participated in the political process. Insurgent activities in Balochistan and Sindh stopped and there was a semblance of peace in these provinces. In NWFP, the NAP changed its name to Awami National Party (ANP) and allowed itself to be co-opted into the system. It aligned first with the PPP and later with PML-N and joined coalitions both in the province as well as the centre. Sindhi nationalism was kept in check by the return of the PPP to power at the centre in 1988 and later in 1993. Most of the old guard of the Sindhi nationalist movement had been either eliminated or bought over by the establishment. By the end of the 1990s, the issue of ethnic or provincial nationalism had receded into the background. Although nationalist groups in the smaller provinces continued to stick to their programmes, they seemed to have lost their influence and were regarded as marginal players.

When Gen. Pervez Musharraf usurped power by overthrowing Nawaz Sharif in 1999, in his first address to the people of Pakistan, he promised to 'strengthen the federation, remove inter-provincial disharmony and restore national cohesion' as one of the seven-point agenda he laid out before the country. But during the eight years he remained in power, he did nothing to address the concerns of the smaller provinces. In fact, he left things much worse than before.

The allegations of Punjabi domination resurfaced in a big way because of the policies adopted by the Musharraf regime. Musharraf's decision to build the Kalabagh dam, cantonments in Balochistan and implement the Gwadar port project evoked hostile reactions in the smaller provinces. His response to Baloch resistance convinced the people in the smaller provinces that he would perpetuate Punjabi domination rather than address the issue of inter-provincial inequality. In fact, since the military and bureaucracy of Pakistan is dominated by Punjabis, and to some extent the Pashtuns, other ethnic groups feel quite marginalised and lend their support to ethnic and provincial nationalist parties.

Mainstream politicians and the military-bureaucratic establishment in Pakistan view ethnic nationalism with suspicion. While it is true that most of the nationalists would settle for autonomy within Pakistan instead of independence, the state apparatus in Pakistan considers ethnic assertion as a prelude to secession. The secession of East Pakistan (now Bangladesh) in 1971, has added to their sense of insecurity in this regard. Rather than responding positively to the legitimate demands of the nationalist groups, the Punjabi dominated military and bureaucratic establishment has reacted in a high-handed manner, which has left the other ethno-nationalist groups with no other choice but to openly advocate separatism.

This has been the case in Balochistan where a full-blown insurgency is underway for the last one decade. More seriously, even in Sindh, the latent separatist sentiment is slowly coming to the fore. In NWFP, while the Pashtun nationalism of the olden days may be dead and gone, ethnic sentiments are now getting dovetailed with Islamism of the Taliban variety.

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<sup>1</sup> Subsequently the name was changed to Muttahida Quami Mahaz with the same acronym.

While ideologically, the Taliban believe in pan-Islamism and have little or no use for ethnic nationalism as a predominantly Pashtun force, there is an inescapable xenophobia of Pashtun tribal nationalism propelling the ongoing armed resistance against foreign forces in Afghanistan, which may metamorphose into a Pashtun nationalist struggle especially in the present circumstances, when the radical Islamist Pashtuns increasingly view the Pakistani state as their worst enemy.

### **Approach of the New Government**

To an extent, the new civilian government that came to power after the February 2008 elections has tried to reach out to the smaller provinces in Pakistan. There are broad-based coalition governments in every province and smaller provincial level parties have been allowed to participate in the coalition at the centre. However, unfortunately, these initiatives have been marred by political exigencies, compulsions and constraints of both the PPP as well as its coalition partners both at the centre and in the provinces.

Apart from such political measures the PPP-led government has also made a commitment to address the grievances of the provinces and has taken a very accommodative position on the National Finance Commission award which seeks to increase the share of the provinces in the distribution of revenues by evolving a new formula to distribute resources between provinces. The old formula that was based on the criteria of population for resource distribution favoured Punjab. This is now being revised to bring in other criteria like area, backwardness, contribution to the national pool, and royalties for resources of the provinces etc. Moreover, the 18th amendment theoretically gives greater autonomy to the provinces. The concurrent list has been abolished and all residual matters now vest with the provinces.

Whether these measures will be enough to satisfy the aspirations of the provinces or whether it is going to be a case of “too little too late” is something that remains to be seen.

### **Baloch Politics**

The Baloch people of Pakistan have demanded independence from the Pakistani state right since partition. They have staged armed insurrection in four different phases and sustained their struggle for independence in spite of brutal repression of their movement by the Pakistani state. There have been several efforts to divide the Baloch and buy out their leaders. However, the idea of an independent Balochistan has always stayed alive in the minds of the people of the province. Ethnicity intertwined with a sense of political isolation and relative economic deprivation has sustained the Baloch ethnic movement for the last six decades. There is a deep-seated feeling amongst the Baloch that they have been denied representation in the government and their resources have been diverted to fulfil the needs of other provinces in Pakistan. There are hardly any Baloch in the army or bureaucracy. Even most of the provincial jobs within Balochistan are held by outsiders. As a result, the rate of unemployment in Balochistan is the highest in the country. They fear marginalisation in their own province by Pashtuns and other ethnic groups.

The Musharraf regime had started a series of mega-projects in Balochistan, ostensibly, to usher in development in the province— Gwadar port being the most notable amongst them. It was argued by the Pakistani establishment that these projects would address the issue of lack of development in Pakistan’s most resource rich and yet economically most backward province. However, these measures have alienated the Baloch further, because they view these mega-projects as instruments of domination. They feel that they have no control over these

projects and have no stakes in them. The way these projects have been implemented, has added to their concerns. The Baloch people allege that the entire labour force was imported from other parts of Pakistan and cronies of the establishment reaped all the benefits from these projects. At the same time, the Pakistan army decided to establish a string of military cantonments across the province. This was seen by the Baloch as a step to tighten the stranglehold of Islamabad on the resources of the province. The mega-projects and military cantonments are also seen as measures to alter the demographic composition in the province and reduce the Baloch to a minority.

With matters coming to a head, an armed insurgency broke out in Balochistan. The Islamist insurgency in FATA and NWFP and the devastating impact this has had in the form of suicide bombings and fidayeen attacks on security installations in cities like Lahore, Islamabad, Peshawar etc., has to a great extent pushed the resurgent separatism in Balochistan to the background. Partly because of momentous political events taking place in the rest of Pakistan and partly because of an informal media censorship on the coverage of the incidents in Balochistan, the Balochi problem has not received the attention it deserves.

But while developments in Balochistan might not have made it to the front pages of newspapers, the situation in the province is spiralling out of control. Today the situation in Balochistan is, in many ways, far more serious in terms of its potential repercussions for the Pakistani federation than even the militancy in the Pashtun areas. The alienation of the people in the Baloch areas of Balochistan is almost total and separatist sentiments are now being openly expressed in various forums. So widespread is the disaffection with Pakistan that even the moderate nationalist forces are being forced to favour the separatists. Even pro-Pakistan nationalist politicians are constrained to tell their

Pakistani interlocutors that they are fast getting marginalised and that their pleas for seeking a solution within the Pakistani federation are finding fewer takers by every passing day.

The assassination of Nawab Akbar Bugti in August 2006 was perhaps the tipping point in the Baloch national movement. While the simmering discontent in Balochistan was palpable even when Nawab Bugti was alive, his death acted as a catalyst for the movement. Bugti's death gave the Balochi separatists the symbol they needed against the Pakistani establishment. After the 2008 general elections, attempts were made by the civilian government to reach out to the Baloch and assuage their feelings. President Asif Ali Zardari started in right earnest and apologised to the Baloch for all the acts of state repression in the past and promised to address all the issues that they had raised. Apart from the development package, he promised to undertake the necessary constitutional reforms to make provincial autonomy a reality. In addition, the PPP government freed most political prisoners, including many of the so-called 'missing persons' who had been kept in illegal custody by the security agencies.

Zardari's peace initiative was accorded a cautious welcome by the Baloch. One reason for this was that the Baloch did not expect the PPP-led coalition government to overturn the strategy put in place by the army under Musharraf. Moreover, the Baloch had boycotted the elections and hence did not regard the provincial government as legitimate and representative. The horse-trading organised by the PPP in Balochistan made the entire exercise suspect in the province (See Map 2.1 for party positions in the provincial assembly). In fact, in a House of 65 members, there is only one opposition member and that too because he had a blood-feud with the chief minister. The MPAs (Members of Provincial Assembly), including the chief minister, are nothing more than figureheads

and they do not enjoy any credibility with the disaffected people, nor do they have the power to do anything to satisfy the aspirations of the people. Both the chief minister and the governor of Balochistan have gone on record to say that they are powerless before the security establishment.

In any case, matters have come to a point where the Pakistani state is willing to offer autonomy to the Baloch, in terms of larger share in the federal resources and partial control over the resources of the province. However, this is no longer considered enough to satisfy the Baloch. Caught, as if they are, in a time-warp, the Pakistani political authorities seem unable to comprehend that the Baloch political and social scene has undergone a fundamental change; that the tribal sardars no longer call the shots and a new generation Baloch youth have assumed the leadership of the movement.

In the past, the state had successfully adopted the tactic of winning over the sardars to bring down the Baloch movement. However, today, this is no longer the case. Although many of the tribal sardars continue to exercise lot of influence, they would not dare to go against the movement. The leadership of the movement has passed on to a younger lot who do not follow the sardars blindly. This change has been summarised by Hirbyair Marri: "Today, even if my father (Khair Bux Marri) wants to hijack the movement and betray the Baloch, he cannot do it". The sardars are thus, compelled to defend the separatists, just to retain their influence and legitimacy. Nationalist sardars like Attaullah Mengal, Khair Bux Marri and Akbar Bugti and their families continue to command respect, but they are mere figureheads and are no longer the driving force of the separatist movement.

The Baloch separatist movement is led today by organisations like the Baloch Liberation Army (BLA), Baloch Republican Army (BRA), Baloch Liberation United Front (BLUF), Baloch Liberation Front (BLF), Baloch Students' Organisation (BSO)

etc. Interestingly, despite these outfits having operated for a number of years now, nobody seems to have adequate information about these organisations. At one level, these are amorphous and faceless organisations. There is more conjecture than any hard evidence regarding their form, structure, leadership and membership. Some analysts in Pakistan doubt whether these organisations even exist on the ground. They feel that these shadowy organisations serve the interests of recalcitrant tribes like the Marris, Bugtis and Mengals. However, these outfits have certainly gone beyond the control of the sardars and even if they have separate agendas and strategies, they are all driven by a common goal, i.e., independence from Pakistan. The amorphous structure of the Baloch separatist armies makes them quite an enigma for the Pakistani security forces. They are like phantom organisations. And despite the mass arrests of alleged operatives of these organisations, they have been able to conduct their operations uninterrupted. The state authorities have no clues about their organisational structure, leadership, cadre, funding, training etc. The guerrilla warfare tactics adopted by these groups—planting roadside bombs and mines that target military convoys, targeting and eliminating people who are close to the government, ambushing soldiers and officers randomly while they are off-duty, killings of people working for or supporting the state authorities, attacking and destroying economic infrastructure like gas pipelines, electricity lines, railway tracks, and carrying out reprisals against Punjabi settlers in Balochistan (which has led to an exodus on the non-Baloch from the Baloch areas of the province) — coupled with the mass public support they enjoy, have made them a nightmare for the Pakistan establishment.

So far, the authorities have adopted a two-pronged strategy to deal with the Baloch separatist movement, which poses a clear threat to the integrity of the Pakistani federation. On the one



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hand, they have used force to quell the rebellion and on the other they have taken political and economic initiatives to address the concerns of the Baloch. In fact, these two strategies have worked at cross-purposes. The use of brute force by the military has offset the political initiatives and strengthened the resolve of the Baloch to continue their armed struggle. Moreover, the authorities have used other tactics to divide and discredit the movement. They have used the Islamists, in particular the Taliban and political groups like the JUI, which shares a fraternal relationship with the Taliban, against the Baloch nationalist forces; and they are instigating ethnic conflict between the Baloch and the Pashtuns in Balochistan.

The alienation of the Baloch people is so complete that, at the moment, they refuse to accept any offer from the Pakistan state, howsoever well-meaning such a gesture may be. A case in point is the popular rejection of the reform package titled '*Aghaz-e-Haqooq-e-Balochistan*', which was discussed and approved in a joint session of the Parliament on December 7-9, 2009. It contained 39 points and sought to address the political, economic, administrative and security related grievances of the Baloch people. Baloch leaders rejected this package as a 'political gimmick' and held that "Zardari and his government may have good intentions but they were powerless and the real powers rested with the military establishment, which would not allow implementation of the policies recommended by the Parliament."<sup>2</sup> Under these circumstances, it is unlikely that there will be any positive movement towards restoration of peace and harmony in the province in the near future.

### **NWFP: Assertion of Pakistani Taliban**

For the first time in Pakistan's history, a Pashtun

nationalist party, the ANP, is heading the government in NWFP, in coalition with the PPP (See Map 2.2 for party positions in the provincial assembly). This is not to deny that the ANP has been part of the provincial government in the past as well – in 1973 as a coalition partner with the JUI, and then in the 1990s with both the PPP and the PML-N at different times. However, the ANP's success has been overshadowed by the Islamist insurgency that has ravaged the province and surrounding Pashtun dominated areas in FATA and northern Balochistan.

It is an irony that Islam, which was seen as a binding force by the Pakistani establishment, today poses the most serious threat to the existence of the Pakistani state, while the Pashtun nationalists, who were always treated with suspicion and distrust, have today emerged as the torch-bearers of the Pakistani state. It is hard to tell whether this is a tactical adjustment by the Pashtun nationalists or an exercise in self-preservation, especially when the Islamist radicals are killing ANP cadres and leaders by the dozens. It is also difficult to agree with some of the analysts who suggest that it is a sign of co-option of the Pashtun nationalists by the Punjabi-dominated Pakistani establishment

What form politics will finally take in NWFP – whether the Islamists or nationalists will succeed in future (as was attempted in Swat on the issue of the Nizam-e-Adl regulations), or whether the Pashtuns would forsake both ethnic nationalism and religious radicalism in favour of a larger Pakistani identity – will depend largely on the response of the Pakistani state to the Islamist insurgency not only in Pakistan but also in Afghanistan. It will also depend to a great extent on the way the ANP-led coalition in NWFP tackles the urgent issues of governance in the coming days.

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<sup>2</sup> Cited in news report "Baloch nationalists reject package", *The News*, November 25, 2009. Available at: [http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top\\_story\\_detail.asp?Id=25763](http://thenews.jang.com.pk/top_story_detail.asp?Id=25763)

The portents are not very good as far as the track record of the ANP-PPP coalition is concerned. Politically, the coalition has been hobbled by the raging insurgency in the province and in FATA. The targeting of political leaders by the insurgents has forced many of them to reduce public contact to a minimum. The veteran ANP leader, Asfandiyar Wali, grandson of the Frontier Gandhi Khan Abdul Gaffar Khan, has completely disappeared from the public eye. He is hardly ever in NWFP, and stays mostly either in Islamabad or abroad. The chief minister is also living practically in a bunker and even when he makes an appearance in public, the area is so completely sanitised that he can hardly make any contact with the people. The performance of the PPP leadership is even worse and most provincial level leaders are hardly ever seen outside their 'bunkers'. Apart from a few ministers in the provincial cabinet like the redoubtable Bashir Bilour, and Mian Iftikhar, who take the trouble to travel to all affected areas and maintain public contact even at grave risk to their lives, all other political activity has practically come to a standstill. If there is any political activity, it is by the supporters and sympathisers of the Islamists – JI and to an extent the JUI.

At another level, the ongoing militancy has not only inflicted huge economic damage on the province, but also it has prevented the provincial government from taking up any developmental initiative or projects that could ameliorate the lot of the people of NWFP. The massive crisis created by the influx of hundreds of thousands of internally displaced people (IDPs) because of the military operations in Swat, Bajaur, Waziristan and other parts of NWFP and FATA has imposed an unbearable burden on the provincial administration and government.

Although resources have been made available by the federal government as well as international

donors to take care of the IDPs, it is going to be an enormous task given the sheer scale of the crisis and the problems of providing relief and rehabilitation to hundreds of thousands of IDPs. If the provincial government can deliver on this then it will redeem itself in the eyes of the people. But if it fails, as is likely given the moribund and dysfunctional administrative structures in the province and widespread corruption in the political and bureaucratic establishment, then it will lead to popular resentment against the government and the state.

Even as the problems of governance continued to mount, the provincial government was still stuck with the political symbolism of the past – renaming NWFP as Pakhtunkhwa – through the 18th amendment bill (after much opposition from the PML-N and the PML-Q) and passed in the Parliament as Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa, in April 2010. This has led to a demand for recognition of other identities within NWFP. The non-Pashtuns especially those inhabiting the Hazara division are likely to keep up their demand for a separate province for themselves. There is also a fear that such political concessions will only bolster Pashtun nationalism, which according to many in Pakistan, runs counter to Pakistani nationalism.

Apart from emotional political issues, the provincial government is also spending a lot of its energy in getting the maximum resources out of the federal government. Torturous negotiations over the criteria for finance commission awards, royalties for hydel power projects and the oil and gas resources of the province, seem to be occupying the ANP-led government far more than administrative action on the ground to provide succour to the people. But since these are the long-standing demands of the nationalists, the ANP believes that if it can extract major concessions on these issues it will be able to reap political mileage

in the province. While this would certainly have been the case if all these negotiations were taking place in normal circumstances, the abnormal situation that exists in the province has added a surrealistic dimension to the ANP's politics.

At a time when people are losing their lives and livelihoods to Islamist militancy, it is hard to believe that the Pashtuns of NWFP would really care whether the ANP has managed to wrangle a few billion rupees more from Islamabad, or whether the name of the province has been changed to Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa.

### Political Situation in Sindh

The province of Sindh has for long been considered the soft underbelly of the Pakistani federation. Sindhi nationalism, articulated by the 'Jiye Sindh' movement, has found a resonance all over the province but has failed to translate into a major political force. One major reason for this is the strong roots of the PPP in Sindh, which is arguably the only party in Pakistan with a countrywide footprint. The Bhutto factor has deprived the 'Jiye Sindh' nationalist movement of the oxygen it needs to grow into a potent force in the province.

As a result, despite harbouring nationalist sentiment, the Sindhis have generally cast their lot with and their vote in favour of the PPP. On its part, the PPP has used its support-base in Sindh to play the 'Sindhi card' whenever it has been persecuted or pushed into a corner by the Pakistani establishment. The explosion of public anger that was witnessed in Sindh after the assassination of Benazir Bhutto proves this point. At that stage, had Asif Zardari, endorsed the slogans of '*Pakistan na khappay*' and not countered them with the slogan of '*Pakistan khappay*', Sindh could have easily descended into chaos.

Apart from Sindhi nationalism vis-à-vis

Pakistani nationalism, there is another fault-line between the Mohajirs (who dominate urban areas like Karachi, Hyderabad, Sukkur and Mirpurkhas) and the Sindhis who dominate the rural areas of the province. Despite efforts to paper over these differences and mutual animosities the chasm between these two communities has widened over time.

Often enough, the political alignments in the province have exacerbated the ethnic antagonisms. The Sindhis tend to support the PPP while the Mohajirs overwhelmingly back the MQM. Normally, an alliance between the PPP and the MQM should be both natural (because their vote banks do not overlap) and beneficial (because it gives both ethnic groups a common stake). But the mutual antagonisms between the Sindhis and Mohajirs appear to be so deep that a mere political alliance between the PPP and the MQM is unable to bring about a genuine rapprochement between them. Whenever the PPP and the MQM join hands, there is a temporary lull but no sooner the alliance collapses, the animus erupts to the surface.

After the 2008 elections, there was really no need for the PPP to strike a deal with the MQM in the province (See Map 2.3 for party positions in the provincial assembly). Sindh was the only province that gave a clear mandate – a simple majority to the PPP. Yet Asif Zardari roped in the MQM, perhaps for two reasons: MQM seats in national assembly provided an insurance to the PPP-led coalition in case PML-N left the coalition; it was an act of political sagacity in the province because excluding the MQM would not only amount to ignoring the mandate of urban Sindh but also open up the possibility of agitation and unrest in the cities of Sindh. The only problem with striking a deal with the MQM was that it did not go down well with the PPP's core support base – the Sindhis – who had voted in large numbers for the party and

perhaps, did not want to see the MQM back in power in the province.

Perhaps, the growing disconnect between the PPP and its Sindhi support base is being reflected in the reassertion of Sindhi nationalist groups, which were reduced to marginal players in the province. Most of the Sindhi nationalist leaders have been coopted by the Pakistani state over the years, and they have merely played the role of a safety valve for the simmering discontent among the Sindhi masses. The old guard amongst the Sindhi nationalists has also suffered from dissensions and factionalism which has seen the Jiye Sindh movement break into multiple factions. But now a new leadership seems to be emerging and connecting with the indigenous people of the province.

A recent public rally by the 'Jiye Sindh Qaumi Mahaz' (JSQM) led by Bashir Qureshi on November 7, 2009 set alarm bells ringing in the corridors of power in both Karachi and Islamabad. Qureshi had earlier aligned with the MQM (in the 1990s when the latter was out in the cold and being hounded by the Pakistani establishment) to forge a common front for the rights of Sindh. But the JSQM seems to have come into its own and in the above-mentioned rally, slogans of independent Sindh were being raised openly and quite provocatively.

Resentment in Sindh is ironically being fuelled by the campaign against a Sindhi president, Asif Ali Zardari, which is suspected to be orchestrated by the Pakistani military establishment and implemented by the Punjabi dominated media and political class. MQM supremo Altaf Hussain's advice to Zardari to 'make a sacrifice for the sake of democracy' has added fuel to the fire. In this case, it is highly probable that the 'Sindhi card' may once again be played by the PPP to take the heat off Zardari.

This may not discourage the Punjabi dominated establishment from toppling Zardari from the presidency using means fair or foul, however, it is not easy to predict the course of Sindhi nationalism in the months ahead. For the moment, the PPP and the MQM are in an uneasy cohabitation in both Islamabad and Karachi. The MQM is using its position in the National Assembly to extract maximum concessions out of the PPP, especially on issues like retaining the local government system in Sindh (which has given the MQM control over Karachi something that the PPP is not very comfortable with).

Given the MQM's proclivity to switch sides, often at a wink and nudge from the establishment with which it shares a love-hate relationship, it may not be long before it pulls out of its alliance with the PPP and lends support to some alternative arrangement. If this happens, the cleavage between the Sindhis and Mohajirs will only deepen. The future of the Sindhi nationalist movement will depend, to a large extent, on the ability of the PPP to handle the Sindhi electorate.

The division between the Pashtuns and Mohajirs in Karachi is another worrying factor in Sindh politics. Due to the increasing influx of (internally displaced) people from the disturbed areas of NWFP and FATA to Karachi, there has been an inevitable rise in the numbers of Pashtuns in the city over the years. These Pashtuns have also become politically assertive and provoked the ire of the Mohajirs. This has led to frequent clashes between these two ethnic communities, the latest instance of which was the three-day long (April 29 -May 1, 2009) bloody fighting in Karachi which left almost 50 dead and many more injured. This has caused lot of embarrassment to the coalition government in Sindh which has both the Mohajir dominated MQM and the Pashtun dominated ANP in it.

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## Punjab: The Political Powerhouse

Punjab is the most populous state of Pakistan. It accounts for 23 per cent of Pakistan's territory and 55 per cent of its population.<sup>3</sup> However, Punjabis constitute about 65 per cent of total strength of the army.<sup>4</sup> They also have a dominant presence in the bureaucracy. Punjab contributes about 50 per cent of the GDP of Pakistan and most of it comes from agriculture and services sector. In fact, Punjab is considered the 'bread basket' of Pakistan. It is the most industrialised province of Pakistan. The literacy rate in Punjab is higher than the national average.<sup>5</sup> In view of this overwhelming dominance of Punjab in Pakistan, some observers have remarked that without Punjab, Pakistan will lose its vitality and importance.<sup>6</sup>

Punjab is also clearly the political powerhouse of Pakistan. And within Punjab, the famous GT road (Lahore to Rawalpindi) constitutes the centre of gravity of the entire country. Any political party that dominates this belt, dominates the politics of Pakistan, not only in terms of numbers in the National Assembly and Provincial Assembly but also in terms of its control over the public discourse and setting the social, political and economic agenda of Pakistan. Thus, when PPP loyalist and governor of Punjab, Salman Taseer, refers to the PML-N as a GT Road party, he is tacitly acknowledging the control of that party over the political nerve centre of Pakistan.

This was the belt which propelled Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and the PPP to power during the 1970 elections and it is precisely the loss of its control

over this belt that has prevented the PPP from forming a government in Punjab after 1977 or attaining a simple majority in the National Assembly since then. The PPP now dominates south Punjab, which is economically under-developed and under the control of the feudal class. The party does manage a few seats in central Punjab (GT Road) and north Punjab. But these are not enough to give it a majority in either Lahore or Islamabad. The politics of Punjab has moved too much to the right for the left-of-centre PPP to recover its lost ground. And if it were not for the divide in the Muslim League, the PPP would have not have even secured as many seats in Punjab in the 2008 elections (See Map 2.4, for details of party positions in the provincial assembly).

### *Advantage Nawaz*

For over two decades now, Nawaz Sharif has dominated the politics of Punjab. The performance of his party in the 2008 elections surprised everyone including Nawaz himself. The party was in complete disarray when it went to the polls. It had faced the brunt of the Musharraf dictatorship for nearly a decade and most of its top leaders had defected and joined the 'King's party', PML-Q. Nawaz returned from exile just weeks before the general elections and found it difficult to put up suitable candidates in many constituencies and faced numerous obstacles in mounting an effective campaign. And yet, despite all these constraints, it emerged as the single largest party in Punjab. The PML-N has also survived the machinations of the PPP-led government since it came to power.

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<sup>3</sup> Projections based on 1998 census in Pakistan.

<sup>4</sup> Punjabis 65 percent; Pashtuns 14 percent; Sindhis and Baluchis 15 percent; Kashmiris 6 percent; and Minorities 0.3 per cent. (Data provided by Globalsecurity.org., at <http://www.globalsecurity.org/military/world/pakistan/army.htm>)

<sup>5</sup> Total Adult Literacy Rate as per 1998 Census: 54 per cent ( Male 66.25 per cent , Female 41.75 per cent) and for Punjab it is 60.8 per cent (Male 70 per cent, Female 51 per cent).

<sup>6</sup> Ian Talbot has argued this in his book *Pakistan: A Modern History*, St Martin's Press: New York, 1998.

Even when the PPP and the PML-N were coalition partners during April 2008 and February 2009, the PPP tried its best to divide the PML-N and bring down its government in Punjab. It tried to capitalise on the adverse judgement by the Supreme Court in March 2009, which disqualified Shahbaz Sharif, and imposed Governor's rule in the province through Salman Taseer, a well-known PPP supporter and governor of Punjab.

The PML-N has weathered these challenges quite well and the PPP-led government had to retrace its steps under popular pressure. Perhaps, for the first time in the political history of Pakistan, PML-N legislators refused to come under the spell of the government and defect to the ruling party. This is because Nawaz has conducted himself with dignity through the crises he has faced so far and projected himself as a reliable alternative in Pakistani politics today. In view of the rising dissension within the ranks of the PML-Q, especially against the leadership of the Chaudhry cousins – Pervez Elahi and Shujaat Hussein, it is quite probable that PML-Q dissidents may defect to PML-N in the future. Under the existing circumstances, the possibility of a PPP-PML-Q alliance against PML-N appears remote. Nawaz's stance on the judges' issue, the NRO and the 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the constitution to restore it to the pre-1999 position has won him accolades from the media and the people of Pakistan.

In fact, the show of political magnanimity by Nawaz Sharif in allowing the PPP ministers to rejoin the government in Punjab has endeared him to the people further, even if the arrangement does not last. This decision may have given the PPP some tactical advantage by providing it with an opportunity to nourish and expand its political base by being part of the government. However, the PML-N has certainly secured popular goodwill by this act of benevolence.

### ***The Case for Seraikistan***

Nonetheless, it is true that in the meanwhile the PPP is trying hard to regain its advantage in the Punjab. It has the advantage of having a loyalist as governor of Punjab and maintaining its control over the PML-N government. At another level, it has sought to consolidate its position in southern Punjab by expressing its willingness to consider the demand for Seraikistan.

In fact, there has been a long-standing demand for a separate province for Seraiki-speaking people of Pakistan. This has gained some political momentum in recent years, especially after the ruling PPP demonstrated its willingness to consider this demand favourably. It is believed that any such province will divide Punjab into two equal halves and reduce the influence of Punjab on national politics. Moreover, it will provide an opportunity for seraiki-speaking southern Punjab to develop this tract independent of the influence of central and northern Punjab which have monopolised the state's resources for years. For instance, politicians in favour of the Seraiki province argue that in the current fiscal year while the whole of south Punjab has been allocated only Rs 5 billion for development, the ring road project in Lahore alone was allocated Rs 26 billion.

According to the advocates of the proposed Seraiki province Multan would be the capital of the province which would include the districts in Bahawalpur and Multan divisions, namely, Bahawalpur, Khushab, Mianwali, Bhakkar, Layyah, Muzaffargarh, Rajanpur, Dera Ghazi Khan, Rahim Yar Khan, Bahawalnagar, Vihari, Lodhran, Khanewal, Jhang, Chiniot, Pakpattan, Sahiwal, Toba Tek Singh and Sargodha.

The PPP is interested in such a province because it wields a lot of political influence in this region. However, it would require a larger political consensus for the province to be carved out of

Punjab. In July 2009, the Federal Minister for Defence Production Abdul Qayyum Jatoi said that Supreme Court will be moved for establishing Seraiki province. Apart from this, Seraiki leaders are planning to launch a massive campaign for creating awareness among the people of southern Punjab for establishment of Seraiki province. Political parties are expected to engage in a long drawn-out debate over this issue in the coming days. Some analysts in Pakistan believe that the final shape of Seraiki province will be largely determined by the nature of the reaction from the Punjabi heartland.

For the moment there is a lot of resistance to the idea from the politicians in central and north Punjab. This is natural because they dominate the politics of Punjab and while the population of south Punjab adds to the overall clout of Punjab and enables it to garner the lion's share from the federal divisible pool, the province does not have to allocate resources to south Punjab on the basis of its population, which in turn allows them to develop their own constituencies. But there are other reasons as well for opposition to a Seraiki province.

The creation of a new province will mean a reallocation of seats in the Senate. It will also reduce the influence of Nawaz Sharif and his party in the

sense that he will appear to be more of a divisional leader rather than a national leader. Some people suspect that the demand for the Seraiki province, which was revived by Mohammad Ali Durrani, a politician who does his politics on the back of infamous agencies, is an establishment driven demand to reduce Nawaz Sharif's influence in Punjab.

But there are more serious implications involved in the formation of the Seraiki province. There is a genuine fear that it could give rise to demands for creation of more provinces – north Punjab (Potohar), Hazara in NWFP, a separate Pashtun dominated province in north Balochistan and a Mohajir-dominated province in Sindh. This is a Pandora's Box that no Pakistani politician would like to open. Not surprisingly, Prime Minister Gilani, who belongs to south Punjab and as such should be supportive of this demand, has rejected all proposals for carving out new provinces. Nevertheless, a fledgling movement that enjoys cross-party support from politicians belonging to south Punjab has started to articulate the demand for a Seraiki province. Even senior members of the PML-N like Makhdoom Javed Hashmi, who belongs to Multan, are supporting this demand. Whether this movement will pick up pace or fizzle out remains to be seen. ■

## CHAPTER III

# PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY: TRAVAILS OF UNCERTAINTY

A stable Pakistan is in the interest of regional and global security. Yet, developments in Pakistan in recent years suggest that it is likely to be an increasingly unstable state in the foreseeable future. Despite this, the army will remain at the core of the decision-making processes within Pakistan. One can also surmise that instability in Pakistan is likely to increase if Afghanistan becomes more unstable as the US contemplates withdrawal from that country. It is useful to examine Pakistan's foreign policy orientation in this context. It is almost certain that Indo-Pak relations will become highly unpredictable if instability persists. Tension between the two neighbours would become a cause of worry for the international community owing to the nuclear factor. An unstable Pakistan may even become more dependent upon the US, China and some Middle Eastern countries.

Growing instability in Pakistan is already deepening the inherent contradictions in Pakistan's foreign policy. Pakistan wants to have a dialogue with India but remains in denial mode over 26/11 and cross-border terrorism. It would like to have good relations with Afghanistan but continues to seek strategic depth there. It relies on Saudi Arabia for its economic, political and ideological support, yet it is a victim of radical Islamist ideology that

has its origin in Saudi Arabia. It continues to be dependent on US aid, yet resists American efforts to make such aid conditional. In spite of its critical reliance on multifaceted Chinese support, Pakistani radicals link with Uighur separatists in Xinjiang, and the issue of providing adequate security to the Chinese engineers and technicians, continue to be irritants in Sino-Pakistan relations.

This chapter analyses the possible directions Pakistan's foreign policy could take and the contradictions that have emerged in its foreign policy stances and practices. The focus of this chapter is on Pakistan's relationship with regional countries like India, Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia as well as important extra-regional powers like the US and China.

### **India<sup>1</sup>**

In a situation of increasing instability, Pakistan's sense of insecurity is likely to rise and lead to a more aggressive posture towards India resulting in turbulent India-Pakistan relations. It has to be remembered here that the basic framework of Pakistan's foreign policy has always been India-centric. Pakistan, in the initial years after its creation, held the belief that India posed an existential threat to it. It has suffered from the small-state syndrome

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<sup>1</sup> For details on Pakistan's perception of India and how Pakistan conducts its foreign policy towards India see Chapter IX, which is devoted entirely to the discussion on India-Pakistan relations.



ever since its inception and has held on to the image of India as the enemy. This has made it adopt a highly aggressive posture towards India. It has relied on the strategy of sponsoring non-state actors against India to destabilise it through covert means. It has continued to pursue an asymmetric option in terms of a proxy war in Jammu and Kashmir (J&K). Simultaneously, it has been following a strategy of destabilizing the Indian hinterland, which was underscored by the terror strike in Mumbai on November 26, 2008 (26/11). Even while Pakistan has made overt gestures of cooperation with India in the aftermath of 26/11, the subsequent arrest and release of suspects like Hafeez Saeed by the Pakistan government make a mockery of Pakistani intentions. Pakistan's existing insecurities vis-à-vis India have been further heightened in the context of a 'Rising India' and its improving relations with the US. Pakistan perceives the differentiated strategy followed by the US towards India and Pakistan as a matter of grave concern<sup>2</sup> (especially the Indo-US civil nuclear deal).

In this context, it seems doubtful whether the Pakistani establishment will give up its efforts to build up military capability against India or stop sponsoring non-state actors from fomenting trouble within India. Richard Boucher at a Senate Committee on Foreign Relations hearing in

December 2007 stated that most of the weapons to be bought by Pakistan were meant principally for external security, although they were going to be used to support its counter-terrorism efforts as well. There is substantive evidence that Pakistan has used military aid from the US for shoring up its stock of modern weapons and equipment which could be used in conventional warfare rather than for counter-insurgency purposes.<sup>3</sup>

There is a contradiction in Pakistan's stand that it would like dialogue to be resumed with India without taking any decisive action to root out entities based on its soil like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), which has been implicated in the Mumbai terrorist attacks. India has time and again expressed its unhappiness at Pakistan's inaction. Pakistan has done virtually nothing to bring the perpetrators of the Mumbai attack to book and has shown its reluctance to destroy their camps and eliminate their infrastructure.<sup>4</sup> It does not seem plausible that the Pakistan government could deliver on this front, given its intricate links with the non-state actors involved in terrorist acts in India. Any action taken against the LeT leadership is likely to be seen as buckling under Indian pressure and is likely to create an intense domestic backlash. It could even be resisted by sections of the army. Pakistan leadership's lack of intent has in any case been quite perceptible since 2002. It has banned the LeT but

<sup>2</sup> For instance former Foreign Secretary and High Commissioner to India Riaz Khokhar in an interview stated that, "...this is where the US has ill-treated Pakistan. They have de-hyphenated this relationship. India is now perceived to be in a different league...". Interview with Shehryar Fazli, *Newsline*, February 2009, p.50.

<sup>3</sup> In an interview with the Express News Channel in Pakistan, in September 2009, former president Musharraf reportedly stated: "Wherever there is a threat to Pakistan, we will use it [equipment provided by the US] there. If the threat comes from al-Qaeda or Taliban, it will be used there. If the threat comes from India, we will most surely use it there....There is nothing like this equipment has come from the US and must only be used against Taliban, or that equipment has come from China and must be used against this or that". See for details BBC Report available at: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/8254360.stm> (Accessed January 19, 2010)

<sup>4</sup> Indian Prime Minister's address at a public meeting in Wanpoh (J&K) as reported by Shujaat Bukhari, 'We'll Insist on Pakistan Taking Action Against Terror Network: Manmohan', *The Hindu*, October 29, 2009, p.12.

allowed it to operate under the name of Jamaat-ud-Dawa.<sup>5</sup> The same is true for other India-focussed terrorist outfits like Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM), Hizbul Mujahideen (HM) and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM). Pakistan's reliance on jihadi organisations to fulfil its strategic objectives against India largely explains its half-hearted approach towards these outfits. Reports in early 2009 revealed that the ISI had instructed area commanders of the LeT and HM to send at least 1,500 militants from different camps in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) to cause disruption in J&K and elsewhere. This despite the fact that there is international condemnation of Pakistan's complicity in abetting terrorism in neighbouring countries.

## Afghanistan

Instability in Pakistan could adversely affect its objectives in the FATA region. As long as there is a strong and stable central authority in Pakistan it is able to control Taliban (both Pakistani and Afghan) activities across the border in Afghanistan. However, if the central authority weakens, the Taliban could emerge as independent players, move into Afghanistan at will and indulge in disruptive activities which could further vitiate relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan. At the moment, sentiment within Pakistan for the formation of an independent Pashtunistan has been contained. However, in the event of increasing instability

within Pakistan, the Pashtuns of Pakistan may gravitate towards Pashtuns across the Durand Line and revive their demands for an independent Pashutun homeland.

As it obtains today, Pakistan desires to have friendly relations with Afghanistan. However, its policy of seeking strategic depth<sup>6</sup> in Afghanistan by either seeking allies in Afghanistan or by trying to establish a pliable regime in Kabul has only increased the quotient of Afghan mistrust against Pakistan. Even as the Pakistan establishment is being viewed by the US as part of the solution to the Afghan problem, it continues to support the Taliban which pose a challenge to Western forces in Afghanistan. The support which consists of money, military supplies and providing strategic planning guidance to Taliban commanders is said to be coordinated by operatives within the 'S Wing' of the ISI.<sup>7</sup> Maintaining links with the Taliban is considered important for Pakistan to maintain its influence in Afghanistan in the eventuality of an American withdrawal from Afghanistan. Pakistan does not want the vacuum to be filled up by any other country in the region (especially India).<sup>8</sup>

This fear was articulated clearly by the Pakistan army spokesperson, Gen Athar Abbas, who said: "What we see is an over-involvement of Indians in Afghanistan—their government, their ministries and their army. The fear is tomorrow what happens if these Americans move out and they are replaced

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<sup>5</sup> It was reported in a story by Zahid Hussain, in the Pakistani newsmagazine *Newsline* of December 2008, that in spite of the ban on the LeT, Hafiz Saeed is allowed to address public rallies which call upon Muslims to join the jihad against India and the US. See p.22.

<sup>6</sup> Strategic depth in Afghanistan is a fairly old concept in Pakistani thinking. In a recent statement, General Kayani reaffirmed this position while talking to a group of foreign correspondents at Rawalpindi. He reportedly stated: "If Afghanistan is peaceful, stable and friendly we have our strategic depth because our western border is secure ... You're not looking both ways." Reported in *The News*, February 2, 2010, Available at: <http://www.thenews.com.pk/print3.asp?id=27014> (Accessed February 3, 2010).

<sup>7</sup> Mark Mazzetti and Eric Schmitt, "US Says Agents of Pakistan Aid Afghan Taliban", *New York Times*, March 26, 2009, at <http://www.nytimes.com/gst/fullpage.html?res=9C04EDA1E30F935A15750C0A96F9C8...>

<sup>8</sup> Ibid.

by Indians as military trainers? That becomes a serious threat.”<sup>9</sup>

Given this perception, it has suited Pakistan to draw a distinction between the ‘good Taliban’ and the ‘bad Taliban’. The good ones are those who are reluctant to fight the Pakistani security forces and do not indulge in suicide bombings within Pakistan. They are instead focused on resistance against US led Western forces in Afghanistan. The latter are those fomenting trouble within Pakistan. Disclosures about the Pakistani Army Chief General Kayani’s reference to Jalaluddin Haqqani, a powerful Taliban leader as a ‘strategic asset’<sup>10</sup>, reveal the Pakistani mindset and speak volumes about its future intentions. Haqqani’s group is one of the major ones said to be supported by the ISI, the other two being the Taliban based in Quetta, commanded by Mullah Muhammad Omar, and the network run by Gulbuddin Hekmatyar.<sup>11</sup>

The policy of overtly supporting the Karzai regime and taking on the so-called bad Taliban allows Pakistan to avail of monetary benefits from the international community. However this does not discourage Pakistan from covertly supporting the so called good Taliban. American efforts to bring these forces into the political mainstream would give Pakistan future leverage within Afghanistan. Yet, Pakistan will have to calibrate its actions in Afghanistan if it values the US economic largesse. After the London Conference held on January 28,

2010, it is obvious that a strategic decision has been taken to engage the Taliban, and Pakistan seeks to play an increasingly important role in Afghanistan. The arrest of Mullah Omar’s son-in-law in March 2010 and his right-hand man, Maulana Baradar in mid-February as well as the reported killing of Mohammad Haqqani, son of Jalaluddin Haqqani in a US drone attack would indicate that Pakistan is under US pressure to act against the Taliban.

Even in the midst of deep-rooted mistrust between Pakistan and Afghanistan, there has been an unprecedented growth of economic activity between the two countries during the last few years. However, in the short term it appears that despite efforts to improve their economic relationship the disturbed political equation between them would continue. It remains to be seen whether the two countries will be able to resolve contentious issues and formulate mutually acceptable options to renew their transit trade agreement as scheduled. The political and the economic relationships between the two countries are likely to run on two parallel tracks. Due to its landlocked geography, Afghanistan not only offers a captive market for Pakistan’s goods and services, but also provides an opportunity for Pakistan to establish its strategic control, by leveraging Afghan economic dependence.

Pakistan would continue to be wary of Indian influence in Afghanistan and would continue to take measures to neutralise India’s presence as is

<sup>9</sup> Quoted in *The Times of India*, July 12, 2009.

<sup>10</sup> In a telephonic conversation General Kayani was overheard saying this, as the transcript of intercept passed to Mike McConnell, the Director of US National Intelligence, revealed in May 2008. Mentioned by David Sanger in his book *The Inheritance*, Bantam Press: London, 2009, p. 248.

<sup>11</sup> Christine Fair, Assistant Professor at Georgetown University in the US, in her testimony to the House Armed Services Committee’s Oversight and Investigations Subcommittee on November 5, 2009 also accuses Pakistan of “limiting its war on terrorism to those elements that undermine the Pakistani state” and states that “those elements are not comprehensively the enemies of the United States”. She also confirms that there is continued support for the Afghan Taliban by Pakistan. Available at [http://home.comcast.net/~christine\\_fair/index.html](http://home.comcast.net/~christine_fair/index.html)

evident from the two bomb attacks on the Indian embassy in Kabul in July 2008 and early October 2009 and the recent attacks on Indians in March 2010. Pakistan accuses India of fomenting trouble in Balochistan through its consulates in Afghanistan, but the Afghan government has consistently rebutted such claims.

Pakistan's increasingly strident endeavours to prevent India from playing a constructive role in Afghanistan have become more apparent of late. It was primarily because of Pakistani insistence that India was kept out of the Istanbul Conference and consigned to a secondary role at the London Conference held in January 2010.

There has been intense debate within various strands of the US decision-making apparatus about US withdrawal from Afghanistan within the next 2-3 years. President Obama's speech on December 2, 2009, while announcing the increase of US troops by 30,000 in Afghanistan, also indicated their exit from Afghanistan within 18 months. Real action on the ground, however, will be determined by the course of the war on the one hand, and the negotiations with the Taliban on the other.

At the same time, there is an opinion in some segments of Afghan officialdom that US strategic interests would dictate a long-term presence of not less than 10-15 years. This will, of course, have implications for Pakistan's relations with Afghanistan. If the US moves out sooner rather than later, Pakistan will probably get an easier environment to operate in Afghanistan, but at the same time it could feel constrained if some regional arrangement to manage Afghanistan is arrived at after the US exit.

## Saudi Arabia

In a situation of instability Pakistan will consider it important to safeguard its economic well being. Its approach to Saudi Arabia will be determined by the fact that the latter is a critical element in Pakistan's energy security calculus. Pakistan imports more than 50 per cent of its crude oil from Saudi Arabia. Of late, Pakistan has sought to import oil from Saudi Arabia on a deferred payment basis in an attempt to boost reserves and offset the impact of rising international petroleum prices. This is not surprising given that in the past, Pakistan has been able to extricate a similar concession especially after the 1998 nuclear tests.

Reportage on the issue points to the fact that Saudi Arabia, after three years of deferred payments, wrote off the rest. However, some doubts exist as to whether the remaining amount was converted into a grant or is outstanding even now.<sup>12</sup> In 2008, the Saudi government agreed in principle to defer payment for crude oil sales to Pakistan, worth about \$5.9 billion. Nevertheless, it is not clear whether there was a delay in activating this facility for deferred payment. It is believed that Saudi Arabia made its support contingent on the Pakistan government's agreement with the IMF.<sup>13</sup>

On the other hand, Pakistan is likely to be increasingly relevant for Saudi Arabia in the latter's quest for food security. Saudi efforts to achieve self-sufficiency in wheat production are expected to be further constrained due to water shortages, as underground water in the Arab countries is fast depleting. The Saudis hope to grow food in Pakistan, amongst other countries, on land leased to them in Pakistan and then take it back home, to

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<sup>12</sup> Syed Rashid Husain, 'Saudi Oil Facility or Grant?', *The Dawn*, July 28, 2008, at <http://www.dawn.com/2008/07/28/abr13.htm>

<sup>13</sup> 'Saudi Response 'Positive' to Pakistan's Requests: Tarin', *The Dawn*, November 6, 2008, at <http://www.dawn.com/2008/11/06/top3.htm>

lower consumer prices as well as their food import bill. The Saudi government will take on lease about 700,000 acres of farmland in Pakistan as reported in September 2009. The attempt by the Pakistan government to attract investment through farming was initiated during President Musharraf's rule.<sup>14</sup> Such policies also promoted by the current government have given rise to concerns within Pakistan.

Pakistan would also try to broad-base its defence cooperation with Saudi Arabia. Pakistan traditionally sent military units/instructors/air force pilots to Saudi Arabia to bolster its internal and external security requirements, before the US came in as the guarantor of Saudi Arabia's security. While Pakistan cannot aspire to become an arms supplier of any consequence for Saudi Arabia which has been primarily relying for modern weapons on the West (especially the US), it can still hope to gain some petro-dollars from by selling the Al Khalid tank and through the marketing of the JF-17 fighter jet co-produced with China to Saudi Arabia.<sup>15</sup>

Pakistan has established its relevance to Saudi

Arabia's security interests as well. It seems that the importance of safeguarding Saudi oil reserves has become intertwined with Saudi Arabia's other regional security concerns in which threat perceptions from Iran and Israel form a significant component.<sup>16</sup> In such a situation, Pakistan has helped assuage Saudi security concerns in various ways. According to some reports Pakistan concluded a secret agreement with Saudi Arabia to provide nuclear weapons technology in 2003. Both Pakistan and Saudi Arabia have denied these claims. However, reports claimed that there had been a deal according to which Pakistan agreed to transfer nuclear technology in exchange for cheap oil.<sup>17</sup> While such reports cannot be easily verified, earlier instances point to the mutual understanding in this respect, between both countries. Saudi Arabia reportedly provided financial support for Pakistan's nuclear programme<sup>18</sup>, and it is believed that in the early 1990s Saudi Arabia was interested in seeking Pakistani nuclear warheads for its CSS-2 missiles acquired from China<sup>19</sup>. The Defence Minister of Saudi Arabia Prince Sultan bin Abdulaziz visited the Kahuta

<sup>14</sup> Najma Sadeque, 'Giving Away the Family Silver', *Newsline*, October 2009, pp.22-23; 'Pakistan to Lend 700,000 Acres Farmland to Arab States', *The Dawn*, September 2, 2009 at <http://www.dawn.com>

<sup>15</sup> Syed Rashid Hussain, 'Crown Prince Abdullah due on 15th', April 4, 2006, at <http://www.dawn.com/2006/04/04/top9.htm>; Ahmed Faruqui, 'Pakistan's Three Way Relationship with China and Saudi Arabia', 18 December, 2006 at [http://news.newamericamedia.org/news/view\\_article.html?article\\_id=fb5752ba203daf8e9...](http://news.newamericamedia.org/news/view_article.html?article_id=fb5752ba203daf8e9...); 'Pakistan Marketing its new JF-17 Fighter Jet, Developed with China, 25 March, 2009, at [http://worldtribune.com/worldtribune/WTARC/2009/ea\\_china0248\\_03\\_25.asp](http://worldtribune.com/worldtribune/WTARC/2009/ea_china0248_03_25.asp)

<sup>16</sup> For a discussion on Saudi Arabia's threat perceptions from Iran and Israel see Kate Amlin, 'Will Saudi Arabia Acquire Nuclear Weapons?', Issue Brief, James Martin Center for Nonproliferation Studies, Monterey Institute of International Studies, August 2008, at [http://www.nti.org/e\\_research/e3\\_40a.html](http://www.nti.org/e_research/e3_40a.html).

<sup>17</sup> Arnaud de Borchgrave, 'Pakistan, Saudi Arabia in Secret Nuke Pact: Islamabad Trades Weapons Technology for Oil', *The Washington Times*, October 22, 2003 at [http://www.globalsecurity.org/org/news/2003/031022-pakistan\\_saudi-arabia.htm](http://www.globalsecurity.org/org/news/2003/031022-pakistan_saudi-arabia.htm)

<sup>18</sup> 'Saudi Nuclear Pact', *Washington Post*, January 18, 1981; 'Mohammed Al-Khilewi: Saudi Arabia is Trying To Kill Me', *Middle East Quarterly*, Vol. 5, No.3, September 1998, p.74 cited in "Nuclear Black Markets: Pakistan, A.Q. Khan and the Rise of Proliferation Networks: A Net Assessment", The International Institute for Strategic Studies, London, 2007, p.83.

<sup>19</sup> Mansoor Ijaz, 'Pakistan's Nuclear Metastasis: How Widespread Is The Cancer?', *The Weekly Standard*, January 8, 2004; Ronen Bergman, 'El-Sulayil Missile Base-Saudi Desert', *Yediot Ahronot*, 27 March 2002, <http://www.globalsecurity.org/org/news/2002/020327-saudi.htm> cited in *Ibid*, p.83.

Research Laboratories in May 1999, and also in August 2002.<sup>20</sup>

Pakistan's dependence on Saudi Arabia for mediation in its domestic politics is also likely to continue. Saudi Arabia's influence in Pakistan can be gauged from the fact that in the past, in times of political crisis, Pakistan has relied on mediation by Saudi Arabian high officials. This was apparent during Z.A. Bhutto's time, when the Saudi ambassador in Islamabad was called upon to bring about reconciliation between the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) and the Pakistan People's Party (PPP). Later, when Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif visited the US during the Kargil crisis, he was received at the airport by the Saudi ambassador. Saudi leadership was closely involved in discussions with General Musharraf for facilitating Nawaz's exile to the Saudi kingdom, and later in a face-saving exit for Musharraf himself.<sup>21</sup> It was again through Saudi good offices that Nawaz Sharif's wife and his brother were allowed to enter Pakistan in the run up to the elections after President Musharraf demitted office. It is because of its apparent power of persuasion and acceptability to all parties, including the US, Afghanistan and Pakistan, that the leadership of that country has of late been closely involved in negotiating with the Taliban, in an effort to manage the situation in Afghanistan.

Pakistan's ties with Saudi Arabia have helped it in consolidating its Islamic identity. Yet, Saudi funding for madrassas in Pakistan during the Afghan jihad spawned the phenomenon of fundamentalism within Pakistan, the reverberations of which are being felt in Pakistan today. This has given rise to concerns within certain sections of the country, other than the Deobandis,

about the role of Saudi Arabia. Yet, Saudi Arabia's close ties with both the political leadership, as well as the clergy, in Pakistan are likely to continue.

## The US

Growing instability in Pakistan could make Pakistan increasingly dependent on the US. Pakistan's fragile economic situation will become an important imperative in formulating its policy towards the US. In the past, Pakistan's alliance with the US was shaped by its strategic location in the context of the Cold War and this determined its strategic outlook. Since then, Pakistan has sought economic and military assistance from the West. During President Musharraf's time, in addition to the above stated goals, safeguarding the country's nuclear and missile assets, the Kashmir cause and regime survival were other factors that shaped Pakistan's policy towards the US.

There are bound to be fluctuations in Pakistan's relationship with the US due to the fact that Pakistan's response or attitude towards the US is not homogenous. In such a situation, the US finds it possible to play one section against another to attain its objectives. Taking the plea of suppressing terrorism, the US finds it possible, in a way, to infringe on Pakistan's sovereignty with drone attacks which cause immense collateral damage. Pakistan has had to bear the brunt of American interference in its internal affairs, because of growing instability. This has engendered huge anti-American sentiment in Pakistan. Given the worsening economic situation, Pakistan will have to bear with the opposition and allow US intrusions to ensure uninterrupted US aid. While a stable Pakistan may have developed an ability to resist American

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<sup>20</sup> Ibid., p.83.

<sup>21</sup> Mushahid Hussain, 'Family Ties', *Newsline*, October 2009, pp.33-34.

interference, an unstable Pakistan will most likely be unable to do so.

Pakistan has succeeded in garnering economic assistance from the US through the controversial Kerry-Lugar Act, which sanctioned \$7.5bn in economic aid for a period of five years. This is by far the most generous package by a single country, even though the Act became the focus of tremendous criticism from different quarters in Pakistan including the politicians, the army and the media due to the conditionalities imposed by it pertaining to strengthening democratic governance, combating terrorism and cooperation in dismantling the nuclear proliferation network. However, Pakistan should be happy because violation of conditionalities will affect only security related assistance, not development aid. Yet, continued compliance with the US dictates may provoke the militant groups to further target the military and intelligence establishment in Pakistan.

Pakistan will also continue to use the US to achieve its objectives vis-à-vis India, even though it faces increasing threats to its internal security on account of American presence in the country. Pakistan has been able to use arms transfers from the US to build up its conventional war-fighting capacity against India. On the political front, since the Mumbai terror attacks in November 2008, Pakistan has placed emphasis on resumption of dialogue with India and tried to use the US in this respect. Pakistan succeeded to some extent in its goals as contacts at the political level were resumed, as was evident at Sharm-el Sheikh in July 2009, even as India remained dissatisfied with Pakistan's actions against the perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks. The foreign secretary level talks on February 2010 also suggest that American persuasion may be working to a certain extent. However, India continues to insist that Pakistan has to take appropriate action against terrorists and terror outfits operating from its soil against India. The

conditionalities attached to the Kerry-Lugar Act also underscore the need for serious action against terrorists operating against India which point to a greater emphasis on results by the US.

Given the chance, Pakistan would inveigle the US into pressurising India for arriving at a satisfactory solution to the Kashmir issue. The US continues to refuse any mediatory role and emphasises a bilateral approach to resolve the issue. Nevertheless, there are sections within the US administration who believe that the US must not abandon Kashmir entirely. The Indian government, however, rejects third party intervention in Kashmir and has gone to the extent of saying that Kashmir is not negotiable, as was evident in the Indian Home Minister Chidambaram's statement that Pakistan is an "unnecessary third party" to the Kashmir dispute.

The profile of the US-Pakistan relationship is changing. The expansion of the US embassy over acres of land in Pakistan implies a long term military and diplomatic presence in Pakistan. American strategy would be focused on capturing or killing the Al-Qaeda leadership reportedly hiding in Pakistan. Besides, the US would like to ensure that Pakistan's nuclear assets do not fall into wrong hands. Despite the demand in a major section of the Pakistani population to make a break with the US, the latter would continue to be an important factor in Pakistan's foreign policy and strategic outlook.

## China

As Pakistan veers towards increasing instability, its already deep reliance on Chinese assistance in multiple areas is going to increase. Pakistan, playing on China's desire to prevent or slow down India's ascendance as an Asian power of consequence, will continue to bolster its capabilities in diverse areas with Chinese assistance. Pakistan has looked for allies outside the region in an effort

to redress its multi-dimensional imbalance vis-à-vis India. In addition to traditional cooperation between the two countries in the areas of defence, nuclear weapons and missile production, which is embedded in their common urge to countervail India, there has arisen a mutual interdependence for finding markets for their goods, investment for industrial growth, assured sources of energy, and infrastructure development in transport and communications.

Pakistan's reliance on China for defence supplies is likely to continue. During the 1970s and the 1980s, Pakistan continued to be among the top five recipients of Chinese arms.<sup>22</sup> In terms of volume, Pakistan imported approximately 28.25 per cent of its weaponry from China between 1995-2005 making it the largest exporter of weapons to Pakistan followed by Ukraine, France, the US and Italy.<sup>23</sup> Even today Pakistan's dependence on Chinese technology to upgrade its future military capabilities is more than apparent, especially with respect to the modernisation of its air force. In November 2009, Pakistan signed a \$1.4 billion contract for the supply of 36 J-10 fighter jets

supposed to be China's most advanced combat aircraft.<sup>24</sup> Various reports suggest that the J-10 could be a derivative of the 1980s Israeli Lavi project, with Chinese and Russian equipment instead of Western avionics and engines. It has been pegged as a third generation fighter comparable to the American F-16 Fighting Falcons. The option of inducting more such aircraft remains open.<sup>25</sup> In addition, Pakistan and China, in March 2009, signed a contract for 42 co-produced JF-17 Thunder jet fighters which are light weight, all-weather and multi-role combat jets and are expected to form an important component of the Pakistani aerial combat fleet in the future.<sup>26</sup> In fact, the first JF-17 was inducted into the fleet of the Pakistani Air Force on November 23, 2009.<sup>27</sup> As far as the Pakistan Navy is concerned, it received the first of four Chinese F-22 P Frigates in September 2009 with the rest expected by 2013. Out of the remaining three, two are to be built in China, and one in Karachi. The F-22P Frigate is equipped with state of the art weaponry and sensors including anti-surface-missiles, surface-to-air missiles, guns, torpedoes, depth charge and air surveillance radars.<sup>28</sup> Besides such major weapons systems

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<sup>22</sup> Michael Brzoska and Thomas Ohlson, *Arms Transfers to the Third World 1971-1985*, Oxford University Press, Oxford, 1987; *SIPRI Yearbook 1991*, pp. 208-211 cited in Samina Yasmeen, 'Sino-Pakistan Relations and the Middle East', in P.R. Kumaraswamy (ed.), *China and the Middle East: The Quest for Influence*, Sage Publications India Pvt. Ltd., New Delhi, 1999, p.95.

<sup>23</sup> SIPRI Arms Transfers Database, 'Imported Weapons to Pakistan in 1995-2005', March 2, 2006, at [www.sipri.org](http://www.sipri.org)

<sup>24</sup> *The Daily Times*, 'Pakistan-China in \$1.4 Billion Fighter Jet Deal', 11 November, 2009 at [http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C11%5Cstory\\_11-11-2009\\_pgl\\_5](http://www.dailytimes.com.pk/default.asp?page=2009%5C11%5Cstory_11-11-2009_pgl_5)

<sup>25</sup> 'Pak to Buy 36 Chinese J-10 Fighters, Options Open for 114 More', November 11, 2009, at [http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report\\_pak-to-buy-36-chinese-j-10-fighters-options-open-for-114-more\\_1310...](http://www.dnaindia.com/world/report_pak-to-buy-36-chinese-j-10-fighters-options-open-for-114-more_1310...); 'Pakistan Buying Chinese J-10 Fighters', 11 November, 2009, at <http://www.defenseindustrydaily.com/Pakistan-Buying-Chinese-J-10-Fighters-05937/>

<sup>26</sup> 'China, Pakistan Sign JF-17 Production Agreement; China to Credit Finance Pakistani Fighter Jets', March 8, 2009, at <http://www.india-defence.com/print/4265>

<sup>27</sup> 'PM Hands Over Pak-Made JF-17 Aircraft to PAF', 23 November, 2009 at <http://www.dawn.com>; 'First Pakistan-Made JF Fighter Rolls Out', November 23, 2009, at [http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-11/23/content\\_12526588.htm](http://news.xinhuanet.com/english/2009-11/23/content_12526588.htm)

<sup>28</sup> 'Pakistan First F-22 Frigate Arrives in Karachi', September 12, 2009, at <http://www.nation.com/pakistan-news-newspaper-daily-english-online/Regional/12-Sep-2009/Pakistan-first-F22-frigate-arrives-in-Karachi>; 'Pakistan Navy To Acquire Four Chinese F-22 P Frigates By 2013', April 13, 2007, at <http://www.india-defence.com/print/3034>



China has provided \$290 million for capacity building of the Pakistani security forces in counter-terrorism,<sup>29</sup> as per the reports in June 2009, which suggests a more direct role for China in helping Pakistan fight militancy.

The emphasis by the leaderships of both the countries on economic cooperation is likely to continue. In August 2009, Zardari visited the industrial hubs of China, Zhe Jiang and Guang Dong, which account for more than US \$ 3 billion of the trade volume between Pakistan and China, to explore further possibilities of bilateral trade and economic cooperation. The civilian governments' aspirations to improve the economic content of the Pakistan-China relationship are no different from that of the military-led government of Pervez Musharraf, who worked towards broadening the strategic economic engagement between the two countries. Trade and investment can be expected to be a major focus of bilateral relations. While the quantum of bilateral trade has gone up over the years, the balance of trade has never been in Pakistan's favour.

This is due to the fact that Pakistan's export mix to China is narrow, comprising of low-margin, low-value raw material and commodity exports rather than value-added high-margin and high-value goods. Yet, Pakistan is the first south Asian country to sign a free trade agreement (FTA) with China, and both countries are seeking to increase the volume of trade to US \$ 15 billion by 2011 (the volume of trade in 2008 was around US \$ 7 billion). The key issue in progress in trade relations and the FTA will be the ability of the Pakistani economy to

make a quantum leap in its exports to China. This would depend on structural changes in Pakistan's economy as well as export-driven investment in value-added sectors by Chinese firms in Pakistan. There would be a strong emphasis on bilateral investments as both countries realise that enhancing the trade relationship is a long-term project that is highly dependent on the initiative of Chinese enterprises and on administrative and policy changes in Pakistan. It will also depend on the vision and farsightedness of Pakistani businessmen who are currently profitably engaged in exporting to the US and Europe where their value-added goods enjoy a competitive advantage. Hence, investment-driven growth will assume importance, as it is the only key result area in which both countries can show fast progress. Chinese companies have invested in different sectors of the Pakistan economy ranging from oil and gas, information technology, telecommunications, power generation, engineering, automobiles, infrastructure, mining, real estate, and financial markets. This trend is bound to strengthen in the future.

Energy cooperation will continue to be a key component of cooperation between Pakistan and China. Energy security has been a prime concern in Pakistan's development strategy. According to reports in the Pakistani media, one of the major outcomes of President Zardari's visit in October 2008 was the signing of a civilian nuclear cooperation agreement for the setting up of two more nuclear energy plants— Chashma III and Chashma IV. These two units are expected to yield 680 MW of electricity.<sup>30</sup> However, this was not

<sup>29</sup> On June 24, 2009, Rehman Malik, Pakistan's Interior Minister, said in the National Assembly: "Due to the efforts of the President and the Prime Minister, the Chinese Government has provided \$290 million for capacity building of our security forces." cited by B. Raman, "The China Connection", *Outlook*, June 29, 2009. Available at <http://www.outlookindia.com/article.aspx?250311>

<sup>30</sup> Baqir Sajjad Syed, "Beijing To Help Build 2 N-Plants: Islamabad Eyes New Era In Ties", October 19, 2008, at <http://www.dawn.com/2008/10/19/top2.htm>

included in the MoUs signed between the two governments during that visit. While this could be because of the requirement of a waiver from the nuclear suppliers group, a report of the Finance Ministry of Pakistan lists, in the budget estimate for 2009-2010, loans from China including that for Chashma Nuclear power plants III & IV.<sup>31</sup> Also it was reported that in April 2009, the Shanghai Nuclear Engineering Research and Design Institute (SNERDI), a subsidiary company of the State Nuclear Power Technology Corporation (SNPTC), signed a General Engineering Contract in Shanghai with China Zhongyuan Engineering Corporation (CZEC) to provide engineering design and technical service for Pakistan's Chashma III and IV units.<sup>32</sup> Whether a formal agreement was signed between Pakistan and China, or if an agreement was signed and not made public, such cooperation could help Pakistan in achieving the future goal of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission, which hopes to increase the country's nuclear power generation capacity to 8,800 MW by 2030.

Pakistan is also looking to China for further investment in its hydro-power sector as is evident in the signing of the MoU in August 2009 for the Bunji Dam mega power project in the Northern Areas, which is only one of the many being planned. President Zardari has also shown keenness to start the Thar coal project because of its potential significance in Pakistan's quest for self-reliance in energy. The importance of China for Pakistan in its strategic calculations is evident in Pakistan's proposal for inclusion of China in the Iran-Pakistan-

India gas pipeline project, in which the Chinese have evinced interest. Reports still do not clearly indicate whether the Chinese would want the pipeline to be extended to China or whether they want to just invest in it.

China has been closely involved in the task of improving Pakistan's capabilities to import and export seaborne energy supplies by assisting in the development of the Gwadar port. China, of course, hopes to benefit by having an alternate route for its oil imports. The importance of this project for China can be gauged from the fact that the total project cost of constructing Phase-I was US \$ 248 million, of which China supplied nearly 80 per cent amounting to US \$ 198 million. Of this, US \$ 50 million was to be an outright grant, US \$ 50 million a commercial credit, and US \$ 98 million Chinese State credit.<sup>33</sup> However, the operational utility of the port has been disappointing. The poor security situation due to the disruptive activities of the Baloch insurgents and the lack of infrastructure connecting Gwadar to the rest of Pakistan has been partially responsible for this.

Terrorism and separatism have major implications for China's plans to grow economically by linking its western provinces to central Asia. The Karakoram Highway (KKH) links Pakistan with Xinjiang which has abundant natural resources. It is also a strategic area vis-à-vis central and south Asia. Beijing believes that this highway has facilitated the spread of Islamic ideology in Xinjiang and enabled radical Uighur militants

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<sup>31</sup> Available at <http://www.finance.gov.pk/admin/images/budget/Estimates%20ofForeign%20assistance%202009-10.pdf>

<sup>32</sup> 'SNERDI Signed Engineering General Contract For Chashma III and IV Units To Help Pakistan Build More Nuclear Power Plants', at <http://www.snptc.com.cn/sites/english/Lists/corporate%20news/DispForm.aspx?ID=34>

<sup>33</sup> 'Economic Viability of Chinese-aided Strategic Port Development Questioned', *The News* (Islamabad), August 26, 2001; John W. Garver, 'Development of China's Overland Transportation Links with Central, South-west and South Asia', *The China Quarterly*, 185, March 2006, pp.8-9.

studying in Pakistani madrassas, to enter Xinjiang.<sup>34</sup> Chinese concerns about Pakistan-based terrorists have been serious and the Chinese government has requested investigation of these by Pakistan from time to time. In April 2009, Chinese officials met NWFP politicians to request that access to Uighur separatists be curtailed. In June 2009, Pakistan handed over ten members of the Uighur diaspora who were reportedly rounded up during counter-insurgency operations in FATA and belonged to the East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM). to China. While China will continue to pressurise Pakistan to clamp down on Uighur dissidents within Pakistan, the Sino-Pakistan strategic relationship may not get adversely affected in any fundamental sense, as the other issues are overwhelmingly important.

The security of Chinese nationals involved in infrastructure development projects or otherwise in Pakistan has become a matter of concern for China. The kidnapping of Chinese nationals by Islamic extremists in Islamabad, in July 2007 led to strong condemnation by the Chinese ambassador. The storming of the Lal Masjid which was attributed in part to Chinese concerns underscores Pakistan's anxiety to address Chinese grievances. That Pakistan attaches importance to the safety of Chinese citizens on its soil is evident in the establishment of a new Foreign Security Cell with a special unit responsible for the security of Chinese nationals.<sup>35</sup>

Apart from the threat of terrorism that the Chinese face in Pakistan, rising Islamic extremism

would also influence Chinese policies towards Pakistan and developments there. In case Islamic extremists appear to be gaining the upper hand in Pakistan, the Chinese can be expected to take measures to insulate the Xinjiang region from this influence. The involvement of the Chinese can be expected to grow if a situation arises which threatens their interests. There is a possibility that the Chinese may further increase their presence in the Gilgit-Baltistan area where it is already noticeable in the engineering and construction teams of the People's Liberation Army (PLA) where they are undertaking various 'developmental' projects including maintenance and up-gradation of the KKH and hydro-electric projects. Sources suggest their number to be in thousands.<sup>36</sup>

### **Attitude of the above Countries Towards Pakistan**

India's attitude towards Pakistan is determined by Pakistan's endemic hostility, reflected in the aggressions of 1947, 1965, 1971 and 1999. Besides, Pakistan's "all-weather friendship" with China, and its strategically subservient relationship with the US, is predicated on their presumed support against India, even though on certain occasions this support may not have come up to the expectations of Pakistan. India's future attitude will flow from the extent to which Pakistan controls anti-India militancy and terrorism emanating from its soil.

Afghanistan's perception of Pakistan has been influenced by two fundamental geopolitical realities: one, that it is a landlocked country

<sup>34</sup> Ziad Haider, 'Sino-Pakistan Relations and Xinjiang's Uighurs', *Asian Survey*, Vol.No. 45, Issue No.4, July/August 2005, pp.523-524.

<sup>35</sup> Mansoor Khan, "Guests in Town", *The Herald*, May 2009, p.33.

<sup>36</sup> During discussions with some of the civil society activists from Gilgit-Baltistan during their visit to India in September 2009, it was suggested that there were about 5000 Chinese in Gilgit-Baltistan alone. Another internet source which features translations from Chinese government sources suggests that there are about 2000 Chinese engineers involved in the upgrading of the KKH. For details see: <http://www.sourcejuice.com/1305686/2010/02/17/Pakistan-Luo-Zhaohui-met-Pakistan-new-Gilgit-Baltistan-Province/>

contiguous to Pakistan and therefore dependent on it, and two, the politically and economically dominant ethnic group of Afghanistan, namely Pashtuns, straddle the Afghan-Pakistan border and obliterate any concept of boundary between the two countries. In fact, the Durand Line is not recognised by Afghanistan. Since its creation, Pakistan has looked upon Afghanistan with covetous eyes, hoping to acquire direct or indirect control over Afghanistan, so that it obtains the requisite strategic depth. This being the primary motivation of Pakistan, it will seriously jeopardise Afghanistan's attempts to acquire political stability and strategic autonomy, on the basis of an indigenously evolved stable political system.

Saudi Arabia has always looked upon Pakistan as a strategic ally so that it can have access to Pakistan's rich resources and avail of its military capabilities for its own internal security purposes. However, predominant religious sections within the country have promoted Wahabism, which has strengthened the forces of Islamic orthodoxy in Pakistan. This has resulted in the creation of the madrasa movement, support for the anti-Soviet jihad, and a broad-based popular support for the Taliban movement, after the exit of the former Soviet Union. These sections may not be concerned about democratic stability in Pakistan, and will be primarily interested in the promotion of an orthodox version of Islam, close to Wahabism.

The US attitude has always been determined by the strategic importance of Pakistan, first in the context of the Cold War, and then in the context of the war on terror. Currently, Pakistan is of paramount importance for the US in the context of the latter's Af-Pak policy. Irrespective of the extent to which Pakistan has been able to serve these objectives, the US perceives Pakistan as a very

important strategic ally, and will continue to pay the price in terms of military and economic aid to Pakistan.

China, particularly after the 1962 war, has looked upon Pakistan as a geopolitical asset which can be used to offset and neutralise India, and undermine the prospects of its dominance in south Asia. Ranging from diplomatic support at the United Nations, to transfer of nuclear technology, reactors, and other equipment, China has played an important role in building Pakistan as a middle level power of some consequence. In the process, China is reaping considerable benefits, having been enabled a role in creating and utilising strategic facilities like ports, roads and possibly, pipelines in Pakistan. The benign attitude of China towards Pakistan will continue in the foreseeable future.

## Conclusion

As different elements within the Pakistani state struggle for control, there is likely to be an increasing political role for the US in the region. The US has already approved of back-channel negotiations with the Taliban. It is not only garnering the support of Saudi Arabia, a long time ally, but also of China in trying to stabilise the situation in Pakistan. Even if the US moves out of Afghanistan, it is bound to maintain a significant presence within Pakistan. This would give it an opportunity to balance the already overwhelming presence of China in that country. The importance of Gwadar port is not lost on the US. China's involvement in Balochistan could be a matter of concern to the US as it would give China access to the Gulf and Iran.<sup>37</sup>

In fact, the US was allowed base facilities in Gwadar by Pakistan, during the Afghan war (1979-1989) due to fears of the Soviets crossing into Balochistan, and occupying Gulf oil fields, or the

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<sup>37</sup> See statement by Lt.Gen. (retd.) Talat Masood in article by Gloria Caleb, 'Foreign Hand: Conspiracy or Fact?', November 10, 2008, at <http://www.dawn.com/2008/11/10/top17.htm>

fishing harbours of Gwadar and Pasni. The facilities were perhaps being used to monitor submarine and other naval movements in Makran.<sup>38</sup>

There is suspicion that the US is using Baloch territory in Pakistan to foment trouble in the Iranian province of Sistan-Balochistan by supporting the Jundullah. Gwadar port being so close to the Straits of Hormuz also has implications for India as it would enable Pakistan to exercise control over energy routes. It is believed that Gwadar will provide Beijing with a facility to monitor US and Indian naval activity in the Persian Gulf and Arabian Sea respectively, as well as any future maritime cooperation between India and the US.<sup>39</sup> It is apparent that countries like the US and China are in the future going to carve out their spheres of influence in Pakistan. This would present a further challenge to India's security and foreign policy.

Pakistan's relations with India and Afghanistan can be expected to remain adversarial given its strategic imperatives. If the militants succeed in controlling the levers of power in Pakistan, the situation will become perilous for India as the integrity of the Pakistani state will be undermined and its will to improve relations with India will be compromised. In such a situation, the US role would decrease, and it is probable that the militants would give a tough fight to the NATO forces in Afghanistan. Such a situation would be a cause of concern to China as it could have grave implications for militancy in Xinjiang. The reasons may be different, but the interests of all countries can only be assured if Pakistan is supported in its quest for stability. This offers a unique opportunity for India to work together with Afghanistan and the US to stabilise the situation in the Af-Pak region. ■

<sup>38</sup> Mehtab Ali Shah, *The Foreign Policy of Pakistan: Ethnic Impacts on Diplomacy, 1971-1994*, I.B.Tauris, London, 1997, p.90.

<sup>39</sup> Zia Haider quoted in article by Abdus Sattar Ghazali, 'India Alarmed As Chinese Built Gwadar Port of Pakistan Becomes Operational', March 8, 2009, at <http://pakalert.worldpress.com/2009/03/08/india-alarmed-as-chinese-built-gwadar-port-of-pakistan-becomes-operational/>

## CHAPTER IV

# FROM ISLAMISATION TO TALIBANISATION: POSSIBLE LEBANONISATION?

Islamic forces in Pakistan have acquired distinctly radical 'Jihadi' and activist character under Wahabi-Salafi and Deobandi influences. This has major implications for the country. Despite their keen desire to create a state for the Muslims of the subcontinent based on Islamic values and save them from having to live in a secular and free India as a grossly outnumbered minority<sup>1</sup>, most protagonists of the Pakistan movement did not want Pakistan to be a Shariat (The Islamic Law) based theocratic state.<sup>2</sup> Since such a state demands all aspects of life to be governed by the injunctions of Islam, it would have opened the Pandora's Box of sectarian differences within Islam. It would have been problematic for the leadership to accept the *fiqh* (the Islamic Jurisprudence) of one sect and disregard all others. Any attempt to rationalise the

contested provisions of different *fiqhs* and create a uniform shariat-based order for the whole nation would have been suicidal.

It was, therefore, no surprise that on the eve of independence, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the undisputed leader of the Pakistan movement, spoke of setting up a secular order in the country (his speech on August 11, 1947 in the Constituent Assembly of Pakistan)<sup>3</sup> His successors made efforts to create a façade of 'Democratic Islam'. During Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's time, there was even a talk of giving this Islam a 'socialist' colour. However, the tendency to exploit Islam for political purposes was a constant in Pakistani society and politics. The elite in Pakistan—the feudal landowners, urban petit bourgeoisie, the Muslim bureaucrats of

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<sup>1</sup> Choudhary Rahmat Ali who coined the term PAKISTAN in a pamphlet 'Now or Never: Are we to Live or Perish Forever?', (published on January 28, 1933), felt that the new nation was to be the home of Punjabis, Afghans (Pashtuns), Kashmiris, Sindhis and Baluchistanis. Interestingly, this definition of the proposed Muslim state did not include the Bengalis, who were to be the most populous ethnic group in it.

<sup>2</sup> Muslim League's 1940 Lahore Resolution, later dubbed as Pakistan Resolution, demanded that the "geographically contiguous units are demarcated into regions which should be so constituted .....that the areas in which Muslims are numerically in a majority.....should be grouped to constitute 'Independent States". Earlier, preparing the background for this call for a separate nation for the Muslims, in his presidential address Jinnah declared that India should be free, but, "If the Hindus were to be free and the Muslims were to be their slaves, it was hardly a freedom for which Muslims could be asked to fight".

<sup>3</sup> Jinnah had said, "You may belong to any religion or cast and creed that has nothing to do with the business of the State." He went on to add that the new nation should keep that goal before itself and "in course of time Hindus would cease to be Hindus and Muslims would cease to be Muslims, not in the religious sense.....but in the political sense as citizens of the State".

the erstwhile British Indian Government and the newly created Pakistan army — even while swearing by Islam, had no desire to convert their nation into a shariat based state and had ‘secularist’ tendencies. Politicians and political parties like the Pakistan Muslim League (PML) used Islam only as a political tool. The call to Islam became a means to overcome ethnic, sectarian and cultural diversities. It is interesting to note that throughout Pakistan’s history, periodic chants of “Islam in Danger” have been accompanied by efforts to drum up anti-India hysteria to keep Pakistan together.

However, despite Jinnah’s secular vision, the Islamic right, mainly comprising *Islam-pasand* parties like the Jamaat-e-Islami (JI) the Jamiat Ulema-e-Islam (JUI) that had opposed partition, and the Jamiat Ulema-e-Pakistan (JUP) that was a creation of free Pakistan, did not take long to mount pressure on the regime to concede their demands for greater religious measures. The anti-Ahmadiya agitation of the 1953 became the first political bandwagon in the country for these Islamists. The ruling elite did not have any clear strategy to deal with the fundamentalist brigade’s challenge and ended up conceding many of its demands in the 1956 Constitution of Pakistan<sup>4</sup> and declared Pakistan an “Islamic Republic”.<sup>5</sup> Islamic orthodoxy has continued to cast its lingering shadow on the

nation’s psyche ever since. Jinnah’s successors did not have the required charisma, appeal, conviction and ability to inspire respect amongst the people to take a bold and principled stand and steer the nation away from Islamist and theocratic tendencies. However, Jinnah’s vision of creating a secular Pakistan remained a romantic political dream and, even while speaking of setting up a democratic order in the country, the Objective Resolution, which Pakistan’s Constituent Assembly adopted on March 12, 1948, vested sovereignty of the state in ‘Allah’ (not in the people of Pakistan) and sowed the seeds of religious fundamentalism.<sup>6</sup> The first constitution adopted in 1956 emphasised Islamic credentials and termed Pakistan as ‘Islamic Republic of Pakistan’.

This phenomenon continued during the Ayub era. Even though his constituency consisted of the army and the expanding Pakistani industrialist class, General Ayub Khan still had to pander to the Islamists and their sentiments. The new Constitution prepared under him had initially changed the name of the state to “Republic of Pakistan” by dropping the word ‘Islamic’ from it. However, it was reverted to “Islamic Republic of Pakistan” when the National Assembly formed under the new Constitution (promulgated in March 1962) carried out the First Amendment in

<sup>4</sup> Details of the 1956 Constitution of Pakistan, as obtained from [http://pakistanspace.tripod.com/archives/56\\_00.htm](http://pakistanspace.tripod.com/archives/56_00.htm)

<sup>5</sup> Hassan Abbas also makes more or less the same points in his book, *Pakistan’s Drift into Extremism: Allah, the Army and America’s War on Terror*, London: M. E. Sharpe, 2005.

<sup>6</sup> The Objective Resolution, officially titled as Resolution on the Aims and Objective of the Constitution, declared, “Sovereignty over the entire universe belongs to Allah Almighty alone and the authority, which He has delegated to the State of Pakistan... for being exercised within the limits set by Him, is a sacred trust”. Under the new order “the principles of democracy, freedom, equality tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam shall be fully observed” and under it, “Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings of Islam, as set in the Holy Quran and the Sunnah”. It is interesting to note that the Objective Resolution was included in toto in the Preamble of the Constitution (1956) or formed the basis of the Preamble (1962). However, the 1973 Constitution did not refer to it directly, though it carried its key provisions relating to State’s commitment to ushering in an Islamic polity in the country. Ultimately, however, in 1985, General Zia-ul Haq made the Objective Resolution an Annexe of the 1973 Constitution through a Presidential Order.

December 1962 and inserted Islamic measures in the statute book.<sup>7</sup>

During the rule of Zia-ul Haq, Pakistan's latent radical Islamic instincts, finding a conducive atmosphere, sprouted new shoots and jihadi fervour overtook Pakistan after Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979. Islamic political parties and their front organisations in the Deobandi spectrum, who were quick to jump on Zia's political bandwagon, gained the most and expanded their influence and reach at the cost of others like the Barelvīs, Shias, minorities and others. A radical and activist Islamic agenda was progressively encouraged by almost all the rulers of Pakistan who followed Jinnah, including Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who called himself a socialist. However, this 'jihadist Islam' did not come from outside the country; its seeds were lying embedded in the collective sub-consciousness of a large section of the Muslim masses of the country. Concerned Pakistani official and non-official lobbies played a distinct role in nurturing and exporting this jihadi fervour to other countries in the context of Afghanistan and, to a major extent, to Kashmir. This spirit of jihad has now come home to roost. The prevailing fundamentalist and activist religious traits in Pakistan makes one dread the inevitability of the looming national catastrophe, particularly because there is still no debate on where the mosque's role is to end and the state's responsibilities to start in the affairs of the nation.

### **The Era of 'Pan-Islamism'**

Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who assumed power in the

most peculiar circumstances following the 1971 debacle in East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), mouthed socialistic slogans as also Islamic ones, particularly those stressing egalitarianism and social justice to legitimise his economic doctrines, as also to avoid running foul of the Islamists. However, there was no attempt to include specific Islamic laws in the legal system until it became politically expedient to do so towards the beginning of 1977.<sup>8</sup> Bhutto's preference to stay on the right side of the Islamic lobby was clear in the 1973 Constitution itself. This document represented a compromise consensus on the issue of role of Islam.<sup>9</sup> Islam was declared as the state religion and Pakistan continued to be "Islamic Republic of Pakistan". Some other Islamic measures that were introduced in the 1973 Constitution included, among others, a definition of those as non-Muslims who did not believe in the finality of Prophethood. Acting under this provision, through the Second Amendment (September 17, 1974) the Ahmadiyas were subsequently declared as non-Muslims and a long-standing demand of the Islamic lobby was conceded.<sup>10</sup>

However, Bhutto's most significant action that not only strengthened the Pakistani Islamists, but also laid the foundations of international networking between official and non-official Islamic bodies, was his encouragement to pan-Islamism. Islamic countries had come together at Rabat in Morocco in September 1969, but had done very little since then to organise themselves into a well-knit body. Bhutto seized the opportunity and brought Heads of Islamic States to Lahore for the 2<sup>nd</sup> Islamic

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<sup>7</sup> Details of the 1962 Constitution of Pakistan can be obtained from [http://pakistanspace.tripod.com/archives/62\\_00.htm](http://pakistanspace.tripod.com/archives/62_00.htm)

<sup>8</sup> "Historical Debate on Islam and the State in South Asia" by Anita M. Weiss in her book *Islamic Reassertion in Pakistan*, Vanguard Books: Pakistan, 1987.

<sup>9</sup> Ibid.

<sup>10</sup> Details of the 1973 Constitution with the amendments can be accessed at <http://www.pakistani.org/pakistan/constitution/>



Summit on February 22-24, 1974, to not only launch the Organisation of Islamic Conference (OIC) but also to define its structure and agenda.

The Lahore OIC Summit in 1974 organised by Z.A. Bhutto immediately after Pakistan's defeat in 1971 offered Pakistanis some solace by offering visions of pan-Islamic grandeur. They felt certain that the summit had sown the seeds of a "United States of Islam", with themselves at its centre, having access to its vast oil resources and riches, substantial strategic assets and even military muscle. Close relations between Pakistan and a fast militarising Iran and Pakistani defense personnel on deputation in a number of Gulf countries during this period strengthened those notions. This general pan-Islamic drift of official policies strengthened similar tendencies in the non-official circles. The Karachi-based Motamar al-Alam al-Islami (The World Muslim Congress) that had practically been dormant for the past so many years got a new lease of life, and with official, as well as non-governmental support, organised Islamic activities in various Muslim countries. There was increased interaction between various other Pakistani Muslim NGOs and groups with their counterparts in other Muslim countries and communities. This increased networking among them had major implications for growth of radical Islam in Pakistan in particular and the entire region as a whole in the next decade.

The myth of a united Ummah (the worldwide Islamic community) also strengthened the bonds between Pakistan's Deobandi radical Islamists and Wahabi-Salafi Saudis. The latter were already in ascendancy because of the clout they enjoyed in the OIC due to their oil-wealth and the massive Zakat money they could dole out to Islamic communities in less-developed Asian and African countries. The association between them and the Pakistani Deobandis stoked the simmering sectarian tensions in Pakistan (Deobandi versus Barelvis, Shias versus Sunnis) on the one hand, and promoted

Wahabi inspired radicalism internationally on the other. Greatly facilitated by Saudi zakat funding, Pakistani Deobandi radicals spread their madarssa network in the country far and wide. Since education ranked very low in state's priorities and privately-run schools were beyond the reach of most people, it was the madrassas run by Jamaat-i-Islami (JI) and other radical Islamic parties, that became, and still continue to be, the major providers of education for younger Pakistanis. They are used to religiously brainwash and indoctrinate the youth, and the Islamic right, particularly the JI, successfully mobilised the youth to take to the streets during late years of Bhutto's rule. The JI's student arm, the Islami Jamiat-e-Tulaba (IJT), played a critical role during the anti-Bhutto agitation during the later part of the 1970s, and the force which supported Afghanistan jihad in the 1980s. In the 1980s and 1990s when the Pakistani establishment started training radical Islamic non-state actors to act as its agents to further its covert agenda in Kashmir and Afghanistan, the madrassas belonging to various Islamic outfits became the recruiting grounds for jihadi foot soldiers.

### **The 'Islamisation' Era**

The next phase of radicalisation under Deobandi influence came during General Zia-ul-Haq's period. Islamic political parties constituted a major bloc in the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) that spearheaded the anti-Bhutto agitation in the second half of the 1970s over the issue of rigging of the 1977 elections. Introduction of an Islamic order – Nizam-e-Mustafa (The order of the Prophet)— was one of the major election planks of the PNA in these elections. As the confrontation between the PNA and the Bhutto regime continued to paralyse the country, the Army Chief General Zia moved in and deposed Bhutto on July 5, 1977 with a clear promise of holding fresh election within 90 days. However, as the political situation became more vexed, elections were postponed and

General Zia continued in power. He needed a political slogan and a constituency outside the army to counter Bhutto and his PPP. To create these he appropriated the PNA's agenda of Islamisation. He contended that Pakistan was created in the name of Islam and, therefore, Islam should be supreme in the country, and he was going to ensure that. This suited the Islamic parties in the PNA, (JI, JUI, JUP and the Khaksar Tehriq) who welcomed Zia's Islamisation call, as it allowed them to ascend to power without winning any election.<sup>11</sup>

Zia's Islamisation programme covered four broad areas: economic matters, judicial reforms, introduction of Islamic penal code and a new 'Islamic' educational policy. However, even in these areas, at no stage did he seek to introduce Shariat provisions in their totality which would have supplanted the existing systems. He merely removed those sections from the existing laws which were felt to be repugnant to the principles of Islam. The western oriented secular system created by the British, and retained by his own Martial Law Administration, was allowed to continue untouched.<sup>12</sup> Given this reality of Zia's Islamisation measures, it was no surprise that by the mid-1980s Islamic parties began to distance themselves from his government and by the beginning of 1988, even the JI had entered into an anti-Zia alliance with the PPP.

Nonetheless, Zia's Islamisation drive did strengthen the Deobandi Islamic fundamentalist lobby in the country and provided it with an

opportunity to gain entry and find acceptance in those sections of the society where it was treated with disdain until then.<sup>13</sup> It also allowed Deobandi-oriented<sup>14</sup> Islamic political parties (like JI, JUI factions and groups like Jamaat Ahl-e-Hadis (JAeH)) to get better organised, widen their organisational networks and gain more popular acceptance, which played a crucial role in the next phase of Islamic development in the country. A programme to convert Pakistan into a theocracy as per Deobandi precepts commenced. Naturally, it accentuated not only the existing Shia-Sunni differences, but even intra-Sunni differences between the Deobandis and the Barelvis. It also made radical Deobandis even less tolerant of the non-Muslim minorities and there were many attacks on the Christians on flimsy allegations of committing blasphemy against Islam. It is also interesting to note that it was during Zia's rule that Pakistan's official agencies began to raise non-state actors in close association with JI and others to target the Shias and the Christians who were resentful of various aspects of official Islamisation policies and to export and sponsor armed-insurrection in Jammu & Kashmir.

### **The Era of Jihad and the Emergence of the Taliban**

Two events in the late 1970s, namely, Ayatollah Khomeini's Islamic revolution in Iran and the Soviet entry into Afghanistan (both in 1979) ensured that

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<sup>11</sup> "Historical Debate on Islam and the State in South Asia" by Anita M. Weiss in her book *Islamic Reassertion in Pakistan*, Vanguard Books, Pakistan.

<sup>12</sup> Ibid.

<sup>13</sup> Hussain Haqqani, *Pakistan: Between Mosque and the Military*, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace, Washington D.C., 2005.

<sup>14</sup> JI and Deobandi organisations differ on many issues at the political level. However, they share the same religious perspectives as far as their approach to Islam is concerned. That is why JI is also being presented here in the discussion as a Deobandi-oriented organisation.

Pakistan could no longer cloak its 'radical' Islamic sensibilities under the veneer of 'Islamic democracy'. The era of the political exploitation of Islam in Pakistan had come to an end and the one in which a radicalised Islam was to call the shots had begun.

Khomeini's revolution unleashed an 'activist Islam' which did not accept the status quo. The Shiite identity of the Iranian revolution not only encouraged Shiite minorities in other countries to become bolder and assertive, but also created an 'activist' Sunni backlash. By the beginning of the 1980s, organisations like Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ) had emerged with the express agenda of quelling Shiite assertiveness by violence, because of their resistance to be subjected to Islamic provisions of the *Fiqh Hanafi* (Sunni Jurisprudence) and instead of demanding Islamisation measures as per their *Fiqh Jafariya* (Shia Jurisprudence). The other targets of these groups were Pakistani Christians, who opposed the Blasphemy Law vehemently as it became a tool in the hands of radical Islamists to hound them. Although the Pakistani state seemingly tried to restrain the SSP and the LeJ, the impunity with which they carried out their pogrom against Shias and Christians, clearly hinted at their patronage by some sections of the establishment, particularly the Inter Services Intelligence (ISI).<sup>15</sup> The ISI, through political parties like the JI, had already launched a project to subvert the Kashmiris' emotional links with India by exploiting religious sensibilities. The era of involvement of Pakistani state sponsored 'non-state players' in pursuit of 'national agenda' had truly and fully dawned.

The Soviet entry into Afghanistan enabled Zia to play, albeit with US assistance and in active collaboration with Pakistan's Islamic political parties, the great game of espionage and subversion in Afghanistan that had been played by Russia and Britain in the nineteenth century. The Afghan Jihad marked the beginning of a wider plan for launching global Islamic activism under Pakistani leadership that continued well after Zia.<sup>16</sup> By the end of 1980 not only massive US military and economic aid was flowing into Pakistan for the Pakistanis as well as the mujahideen, but also there was a massive flow of over one million Afghan refugees into Pakistan. This refugee population provided the recruiting grounds for the Afghan Islamic mujahideen groups and their Pakistani Deobandi/Wahabi supporters. One of the first Pakistani Refugee Commissioners was one Abdullah, who had close links with the JI of Pakistan.<sup>17</sup>

As the Afghan jihad expanded, so did the influence of 'radical' and activist Islamic ideology in Pakistan. The Barelvi JUP was pushed out of the picture and the Deobandi-oriented JI and the JUI were encouraged by the Zia regime to get closely involved with mujahideen activities not only to cover the tracks of the ISI and the Pakistan Army, but also to counter-balance each other.<sup>18</sup> Soon, they became the major conduits for funnelling the aid in men and material that was coming through various pan-Islamic bodies, like the Saudi Arabia based Rabitat al-Alam al-Islami (The Muslim World League), the World Assembly of Muslim Youth (WAMY), and other international Islamic groups based in other countries to mujahideen groups.<sup>19</sup> It is interesting to note that most non-state Pakistani

<sup>15</sup> Hassan Abbas, n.3.

<sup>16</sup> Hussain Haqqani, n.13.

<sup>17</sup> Ibid.

<sup>18</sup> Ibid.

and foreign players collaborating in propping up Afghan Jihad belonged to the Salafi-Wahabi/Deobandi spectrum and had close links with Saudi official and non-official Islamic bodies. Pakistani Islamic sects like the Shias, Barelvis, Ismailis, etc had virtually no, or at best a very marginal, role to play in the Afghan Jihad.

Another fallout of the development of close nexus between these Islamic radical groups, particularly the JI, and the Zia regime, was their virtual take-over of such state organs as the Council for Islamic Ideology (CII), Ministry of Religious Affairs and all such other bodies that were expected to play a role in the introduction of Islamic order in the country. These Deobandi-oriented groups utilised their positions to push their agenda of establishing a Deobandi Islamic order in the country, by blanking out views and beliefs of other Islamic sects. This led to the emergence of radical Islamic activism among such other Sunni groups as the Barelvis, Ahl-e-Hadith, etc. that in turn led to emergence of their respective armed wings and accentuation of intra-Sunni rivalries. Emergence of groups like Harkat-ul Mujahideen (HuM), Harkat-ul Ansar (HuA), Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) was also facilitated through active patronage by the State (read army/ISI).

### **The Creation of the Taliban**

The Geneva Accords signed on April 18, 1988 paved the way for ending the Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. It also marked a turning point in the evolution of the Islamic movement in Pakistan and its transformation from an activist-radical Islam into a jihadist Islam, out to pursue a global agenda of jihad and setting up of puritanical theocracies in

Islamic states. Despite the Geneva Accord, Afghan peace was still a mirage. The formerly allied Afghan mujahideen groups fell out with each other over sharing the spoils of power and plunged the just-freed Afghanistan into a devastating civil war. Before the Taliban emerged on the Afghan scene towards the end of 1994, the country was in a state of disintegration. Along with this Pakistan's hopes of creating an Afghan client state, which would provide it with 'strategic depth' against India, as also access to the markets and fossil fuel resources of the newly emerged Central Asian Republics (CAR) were also fast evaporating. Therefore, Pakistan had to act fast. Benazir Bhutto, who became the Prime Minister of Pakistan in 1993 for the second time, was especially keen to contain the damage and open a land-link with the CARs.<sup>20</sup>

Under her directions, the Pashtun Pakistani Interior Minister, Major General (Retd.) Naseerullah Babar, initially explored the possibility of opening a shorter route to Uzbekistan and other central Asian republics through Khyber Pass, Kabul and across the Hindukush ranges to Tashkent. However, fierce fighting between contending mujahideen groups in northern Afghanistan made that plan a non-starter. An alternative route was sought from Quetta, Kandahar, Herat to Ashgabat in Turkmenistan, as there was less fighting in that area. Although Babar led a delegation of some Islamabad-based diplomats and Pakistani technocrats in October 1994 to Kandahar and Herat to demonstrate the viability of that route, the Kandahar-based mujahideen commanders remained suspicious of the Pakistani plan and did not extend it the desired cooperation. They believed, the Pakistanis were opening up this route in order to intervene in the Afghan civil war on behalf of their opponents.<sup>21</sup>

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<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

<sup>20</sup> Ahmed Rashid, *Taliban: Islam, Oil and the New Great Game in Central Asia*. IB Tauris & Co.: London, 2002.

It was at this point that a group of 200 theological students from Pakistani Deobandi Islamic seminaries—the Taliban (students)—mysteriously emerged and entered Kandahar from Pakistan.<sup>22</sup> They attacked Gulbuddin Hekmatyar’s local garrison and overran it with just one casualty. With clear Pakistani official direction as well as overt and covert assistance, they took over the arms and other local assets of Gulbuddin Hekmatyar and other Afghan warlords in the area. Soon their numbers swelled and they began to fan out to other areas of Afghanistan. Although initially Benazir Bhutto denied any Pakistani hand behind the rise of Taliban, she later conceded that her government was in no position to stop volunteers from going across the border and joining the Taliban. The Pakistan government and the JUI celebrated the fall of Kandahar, and Babar credited himself with the successes of Taliban, terming them as “our Boys” in private.<sup>23</sup>

Soon, the Taliban were in control of almost entire Afghanistan, with the exception of the northern parts of the country. Their Wahabi/Deobandi orientation and commitment began to manifest immediately. They did not need the façade of Islamic Democracy like their Pakistani masters and began to implement Shariat as per the Deobandi interpretation in the areas under their control. Afghanistan was declared the “Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan” in 1996, after the capture of Kabul.<sup>24</sup> The Taliban regime’s harsh Islamic measures like floggings, public executions of ‘criminals’ and the demolition of the Bamiyan Buddhas soon began to

invite strong international opprobrium. The links between Osama bin-Laden, leader of the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban regime alarmed the West, particularly the US, which carried out missile strikes against alleged Al-Qaeda-training camps in Afghanistan after attacks on the US Embassies in Nairobi (Kenya) and Dar-as-Salaam (Tanzania) in August 1998. Pressure began to mount on Pakistan to rein in its former protégés.<sup>25</sup> However, by then, the Al-Qaeda and the Taliban had grown out of the control of Pakistan. They were pursuing their own global Islamic agenda that led to 9/11. The Pakistani establishment chose not to confront them with any vigour due to its vested long-term interest in their continuance for the sake of retaining its influence.

### **Post 9/11 US-led ‘War on Terror’ and Strains in Pak-Taliban Nexus**

The immediate price Pakistan had to pay for 9/11 was to end its open support for the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and join the US-led ‘War on Terror’. However, covert links with Taliban continued and Pakistani supporters of the Taliban, the Pashtun tribes, the JUI and the ISI continued to be in contact with them. Many Taliban and Al-Qaeda cadres found refuge in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA) of Pakistan, areas of the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP) and in northern Balochistan. Pakistan sought to justify this duplicity in its policies as a “major strategic reorientation”.<sup>26</sup>

As time passed, General Pervez Musharraf, who had assumed power in the meanwhile through a

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<sup>21</sup> Ibid.

<sup>22</sup> The first group of cadres and those who followed them subsequently, were the products of Jamia Asharfia (Lahore), Jamia Arabia (Raiwind), Jamia Uloom al-Islamia (Binori Town, Karachi) and Dar-ul Uloom Haqqania (Akhora Khattak).

<sup>23</sup> Ahmed Rashid, n.13.

<sup>24</sup> Ibid.

<sup>25</sup> Speech given by General Jehangir Karamat, Pakistan Ambassador to the US, Brookings Institution, December 14, 2004

coup, was forced to get more deeply involved with US operations against the Taliban/Al-Qaeda in return for easing of US sanctions and receiving massive economic and military assistance. What was initially limited to intelligence sharing, led to operations against Al-Qaeda fugitives in Pakistan and eventually military operations against their pockets of presence in Pakistan, particularly if they or their local allies threatened to supplant the Pakistan government's writ in that area with their own. Under US pressure top leaders of many religious parties like Fazl-ur Rehman (JUI), Qazi Hussain Ahmed (JI), etc. were arrested and many Pakistani and Arab militants who were returning from Afghanistan to their sanctuaries in Pakistan were taken into custody. On January 12, 2002, Musharraf in his address to the nation announced a ban on JeM, LeT, SSP, Tehriq-e-Jafaria (TeJ) and Tehriq-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (TNSM).<sup>27</sup>

However, these measures were either merely cosmetic, or were not taken to their logical end. They remained half-hearted, designed to please the Western audiences.<sup>28</sup> Most of the arrested religious leaders, extremists and militants were released within a few months, as the government declared that there was 'insufficient evidence' implicating them in the plots to harm the country.<sup>29</sup> There were apparently strong lobbies in Pakistan, including in the military establishment that were strongly opposed to totally decimating the jihadi groups that had so painstakingly been nurtured over the years as 'Strategic Assets' of the country, as part of a well-thought-out national policy in tune with its

Islamic ethos. Even while appearing to be acting against them, the Pakistan establishment wanted to maintain surreptitious links with them as an insurance policy for the future.

According to Hassan Abbas, the noted Pakistani author and political commentator, on September 14, 2001 Pakistan Army's top commanders, including all the corps commanders, met to decide on a response to the US ultimatum to Pakistan to join its 'War on Terror' by ditching the Taliban. Most corps commanders agreed with Musharraf's assessment that Pakistan had to stand with the US in accordance with the UN Security Council resolution, or be declared a 'terrorist state', leading to economic sanctions. However, there were some lieutenant generals like Mohammad Aziz Khan, Jamshed Gulzar and Muzaffar Usmani who differed with him and wanted the country to stand with Taliban and Afghanistan.<sup>30</sup> Even though Musharraf's views prevailed and all the generals eventually 'agreed' with him, strong support for Taliban manifested itself later in the lukewarm Pakistani response to transformation of Afghan Taliban into Pakistani Taliban and their increasing assertiveness in the Tribal Areas along the Durand Line. Apparently, Pakistan was hoping to keep the US happy and obliged over its commitment to deal with Taliban terror, and at the same time maintain links with the latter through Islamic political parties like the JUI so as not to lose them altogether. This 'hunting with hounds and running with hares' approach was clearly a result of the fundamental dichotomy over the role and use of Islam in state policy.

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<sup>26</sup> Hussain Haqqani, n.13.

<sup>27</sup> Ibid.

<sup>28</sup> Ibid.

<sup>29</sup> Ibid.

<sup>30</sup> Dexter Filkins, *New York Times*, September 5, 2008, at <http://www.nytimes.com/2008/09/07/magazine/07pakistan->

The seemingly final break with Islamic radicals came with the December 2003 attacks on General Musharraf, and on the then Prime Minister designate Shaukat Aziz and the Karachi Corps Commander (middle of 2004). The Taliban appeared to have finally lost faith in the commitment of the Pakistani dispensation to their cause and were not willing to accommodate it any more. Pakistan's continuing failure to either come out of US-led 'War on Terror', or at least prevent drone attacks from its soil, convinced the Taliban – Afghan as well as Pakistani – that whether under a military regime like that of Musharraf, or a civilian one like that of Nawaz Sharif, Pakistan had no desire to give up American financial and military assistance for a jihad to usher in Shariat-e-Mohammadi (Islamic Law as laid down by Prophet himself). Jihad, they seemed to have concluded, had become a dispensable commodity for most Pakistanis. This assessment seems to persist even today. However, they would continue with their zeal to bring about Islamic rule in Pakistan and Afghanistan and hope, as Mustafa Abu al-Yazid, alias Abu Saeed al-Masari, Al-Qaeda commander in Afghanistan, reportedly said: the "Pakistan Army would be defeated (in Swat) and that would be its end everywhere".<sup>31</sup>

Secondly, the Pakistani Taliban and Islamic radicals have a clear Islamic agenda to introduce a strict Shariat-based Islamic order (Nizam-e-Adal) for the Muslims as per their Deobandi/Wahabi-Salafi interpretation. It spares no space for such hybrid Pakistani ideas as 'Islamic democracy' and 'Nizam-e-Mustafa'. This Islamic ideology of the Taliban and their cohorts, active under different nomenclatures in various countries, does not want to make any compromises. They want to bring Muslim societies

overnight under Shariat. This Islamic system would encompass all aspects of human life, personal, societal, political, domestic and international. Their ultimate goal is to create an Islamic Caliphate that would closely follow the model of the First Islamic Caliphate that was set up by Prophet Mohammad himself in Medina in the early years of Islam. The Islamic order they visualise, if enforced in Pakistan, would mean an end to the existing Pakistani civilian, military and social order, and make it like Afghanistan, or a Sunni version of Iran.

### **The Conflict in Swat and FATA**

Swat and other areas of the FATA have been the battleground for the two sides for some time now. Islamists like Sufi Muhammad, leader of TNSM had started imposing Shariat on the people of Swat as far back as 1992, even before Taliban emerged as a political force in Afghanistan. He had under his sway the tribal districts of Swat, Malakand and Bajaur. In 1995, TNSM followers occupied government offices in Swat district and demanded imposition of Shariat in the area. On September 6, 1998, in reaction to the August 1998 American missile attacks on Al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan, the TNSM threatened to attack American citizens and property in Pakistan, unless the US apologised to the Muslim world for the missile strikes. Later on October 27, 2001, in the wake of 9/11, about 10,000 heavily armed TNSM cadres from Bajaur, led by Maulana Sufi Mohammed crossed the Pak-Afghan border to join the Taliban to fight the US-led forces. The influence of pro-Al-Qaeda/Taliban radicals in the country was so extensive and intense that the then Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif introduced the fifteenth amendment to the Pakistani Constitution in 1998. Clause 2 of the proposed Bill

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<sup>31</sup> Reuters India, July 1, 2009

stated:

The Federal Government shall be under an obligation to take steps to enforce the Shariat, to establish *salat*, to administer *zakat*, to promote *amr bil ma'roof* and *nahi anil munkar* (to prescribe what is right and to forbid what is wrong), to eradicate corruption at all levels and to provide substantial socio-economic justice, in accordance with the principles of Islam, as laid down in the Holy Quran and Sunnah.

The Bill was passed by the Lower House of the Parliament on October 8, 1998, but it was not presented in the Upper House because Nawaz Sharif's party did not have the required majority there and the moderate Pakistani lobbies opposed it.<sup>32</sup>

After the fall of the Taliban in late 2001, Pakistani militants siding with them came back home to impose their Deobandi/Wahabi precepts in the tribal hinterland and made their writ run in local pockets in Waziristan, Bajaur, Malakand, Swat and even in Khyber. All this came to the fore in 2004-2005 with the resurgence of the Taliban in Afghanistan and the militant assertions of local Pakistani Taliban like the one in Miranshah in North Waziristan. The Pakistani army also did not have a policy to tackle the Taliban in Pakistan. It claimed in 2005 that it had deployed 80,000 of its troops in FATA and taken 700 casualties in its fight against the Al-Qaeda. It was, however, never serious about its fight with the local Taliban and was fearful of the adverse political fallout in the rest of the country. Its forays into the Tribal Areas were more like knee-jerk responses to local crises and were largely ineffective.

On October 24, 2007, more than 3,000 Pakistani

troops were sent to Swat to confront the Taliban. By October 31, the army claimed that up to 130 militants had been killed. However, the very next day nearly 700 militants overran a military post on a hill in Khwajakhel, forcing nearly 50 soldiers to desert their positions and 48 others were taken as prisoners. On November 3, 2007, police and paramilitary forces in nearby Matta also surrendered after being surrounded by the militants. On November 12, more troops were sent to Swat to bolster army positions and by December 5, the Pakistan army managed to regain most key areas in Swat. However, the Taliban had not been overwhelmed. They began to creep back into the area and continued to engage the army in skirmishes throughout 2008. Finally on February 16, 2009, the NWFP government was forced to announce that it had abolished all "un-Islamic" laws in the Malakand division and put security forces engaged in the military operation in Swat in 'reactive mode' after reaching an understanding with Islamic radicals on enforcement of Nizam-e-Adal regulation in seven districts of the Malakand division and the Kohistan district of the Hazara division.<sup>33</sup> Later, on April 13, 2009, President Asif Ali Zardari sanctified the agreement through an ordinance imposing Shariat in the Swat Valley and its surrounding areas thus effectively empowering the Taliban and other groups. This followed the passage of a unanimous resolution on the subject by the Pakistani Parliament.

The deal led to a huge international outcry, particularly when the Taliban began to administer Islamic justice and punishment to men and women alike (March 2009). Under tremendous US pressure, the Pakistan government was forced to move against the Taliban despite the Swat deal. On April

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<sup>32</sup> Ashok K. Behuria, "Fighting the Taliban: Pakistan at war with itself", *Australian Journal of International Affairs*, November-December 2007.

<sup>33</sup> *The News*, February 17, 2009



23, 2009 Pakistan troops were moved into the area to protect government buildings in Buner,<sup>34</sup> triggering large-scale military operations in Swat which extended to almost all the areas of FATA involving over 150,000 Pakistan troops who were mostly non-Pashtun.

Ever since, the Islamic radicals have responded by carrying out terror strikes in many major Pakistani cities, as also in Muzaffarabad in Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK). Despite massive Pakistani deployment in Swat and other areas of the Malakand Division, there is an uneasy calm, broken by sporadic attacks by Islamic militants. There is neither complete restoration of the civilian authority in the region, nor any plans to withdraw Pakistani troops from the area. If anything, there is a talk in Pakistan military circles of setting up permanent military cantonments and posts in Swat and its adjoining areas. Pakistan seems to be heading for a protracted engagement with the radical Islamist forces in the coming days. The discussion above suggests that Pakistan's Islamic birds have finally come home to roost.

The situation in North and South Waziristan is pretty much similar to the one in Swat. In July 2002, Pakistani troops entered the Tirah Valley in the Khyber Agency for the first time since 1947 and proceeded to the Shawal Valley of North Waziristan and later to South Waziristan. Immediately afterwards, Musharraf was attacked twice in a span of two weeks in Rawalpindi in December 2003. These attacks were later traced to Waziristan. Like in Swat, there have been repeated deals and broken accords, interspersed with violence in the two Waziristans. From April 2009, Pakistan Army has taken on the Taliban in South Waziristan, as also in Bajaur, Buner and Lower Dir after consolidating its hold on Swat. In the second half of June 2009,

Pakistan Army began a largescale build-up of troops for an imminent offensive in South Waziristan. The offensive began in mid-October 2009 and it is still continuing. The army has shown some resolve to take on the militants since early 2010 and a number of operations have been conducted in the tribal areas (in Swat, Bajaur and Waziristan in particular) resulting in the arrest and killing of some of the top Taliban leaders. However, despite repeated claims of successes by Pakistan military, neither the Pakistan military nor the civilian government has been able to indicate any schedule for concluding these operations. Meanwhile, out of a total population of 429,841, as many as 330,000 people have taken refuge in camps in D.I. Khan and Tank according to UN aid agencies.

### **The Power and the Reach of Jihadi Groups**

It is well-known that Taliban leaders and most of their cadres are products of various Pakistani Deobandi Islamic seminaries like the Binori Town madrassa in Karachi, where a large number of Pakistanis have been indoctrinated (incidentally, Maulana Masood Azhar, the chief of JeM was a contemporary of Mullah Omar, the supreme leader of Taliban at the madrassa). Organisations like the JI, JUI, JAeH, the Markaz-ud Dawaa (MuD) and its militant arm the LeT (which follows *Ahl-e-Hadis* ideology close to the Salafis); the JeM, the LeJ, the SSP, (all linked with the JUI and follow Deobandi ideology); and even the JI's Kashmir specific Hizbul Mujahideen (HM), have all been preaching an orthodox, uncompromising and militant version of Islam based on their own interpretation of Islamic law and its practices. It is hardly surprising that there is operational cooperation between these outfits and the Taliban in Pakistan.

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<sup>34</sup> BBC News, Thursday, April 23, 2009

Interestingly, all these groups including the Taliban, have until recently had a close nexus with Pakistan army and its ISI. The SSP, an offshoot of the JUI (that had earlier created Harkat-ul Jihad-e-Islami (HuJI) and HuM and later merged into HuA in the context of Afghan jihad), came into existence in 1985 to quell Shiite opposition to the Deobandi inspired Islamisation measures of Zia-ul Haq. The SSP, and later its militant arm LeJ were responsible for a large number of attacks on Shias, including lawyers, doctors and government officials. Yet, none of the perpetrators of those crimes were ever arrested. In many cases, those attackers were accompanied or helped by lower level ISI functionaries. Shocking still, if some upright and honest police investigator ever came anywhere near cracking those cases, he was mysteriously killed despite official protection provided to him.<sup>35</sup> There are several evidences of close association and active operational cooperation between the SSP/LeJ and the the Taliban in Afghanistan, both in pre and post 9/11 period.

Similarly, the Salafist oriented Markaz-ud Dawa-wal Irshad (MDI - Centre for Religious Learning and Propagation) which was founded in 1985 (later renamed as Jamaat-ud Dawaa (JuD) in early 2002 after its militant wing LeT was declared a terrorist organisation by the US) follows the Ahl-e-Hadith philosophy and is close to the Deobandi/Wahabi version of orthodox Islam. The MDI/JuD owes a lot to ISI's plan to indirectly intervene in Kashmir through non-state actors. The Chief of the MDI/JuD/LeT conglomerate, Hafiz Mohammad Saeed is a hardline Salafist who has readily expanded his organisation's Islamist agenda from Kashmir to the rest of India. However, he also speaks of his pan-Islamic vision of creating a pious and

correct international Islamic order by strengthening Pakistan's ties with the Islamic countries (read radical Islamic forces) and reducing dependence on the US.<sup>36</sup> Significantly, he has also worked in close cooperation with the Taliban in Afghanistan and vowed to launch a jihad to turn Pakistan into a pure Islamic state<sup>37</sup>.

The Lal Masjid incident in 2007 in Islamabad clearly demonstrated the reach and the impact of Pakistani jihadi groups and the distance they had created between themselves and the Pakistan establishment. No doubt, Pakistani government agencies created and nurtured these groups as per Pakistan's national agenda in Afghanistan and India and these groups cooperated fully in pursuit of those agendas. However, whenever there has been a clash between their Islamic jihadi goal and that of the Pakistan government, the Taliban and their allied Pakistani jihadi groups have not hesitated to go their own way even if that meant a violent confrontation with their patrons. To that extent, these groups seem to have grown beyond Pakistan's control and have acquired independent muscle, which they are not averse to flexing.

The worsening of the situation in Swat and other areas of FATA can be directly traced to the Pakistan government's crackdown on Lal Masjid and its attached madrassas— Jamia Hafsa and Jamia Faridia. Mullah Fazlullah of the TNSM, the organisation which spearheaded the *Nizam-e-Adal* movement in Swat, declared war on the Pakistan government on his FM radio station in the wake of the attack on Lal Masjid. One of the two Imams of the masjid, Mohammad Abdul Aziz, who had been arrested during his attempted escape in a burqa from the siege, declared in his very first sermon after his

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<sup>35</sup> Hassan Abbas, n.3.

<sup>36</sup> Ibid.

<sup>37</sup> Ibid.

release from detention in April 2009 that implementation of the Shariat in Swat and other areas of FATA was a direct result of the attack on Lal Masjid<sup>38</sup>

### **The Present and Future Scenarios — Leap of jihad to south Punjab**

The most likely extension of the jihadi challenge to Pakistan establishment in the days to come is likely to materialise in south Punjab (See Map 4.1). Pakistan Army's iron-fisted action in FATA has driven most Taliban cadres from there to the adjoining areas of Afghanistan. This is also accompanied by an increase in terrorist attacks against government targets and others who appear to oppose the Taliban, in Peshawar and other areas of NWFP, Capital region of Islamabad and Rawalpindi, Lahore and other places. Even the Pakistan army's General Headquarters (GHQ) located inside the high security Rawalpindi cantonment, and the Pakistan Naval Headquarters in Islamabad have been attacked. Significantly, these attacks do not seem to have been carried out by Pashtun Taliban from FATA. Reports in the Pakistani media reveal the involvement of south Punjab based jihadi organisations like LeJ in these attacks. There are reports that south Punjab districts like Bhawalpur and Dera Ghazi Khan are full of Deobandi madrassas belonging to JeM and other groups, which continue to operate their militant training camps in these areas from the hey-days of Kashmir jihad. A very large number of their cadres regularly move from south Punjab to FATA and Afghanistan to fight against Pakistani and the US security forces respectively. Local police and administration are virtually non-existent in south Punjab or are unable to do any thing to control the local jihadi groups. Even the Pakistan Rangers deployed in the area are only concerned with

protecting an oil pipeline passing through the area. Hence, south Punjab appears to be the next flash point for conflict between the Pakistan establishment and the Islamic jihadi groups.

Despite the clear and present danger from radical Islam, Pakistan remains confused and ambivalent on both the tactics to be used against the radical elements, as well as on the basic ideological issue, i.e., what should be the ideological contours of the "Islamic Republic of Pakistan"? What should be the relationship between the state and the mosque? If it were to remain an Islamic Republic, what would be the role of Shariat in its governance, and as per which *fiqh*? What power would the Ulema and the clerics exercise in deciding what is Islamic and what is not? Who would interpret Islam for the nation, its institutions and the people? What would be the powers of the legislature and the judiciary in this Islamic set-up? In a nutshell, where would Islam stop and democracy commence and vice-versa? It would seem that the ideological ghosts of the early 1950s have come to haunt the Pakistani nation once again.

Unfortunately, there is no debate anywhere in the country on these issues. The Pakistan government and its institutions like the army seem to think that the current crisis will blow over just as the earlier ones and Pakistan would not have to sort out the dilemma of its ideological moorings. Perhaps, duplicity and an opportunistic recourse to Machiavellian craftiness have become a natural way of life in the Pakistani nation and it feels comfortable with it. A survey carried out by some US experts like C. Christine Fair, Neil Malhotra and Jacob Shapiro in April 2009 in Pakistan showed that an overwhelming number of Pakistanis accepted the militant dimension of jihad in principle. Nearly 77 per cent of the respondents

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<sup>38</sup> Mona Kanwal Sheikh, "Disaggregating the Pakistani Taliban"; DIIS Brief, September 2009.

felt that either the state or the state and the non-state actors together could use force to protect the Ummah. Over 90 per cent of the respondents felt that Shariat provided service and security to the people, free of corruption. It was hardly any surprise when various surveys conducted by the International Republican Institute (IRI) in 2008-9 showed that a majority of Pakistanis disapproved of the military action against Islamic radicals in FATA until March 2009. The picture changed later and reflected a sense of confusion amongst the respondents with nearly 70 per cent refusing to express their views on the subject or claiming to have no views on it. On their part, the Taliban and their allied Salafi-Wahabi/Deobandi radical Pakistanis seem to have clearly assessed that their call for a strict Shariat-based Islamic order has the support of a fair number of Pakistanis, both within and outside the government and those who do not support them could be tamed. Therefore, they have begun to term their current conflict with the 'oppressor Pakistani Army' as jihad.

The Pakistani armed forces also rely on religion to indoctrinate their rank and file to fight India, described as the number one enemy of Pakistan. Even the Pakistani educational system uses religious symbolism to create and sustain anti-India sentiments. Therefore, the Taliban ideology enjoys extensive popular support in Pakistan. There is also a social angle to the looming crisis. Secular and ideological opposition was never allowed to develop in Pakistan. The leftists were hounded by religious forces and the entry of Soviet forces into Afghanistan in December 1979 virtually emasculated the leftist movement in Pakistan. The ruling oligarchy, through its control and exploitation of the state apparatus has made mosques and the mullahs as their major source of support. Radical orthodox Islam has gradually

presented itself as an alternative and won popular acclaim. Besides, the Taliban and their allied groups have developed deep roots, widened their reach and acquired great strength. When all these silent pro-radical sentiments will come out in support of the Taliban and their pro-Shariat struggle to tip the balance in their favour, remains to be seen.

This, however, does not mean that the Taliban and their radical associates can sweep the country so easily. This is primarily because of the divisions within Islam. Any attempt to impose a particular version of Islam on the people is likely to be resisted by all others. Even within the Sunnis, the sect which is dominant in Pakistan, there is a major schism between the Deobandis and the Barelvis. The Barelvis, who constitute over 50 per cent of Pakistani Muslims, do not subscribe to the Deobandi interpretation of Islam and are unlikely to abide by the Talibani dictates. Many Muslims in Punjab and most Mohajirs in Pakistan also belong to the Barelvi School and are present in large numbers in Karachi and various other urban centres of Sindh. They amply demonstrated their capability to successfully resist attempted arms-twisting by others, particularly the Pashtuns in Karachi in the mid-1980s. The Taliban are likely to encounter stiff resistance not only from the Mohajirs but also from ethnic Sindhis as most of them are strongly influenced by the Sufis.

Then, there are the Shias, who constitute roughly 30 per cent of Pakistan's population according to Vali Nasr.<sup>39</sup> It is interesting to note that the Taliban efforts to dominate Parachinar in the FATA, which is Shia dominated, have not been successful. Parachinar Shias are receiving assistance from their fellow Afghan and Iranian Shias. Similarly, the Gilgit and Baltistan areas are dominated by the Ismailis, who are also unlikely to

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<sup>39</sup> Vali Nasr, *The Shia Revival*, Norton, 2006, p.160

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follow the Talibani version of Islam, despite some inroads made by the Deobandis among them. In Balochistan, the ethnic Baloch have been relegated to the central and southern parts of the province, particularly the Makran coast. Some of them follow the Zikiri order, which is moderate and is closer to the Omanis and the Malikis of UAE. Further, they may still harbour some leftist instincts left over from the past when it was the prevailing ideology in the region.

Signs of serious and violent strains between the Taliban and these Pakistani Islamic sects have already emerged. A leading Barelvi cleric Dr. Sarfraz Naeemi was killed on June 12, 2009 in Lahore by Taliban elements. Other anti-Taliban clerics and leaders, propped up by the regime have been systematically eliminated in the FATA/NWFP. The Taliban have also issued sharply worded warnings to Shias and Ismailis asking them to change their attitudes and practices.

The Pakistan army and the ISI now appear eager to exploit the mass-based evangelical movement of the Tabligh Jamaat (TJ) as an ideological challenge to the Taliban and their allies. The TJ leadership appears to have agreed to this with great reluctance. However, if the TJ begins to undercut the Taliban's ideological base, it may take recourse to targeting the TJ leaders and cadres as it has done with the Barelvis and others. That would either dissipate TJ's influence as an ideological counter to the Taliban, or force it to arm itself for self-defence. If that happens, it could be the actual beginning of 'Lebanisation' of Pakistan. In this situation, the country could get divided into various pockets

controlled by militarised ethno-sectarian groups and, correspondingly, the reach and the role of the government and its institutions may be reduced, like that of the Lebanese government in that country. Another implication could be the emergence of a broad-based formal or informal alliance between various sectarian/theological/ethnic groups opposed to the Taliban that may challenge their advance, just as the 'Northern Alliance' did in Afghanistan. This would be particularly so if the State appears to be failing to stem the Taliban advance.

However, in the immediate future one factor standing against such a scenario is the Pakistan army. It is a professional and well-trained institution. It packs enough punch to deliver severe blows to the Taliban. However, its Achilles Heel is its extraordinary emphasis on Islamic indoctrination of its soldiers to enhance their martial spirits, which has mostly been based on Deobandi precepts from the time of Zia-ul Haq. Would that at some time de-motivate the lower ranks to fight the Taliban? Interestingly, religion and politics which used to be taboos in Officer's Messes in the past, are no longer so and some botched up efforts at coup-plotting have been reported from the barracks by Islamic elements.<sup>40</sup> The possibilities of a repetition of the Iranian syndrome in Pakistan should not be totally discounted.<sup>41</sup> Indications are already there that the Pakistan army's GHQ is at pains to keep predominantly Pashtun units away from FATA operations, in which most of the close fightings are being done by troops of Northern Light Infantry (NLI), who are mostly Ismailis. Interestingly, Pakistan Army is mainly

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<sup>40</sup> Hassan Abbas, *op. cit.*

<sup>41</sup> The late Shah of Iran wanted to create a modern and progressive Iran defended by a well-trained and equipped Army. When the Islamic revolutionary challenge from Ayatollah Khomeini's supporters intensified, while the Officer Corps remained loyal to the Shah, the soldiery joined hands with the revolutionaries. Possibilities of something similar happening with the Pakistani soldiers, particularly its Pathan elements, should not be rejected out of hand, particularly if the anti-Taliban operations prolong and intensify.

relying on armour, artillery and airpower in its own territory to deal with Taliban and is generally avoiding any direct contact between its Punjabi-dominated formations and Taliban cadres, leading to large-scale casualty among them.

Moreover, Pakistan army's iron-fisted response to the Taliban has driven them to launch prolonged medium-to-high intensity insurgency and terrorist attacks. This is clearly seen in the recent developments after the Pakistan Army regained control over Swat and killed Baitullah Mehsud, the chief of Tehriq-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Taliban attacks in FATA and other areas of NWFP, including fresh rocket attacks and car-bombings in Peshawar have resumed and in the post-Baitullah Mehsud period, despite the reported divisions in their ranks, the Taliban groups appear determined to fight to the finish. Even the reported killing of Baitullah's successor, Hakeemullah Masud, has not affected their resolve to take on the Pakistan army. They have conducted attacks on military facilities located outside the FATA in Islamabad and Lahore, which indicate that Pakistan will have to prepare itself for a long-drawn-out war with these elements.

Unfortunately, Pakistan does not have any specialised agency to deal with the threat of prolonged and sustained insurgency, nor does its army have any such prior experience. How long will it be able to withstand the impact of such attrition is something worth pondering over. The Pakistan GHQ has already committed over 110,000 troops in Swat and other areas of FATA and another 50,000 for South Waziristan operations. It does not have many reserves left to meet the requirements of the local commanders who want at least 50,000 more troops in the area. Over three million civilians have also been uprooted from the conflict zone so far and forced to take shelter in refugee camps as Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs).

Lastly, Pakistan's military leadership has

repeatedly shown itself incapable of dealing with vexed socio-political problems in the country because of its sledgehammer approach to dealing them. Yet, it has assumed right to deal with such problems in the name of defending the country. Absence of effective political institutions and mechanisms has been facilitating this approach. Unless realistic and principled political elite, not averse to acting in a statesman-like manner, emerges in the country to take charge of affairs and the army reverts to the barracks in letter and spirit, the dark clouds hovering over Pakistan are unlikely to go away.

### Summing Up

- The threat to Pakistani establishment from Taliban and the other Wahabi/Deobandi Islamist radicals stems from the basic contradictions in the concept of the Pakistani nation. The propensity of successive regimes to live with this ambiguity has kept the instincts for creating a theocratic state alive in Pakistani society.
- The progressive Islamisation of politics in Pakistan has slowly allowed the Wahabi ideology to make inroads into Pakistani society. This process was enthusiastically encouraged by Zia-ul Haq who took up the issue of Islamisation to serve his political objectives. The Afghan war further strengthened the Wahabi/Deobandi hold on the Pakistani army and the establishment.
- The creation of the Taliban by Pakistan was another instance of exploiting Islam for narrow national and regional goals. The Taliban grew much bigger in time and spun out of control of Pakistan and its agencies like the ISI.
- Post 9/11, instead of realising the implications of the Taliban/Al-Qaeda nexus and taking a principled stand against it, the Pakistani

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establishment took recourse to duplicity and tried to protect these elements as its 'strategic assets' even as it assured the Americans of its resolve to fight these forces.

- The Swat deal of April 2009 made it clear to the Pakistani government that manipulating the Taliban for its ends was no longer possible and unless they are dealt with effectively, they may destroy the existing order and system in the country. Very reluctantly, the Pakistan army has launched several operations against the Taliban in the aftermath of the Swat deal.
- However, the larger issue of combating Islamic radicalism is nowhere on the horizon. Unless Pakistan deals with the basic issue of 'Islam and the State' and resolves the basic contradictions, the threat of radical Islam will remain.
- Radical Islamic forces with sanctuaries and support bases in south Punjab, now appear set to expand their area of influence to other places. Finding its military capabilities already overstretched and realising that its usual

sledge-hammer approach to tackling militancy in Punjab would not be effective, the Pakistani military establishment and the ISI seem to be contemplating using the Tablighi Jamaat to confront the Taliban and their other Islamic radical cohorts ideologically. This policy could eventually force a pacifist TJ movement to arm itself for protection against attacks from Islamic radicals rooting for jihad. This could effectively mark the beginning of the 'Lebanonisation' of Pakistan.

- The outcome of the conflict between Islamic radicalism and the state would depend in general on the basic instincts of the people at large, and the commitment of the army to fight the radical Islamic forces it has fostered over the years.
- There are important sectarian minorities in Pakistan that may together with the Barelvis constitute the majority. If such a group engages itself in a bloody struggle with the Taliban, it may lead to a 'Lebanonisation' of the Pakistani state. ■

## CHAPTER V

# THE ECONOMY OF PAKISTAN: STRUCTURAL WEAKNESSES

Pakistan is in the midst of a serious economic crisis. Its GDP growth declined to 2 per cent in 2008-2009.<sup>1</sup> The debt service to GDP ratio stood at 2.1 per cent of GDP during July 2008-March 2009. In October 2009, Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves were just sufficient to meet six weeks' imports. Exports had fallen; inflation was running at over 30 per cent. The rupee had depreciated by 20 per cent between March and November 2008. The balance of payments situation had also deteriorated considerably. Even on socio-economic parameters, Pakistan ranked 141 out of 182 on the Human Development Index (HDI) taking into account factors like life expectancy, educational achievement and purchasing power.<sup>2</sup>

Pakistan sought help to manage its capital crisis from a variety of sources, including multilateral lending agencies and sympathetic countries which came together under the name of the "Friends of Democratic Pakistan (FoDP)". While Pakistan is managing to stay afloat by securing funds from external sources, this obviously has implications for the future stability of Pakistan. How the Pakistan economy is going to perform in the future is going to have a bearing on Pakistan's ability to come out of its multiple crises. For stability, Pakistan needs

long term economic growth and socio-economic development. Yet, Pakistan's economy is suffering from structural weaknesses which are not easy to remove overnight. Presently, the economy is dependent upon external assistance and workers' remittances. In this context, the worsening security situation is likely to hamper the prospect of sustained economic recovery which in turn may further aggravate the security situation. Thus Pakistan is caught in a vicious cycle of a deteriorating economy and a worsening security situation.

### **Economic Growth**

When General Musharraf took control of Pakistan after the coup in 1999, Pakistan was in the throes of economic disrepair and in need of debt relief given the freeze of foreign currency accounts after the nuclear tests in May 1998. However, within a couple of years, Pakistan was witness to generally strong economic growth for around seven years, with the economy running into problems in 2008. Real GDP growth (See Figure 5.1) which averaged above 7 per cent during 2005-2007, declined to 5.8 per cent in 2007-2008 and further to 2 per cent in 2008-2009. This gave the impression that

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<sup>1</sup> Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey 2008-09*.

<sup>2</sup> *Human Development Report 2009*, Country Fact Sheets on Pakistan.

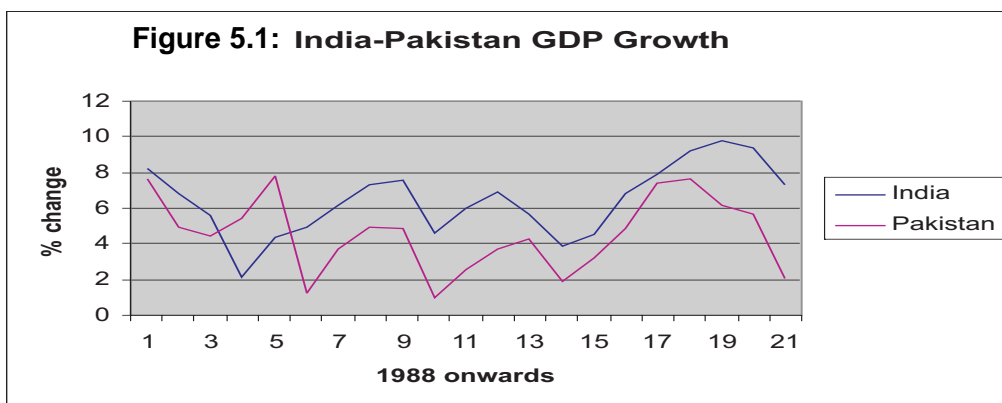


Pakistan's economy was making impressive strides during the last few years.

Post 9/11, remittances coming into Pakistan increased substantively, the value of the rupee improved, and the ratio of Pakistan's deficit to its GDP decreased. The inflow of external financing ensured that banks were free to lend to the private sector rather than the government. However, this rate of growth could not be sustained. This was partly due to the fact that the growth was not fuelled by sound economic fundamentals. Rather, this growth was credit driven, which in turn only added to the already significant existing external deficit.

While the banking sector should have tightened interest rates, policy makers and the elite who have the ability to spend resisted this step, which underscores the fact that the Pakistan economy is an elitist economy. The complacency that set in with the external financing post 9/11 perhaps slowed the pace of critical fiscal reforms. Yet, the high rate of growth in these years obfuscated the real problems of disproportionate private sector credit and the lack of social development.

If one takes a look at the sectoral breakup of GDP (See Figure 5.2) over a period of 40 years from 1960 to 2000, it becomes apparent that the



Gross Domestic Product, Constant Prices (Annual percentage change)

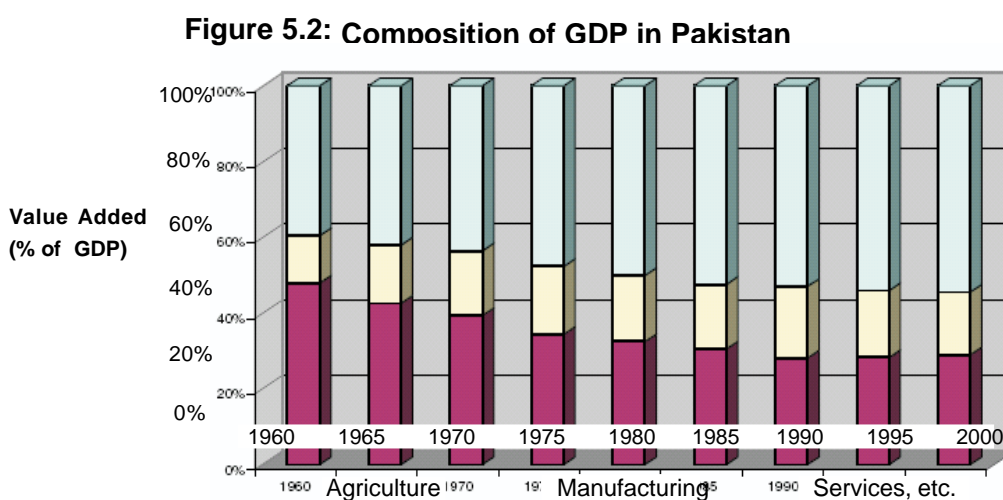


Figure 5.1— Source: International Monetary Fund, 2009

Figure 5.2— Source: World Development Indicators Online, World Bank, Washington DC, 2000

composition of Pakistan's GDP in terms of the value added by sector, has shifted slowly. It moved away from its initial dependence on agriculture, with manufacturing remaining relatively constant, and a significant growth in the services sector. The agriculture sector has been affected by its high dependence on the cotton crop, which is in itself vulnerable to drought and flooding as well as adverse weather conditions and pest damage. The irrigation system is not efficient, water supply is inadequate and the amount of land under cultivation has not increased. Additional factors which hamper production include soil erosion, water logging and salinity.

It is difficult to expect a change in the status quo given the dominance of the agriculture sector by wealthy landowners who profit by evading taxes, borrowing heavily, and becoming bad debtors. While the growth of the services sector gives an indication of the development of the retail sector in Pakistan, it also signals the inequality between the rural and urban sectors, with agriculture on the decline. While globally, reliance on agriculture has been on the wane given the emphasis on manufacturing and services, it would be important for a human resources intensive country like Pakistan to attach due importance to agricultural development and productivity till education levels improve. This is because the soaring population levels coupled with declining birth rates could lead to increased unemployment rates, and increase disparity thus impacting the quality of life.

While the share of manufacturing in GDP has increased since about 2002-2003, this sector has been affected by both international factors and domestic problems pertaining to shortage of skilled workers,

poor physical infrastructure, official corruption, political instability and continuing terrorist attacks. In addition, acute energy shortages prevented industry from performing optimally. Manufacturing output has really been affected due to the fact that Pakistan has a very narrow production base, with an overemphasis on yarn-spinning and sugar refining. In the last few years, the textile sector has faced problems and there is a need for diversification of the manufacturing base to include high value added goods. The major impetus to growth has really come from the services sector. In the past five years (since 2003-04), the services sector has grown at an average of 6.6 per cent annually, specially in the sectors of transport, storage and communication, wholesale and retail and social services. It has a growing but as yet small information technology sector. The flow of tourists to Pakistan is limited.

Pakistan suffers from a lack of infrastructure in multiple sectors like water, irrigation, power and transport which adversely affects its attractiveness for investment, growth and competitiveness of industry and makes exports unviable. Pakistan has been facing water shortages, and it is expected that Pakistan will probably face an acute water crisis in the next two decades. In addition the water infrastructure is in poor condition. Pakistan is to invest nearly Rs 60 billion (US\$ 1 billion) per year in new dams and related infrastructure over the next five years.<sup>3</sup> It has also been facing severe energy shortages. The per capita energy consumption in Pakistan is supposed to be amongst the lowest in the world. In 2007, the shortfall in electricity was about 4,500 MW. This is expected to increase to 6,000 MW by 2010.<sup>4</sup> Reports suggest a net electricity deficit of 40 per cent. The price of electricity has risen by 700

<sup>3</sup> "Pakistan Infrastructure Implementation Capacity Assesment (PIICA)", Report No. 41630-PK, November 2007, World Bank.

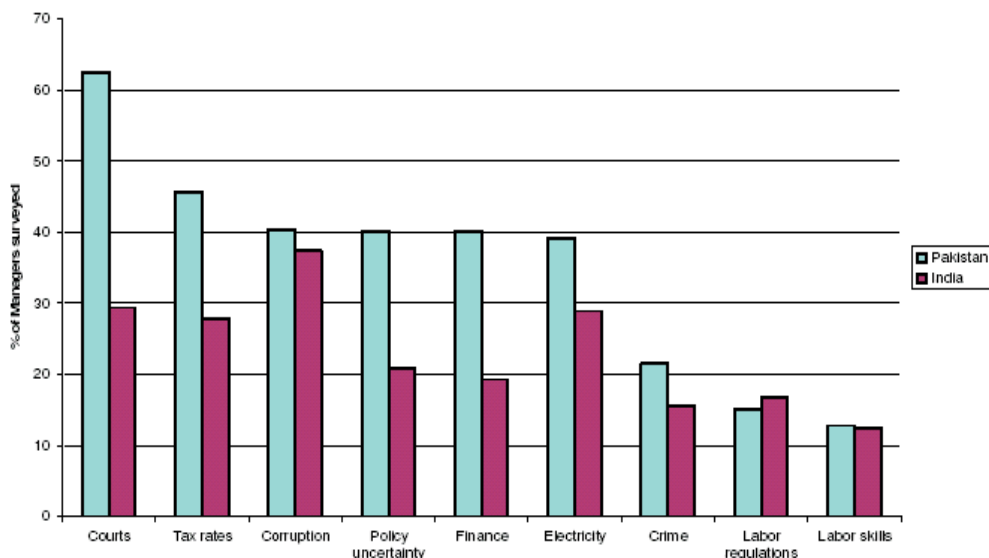
<sup>4</sup> Ibid.

per cent in the last 15 years.<sup>5</sup> It has been found that about 40 per cent of firms in Pakistan felt that lack of electricity caused severe constraints in the operation and growth of their businesses.<sup>6</sup> It is widely believed that the country's transmission and distribution networks need to be improved and that regulatory tariffs need to keep up with operational costs. According to noted Pakistani economist, Shahid Javed Burki, Pakistan's GDP per capita could double in the next 15 years from US \$ 700 to US \$ 1400 in constant terms by 2020<sup>7</sup> with adequate supply of energy. The energy crisis is likely to continue unless there is an increase in investment in power generation which can only come about if there is requisite capital from private investors and commercial banks. Till then, there would continue to be a constraint in industrial growth, impacting all sectors of the economy. Inefficiencies in the transport sector have also affected the economy negatively, and there is an apparent need for huge investments in road, rail,

and airport infrastructure.

Weaknesses in Pakistan's infrastructure have also driven away Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and affected trade prospects as well (See Figure 5.3 for details). One of the major weaknesses which dampens the investment climate in Pakistan is the judicial system. In a survey of managers in 2002-2003 in India, there was a lack of confidence in the Pakistani system, for accountability in upholding contracts, particularly for small businesses with either limited political connections or none. Also, the time taken to enforce a contract is much longer in Pakistan (taking an average of 395 days), as was evident from calculations done in 2004. Other factors which affect the inflow of investment include high tax rates, corruption, policy uncertainty, inadequate finance, shortage of electricity, and problems of crime, labour regulations and inadequate labour skills..

**Figure 5.3:** Major Barriers to Trade



**Source**

<sup>5</sup> Mohammad Asif, "Let There Be Light", *Newsline*, April 2008, p.71.

<sup>6</sup> World Bank Report No.41328-PK, May 22, 2008.

<sup>7</sup> Shahid Javed Burki, "The Weight of History: Pakistan's Energy Problem", in Robert M. Hathaway, Bhumika Muchhala, Michael Kugelman (eds.), *Fueling The Future: Meeting Pakistan's Energy Needs in the 21st Century*, Washington D.C., Woodrow Wilson International Centre for Scholars, 2007.

In fact, even according to the Global Competitiveness Index 2009-2010, Pakistan scores pretty low in most of the basic requirements like institutions, infrastructure, macroeconomic stability, health and primary education, goods market efficiency and labour market efficiency, financial market sophistication, technological readiness and market size. The top problem areas which affect the business environment in Pakistan include government instability, policy instability, corruption, inflation, access to financing, inefficient government bureaucracy and inadequate infrastructure.<sup>8</sup> It is increasingly apparent that the internal security situation in Pakistan has had a huge impact on the economy. Pakistan's role as a frontline state in the war on terror affected normal trading activities. Economic growth declined. There was a decline in tax collection due to a compression in import demand. At the same time, inflow of foreign investment and privatisation efforts were affected adversely. Also Pakistan has lost human capital and infrastructure. The Pakistan government estimates the cost of the war for Pakistan at around US\$ 35 billion since 2001-2002.<sup>9</sup>

### **Impact of Recession on the Pakistan Economy**

While the recession did impact Pakistan's economy negatively, most of the country's economic woes are due to the long existing structural weaknesses, as is evident from the fact that the Pakistan economy was already in crisis mode since January 2008, eight months before the recession. The Pakistan economy was already in dire straits before it felt the reverberations set off by the global financial

crisis. Within the first eight months of 2008, the country was faced with the problems associated with increasing oil and food prices, devaluation of the rupee, an acute shortage of electricity leading to long blackouts and a deceleration in growth/development led by Pakistan's real estate and services. This was augmented by the financial crisis and persisting political instability. This led to a loss in confidence among foreign investors. There was a massive impact on Pakistan's foreign exchange reserves which fell by 75 per cent to 3.4 billion. During this time, huge numbers of the Pakistani elite also pulled out their money from Pakistan. In such a situation Pakistan was forced to fall back on the IMF for help.

The effect of recession on the Pakistan economy becomes quite visible if one looks at the changes in some of the key economic indicators. Large-scale manufacturing as of March 2009 had witnessed a contraction of nearly 20 per cent. Export growth during the same period also declined by 26 per cent.<sup>10</sup> The current account deficit of the country grew by US\$ 1 billion during July-August 2008 as a result of the deteriorating balance of payment situation. The deficit surged to US\$ 2.572 billion in July-August 2008 as compared to US\$ 1.571 billion dollars during the same period in July-August 2007.<sup>11</sup> This was largely due to the tremendous increase in the oil import bill and the growing trade deficit.

The Pakistani economy has picked up post-recession. The real sectors of the economy including large-scale manufacturing and exports have shown signs of recovery. The large-scale manufacturing

<sup>8</sup> *The Global Competitiveness Report 2009-10*, World Economic Forum.

<sup>9</sup> Government of Pakistan, Ministry of Finance, *Economic Survey, 2008-09*.

<sup>10</sup> Government of Pakistan, Finance Division, Principal Economic Adviser's Wing, "Pakistan Economic Update, First Quarter Fiscal Year 2009-10", (July-September 2009) at <http://www.finance.gov.pk>.

<sup>11</sup> *The Nation*, September 18, 2008.

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sector grew by 0.9 per cent in August 2009 after 13 months of negative growth. There was a significant increase in cement production and a decline in petroleum products and in steel. The rate of growth in overall large scale manufacturing production was 1.01 per cent in August 2009. Export growth was recorded at -14.2 per cent for September 2009, after a -5.4 per cent year on year decline till August, the lowest contraction since December 2008. Investment conditions have improved, yet credit to the private sector has gone down by 3.0 per cent.<sup>12</sup> This would continue to fuel consumption driven growth. Unfortunately credit is not going into productive investment like factories, infrastructure and services like India's software services and BPO's.

The domestic economic activity in any case experienced retarded growth due to multiple factors like the effects of the IMF policies intended to stabilise the economy, poor balance of payments situation, deteriorating internal security condition, increasing energy shortages, and lack of FDI. The tendency towards a declining rate of inflation had held for 11 months by September 2009. Inflation as gauged by the Consumer Price Index came down to 10.1 per cent only in September 2009, a fall from 23.9 per cent in September 2008, and this was due to the food as well as nonfood categories.<sup>13</sup>

While the balance of payments situation has improved, this is mostly on account of lesser imports and the huge inflow of workers' remittances which stood at US\$ 806 million in September 2009.<sup>14</sup> In fact, growth in remittances has

continued contrary to expectations that the global recession would lead to a decline in remittances due to massive job losses by overseas workers. Remittances from most countries have increased, but especially so from Abu Dhabi which has been linked to the construction boom there. Even though post-recession the Pakistan economy has improved, structural weaknesses led to the economy collapsing even before the effects of recession could be felt. Therefore, there is enough reason to doubt that the Pakistan economy can sustain this path of recovery. Pakistan's GDP growth in 2008-09 at 2.0 per cent was even below the IMF expectations of 3.4 per cent growth. IMF projections for 2009-10 stand at 5.0 per cent. The Advisor to the Prime Minister on Finance, Shaukat Tarin has said that there will be attempts to increase the tax to GDP ratio from the current 9.5 per cent of GDP to 15-16 per cent so as to broaden the tax base for socio-economic development.<sup>15</sup> Such projections would be contingent on whether Pakistan is able to carry out IMF prescriptions in its fiscal, monetary and exchange rate policies. For instance, Pakistan has agreed to lower its fiscal deficit as a percentage of GDP by increasing taxes and eliminating subsidies. However, all these are politically sensitive issues and the end result hinges on successful implementation. The massive task ahead can be gauged from the fact that Pakistan has the lowest tax-to-GDP ratio in South Asia, as less than 1 per cent of its population pays income tax.<sup>16</sup>

Even though the Pakistani economy has been teetering, government expenditure on defence

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<sup>12</sup> See f.n. 10.

<sup>13</sup> Ibid.

<sup>14</sup> Economist Intelligence Unit, "Country Report on Pakistan", November 2009.

<sup>15</sup> *The Nation*, April 3, 2009.

<sup>16</sup> Report of the Atlantic Council of the United States, "Needed: A Comprehensive US Policy Towards Pakistan", Washington DC, February 2009.

continues to be substantial. Although there was an expectation that there would be a decrease in Pakistan's defence budget due to IMF dictates, the figures given in the Pakistan government's budget for 2009-10 indicated that defence spending had increased by 15 per cent to Rs. 342 billion (US\$ 4.11 billion). There are various indications that Pakistan's actual defence spending may be relatively higher than the official figures, as they do not take into account heads like military pensions, benefits for the retired and serving personnel, military aid from Gulf states, space and nuclear programmes and income generated by various business interests of the Armed Forces.<sup>17</sup> Pakistan can hardly afford to be in a debilitating arms race. It needs to have good relations with India. However, ever since the Mumbai terror attacks on November 26, 2008, India-Pakistan relations have deteriorated. This may suit the Pakistan Army, but this cannot be in the interest of the Pakistani economy or its people.

Some segments in Pakistan have been of the view that stronger trade relations with India would help Pakistan, and the expenditure incurred on the Kashmir issue has affected the rate of economic growth in Pakistan. For instance Shahid Javed Burki, identifies four areas which would have benefited with improvement in Indo-Pak relations. They include a reduction in military expenditures, an increase in intra-regional trade especially between Pakistan and India, an increase in the flow of foreign direct investment, and an investor-friendly domestic environment. After computing the advantages for the Pakistan economy with respect to the four factors given above, he states

that if the country had not got entangled in the Kashmir dispute, the country's long term growth rate could have been about 2-2.5 per cent higher than what it has actually achieved. A higher rate of growth of this magnitude, sustained over 50 years, would have increased the gross domestic product (GDP) by a factor of between 3.5 and 4.5. He goes on to state that Pakistan's GDP could have been three and a half times larger than that in 2004-5—US\$ 450 billion rather than US\$ 110 billion—and its income per capita would have been US\$ 2900 rather than US\$ 710.<sup>18</sup>

Pakistan has approached multiple donors for monetary assistance. The IMF agreed to give Pakistan a loan of US\$ 7.6 billion with conditions which require fiscal tightening. In July 2009, the fund enhanced its loan assistance to US\$ 11.3 billion from the initially sanctioned US\$ 7.6 billion. In April 2009, FoDP donor countries pledged an assistance of US\$ 5.8 billion. However, there has been a problem of slow disbursement of funds. In the meanwhile, the US has pledged to provide Pakistan with US\$ 1.5 billion assistance every year for civilian purposes under the Kerry-Lugar Act. Western efforts to prop up the Pakistan economy are quite expected due to Pakistan's indispensability in managing the situation in Afghanistan. While this will allow Pakistan to extract increasing aid from the West, the question remains as to whether such external assistance can sustain Pakistani economy in the long run.

### Future Trends

From the aforesaid, it is clear that economy of Pakistan is going to be in a crisis situation for the

<sup>17</sup> *Military Balance 2010*, IISS, London, Availbale at: [http://pdfserve.informaword.com/26092\\_75891250\\_919051843.pdf](http://pdfserve.informaword.com/26092_75891250_919051843.pdf) (accessed March 3, 2010)

<sup>18</sup> Shahid Javed Burki, *Changing Perceptions, Altered Reality: Pakistan's Economy under Musharraf, 1999-2006*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2007.

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next few years. So far, the consumption-led service sector has grown artificially. There has been a growth in retail buying by the privileged classes, which has led to an increase in the GDP. However, this GDP growth collapsed even prior to the recession, due to structural weaknesses in the economy. Agriculture has declined and the manufacturing sector has not grown appreciably due to lack of investment, as the investment climate is not good. The export sector is not efficient because it is mostly agriculture-driven. There is an emphasis on cotton production which is dependent on water, and energy supplies which are imported. Value-added exports are low which in turn affect the margins of profit. All this has led to a dependence on imports leading to problems of foreign exchange.

As has been mentioned earlier, there are many structural weaknesses in the economy of Pakistan. Therefore, it is foreign aid only that will be able to keep the economy going. The flow of foreign aid is tied to conditionalities and structural adjustments dictated by international financial institutions. Pakistan carried out some changes under Musharraf, but even then the economic decline was apparent eight months before global recession. IMF prescriptions have their limitations. They are fiscal prescriptions which focus on factors like interest rates, balance of payments and inflation. They do not include cuts in defence spending and do not prescribe how to improve investment in manufacturing, or how to invest in exports. Due to the worsening security

situation in Pakistan, the investment climate is not likely to improve in the near future.

Future trends of the Pakistani economy are not very optimistic, according to the projections made by The Economist Intelligence Unit (See Appendix III). For instance, the real GDP growth is projected to decline from 3.7 per cent in 2009 to 1.9 per cent in 2010. Similarly, the services sector growth is expected to decline from 3.6 per cent in 2009 to 1.9 per cent in 2010. The rate of unemployment is likely to rise from 15.2 per cent in 2009 to 16.2 per cent in 2010. The fiscal deficit of the country is projected to increase from 5.2 per cent in 2009 to 5.8 per cent in 2010. Similarly, the current account deficit is expected to increase from US\$ 2.406 billion in 2009 to US\$ 5.05 billion in 2010. However, the international reserves in Pakistan are expected to rise marginally from US\$ 15.304 billion in 2009 to US\$ 16.347 billion in 2010.

In sum, the vicious cycle of economic decline and political instability in Pakistan is likely to continue. At this critical juncture, Pakistan has to realise that the existing policy of increasing defence spending is taking a heavy toll on socio-economic development and it will impact its economy negatively in the long run. Rather than having an adversarial policy vis-à-vis India it must take steps to improve its relationship with India which will certainly have a positive effect on its economy. However, Pakistani behaviour, post-Mumbai attack, does not indicate any change in its thinking.



## CHAPTER VI

# CIVIL-MILITARY RELATIONS: ARMY AS THE FINAL ARBITER

The military has been the most important player in Pakistani politics determining not only the contours of civil-military relations but directing the country's foreign policy pertaining to India, Afghanistan and its nuclear program. Given the ideological contradictions and its aspiration for parity with India, Pakistan entered into Western sponsored military alliance to enhance its defence capability soon after its creation. To quote Ayub, "The consideration of security embraces the defence of our country and the preservation of our ideology.... And since we live in a world of combating philosophies, we have to fight to preserve our ideology *which is the basis of our national defence (emphasis added)*"<sup>1</sup>. Since India is portrayed as an imminent threat the actions of the armed forces and their several forays into politics have been unquestioningly accepted. An analyst has aptly described this prominence in the following words, "Pakistan's preoccupation with the security threat and the attendant priority for defence, partially led to the supremacy of the Defence Ministry and the General Head Quarters (GHQ) in the weakened parliamentary process in the post-Jinnah years"<sup>2</sup>.

This chapter seeks answers to two important questions in the context of civil-military relations in Pakistan. First, would the relations between the civil and the military witness any significant change in the post Musharraf period, and second, has the war on terror further strengthened the military in Pakistan? The paper is divided into four sections. The first section dwells upon the history of civil-military relations in terms of what are the major lessons learnt. The second section encapsulates the developments in the post-Musharraf period and how the military which was extremely unpopular is slowly regaining its legitimacy. The third section reflects upon how the war on terror has not only enhanced the army's defence capability but has made it the lynchpin of Pakistan's relations with the US notwithstanding the requirement of civilian oversight of the military as mentioned in the Kerry-Lugar Bill. The last section analyses the future of civil-military relations.

There have been several in-depth studies on Pakistan's military and civil-military relations.<sup>3</sup> However, this chapter dwells on the post-Musharraf

<sup>1</sup> Ayub Khan, *Friends Not Masters*, London: Oxford university Press, 1967, p.114

<sup>2</sup> Iftikhar H Malik, *State and Civil Society in Pakistan*, London: St Martin, 1997, p.75

<sup>3</sup> Some of these works are Hasan Askari Rizvi, *Military and Politics in Pakistan, 1947-86*, Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1987, Ayesha Jalal, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, Stephen Cohen, *Pakistan Army* Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998, A.R.Siddiqui, *Pakistan Army: Myth and Reality*, Lahore, Vanguard, 1996, Brian Cloughley, *Pakistan Army: War and Insurrections*, Karachi: Oxford university Press, 2002, Ayesha Siddiqi, *Military Inc.: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy*, London: Pluto Press, 2007, Shuja Nawaz, *Crossed Sword: Pakistan, its Army and the War Within*, Karachi: Oxford University Press, 2008, Brian Cloughley, *Pakistan Army: War and Insurrections*, Karachi: Oxford university Press, 2002, Mazhar Aziz, *Military Control in Pakistan: The Parallel State*, London: Routledge, 2008.



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phase in detail. The study of this phase is significant for two reasons. First, the restoration of democracy after nine years of Musharraf's rule stirred hopes and expectations that the civilian government led by the PPP will seek to institutionalise democracy. Second, an elected civilian government will bring in democratic consensus and support for the ongoing war on terror because the earlier military government lacked popular legitimacy. This chapter attempts to look at the civil-military relations in the post-Musharraf period to analyse whether democracy would bring any shift in the relations between the two.

### **History of Civil Military Relations**

Bitter political contestation, disagreement over the nature of the state and constitution, frequent changes of government and the ensuing political instability and above all a strong perception of the Indian threat gave Pakistan army – the only cohesive institution in the country – a central position in Pakistani society and polity. Even before the military was invited to takeover power by the then President Iskander Mirza in 1958, the army was seen as playing a clear role in dealing with internal security problems in the wake of anti-Ahmadiya riots at home and also in negotiating the Mutual Defence Agreement signed with the US in 1954. In the process it developed its own opinion about politics, politicians and country's security. As the military remained in power for more than three decades of Pakistan's existence, the popular belief that the military is better poised to take care of the security and foreign policy needs of the country took strong roots. The civilian governments failed to inspire public confidence and rather than taking steps to strengthen democracy they wasted their energy in meaningless political rivalries and used

the army for political purposes and indirectly helped it grow as a powerful institution.<sup>4</sup>

The brief period when the army really went back to the barracks in the political sense was during 1971-1973, after Pakistan suffered a humiliating defeat and lost its eastern wing. However, it regained part of its lost glory from its successful operation in Balochistan. By 1977 the army's help was sought to diffuse the political crisis arising out of Bhutto's rigged elections. In no time Zia-ul-Haq, the supposedly pliant general – the only qualification for which he was made to supersede many of his seniors to become army chief of Pakistan – took over power with the promise of conducting elections soon afterwards. However, he did not keep his promise and went on to execute Bhutto. Zia ruled Pakistan for eleven years and compelled the political parties to accept article 58(2b), which he inserted in the Constitution, which gave him immense power as the President in lieu of conducting a party-less election in 1985 and promising not to form a National Security Council.

Zia's death in a mysterious plane crash saw the emergence of a troika in which military remained an important centre of power. The military propped up the Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) to defeat the PPP, which was being led by Benazir Bhutto in the 1988 elections. Lt. Gen (Retd.) Assad Durrani, former ISI chief in an affidavit submitted to the Supreme Court admitted later that he was asked by the former army chief Mirza Aslam Beg to distribute funds among politicians to form the IJI to defeat Benazir Bhutto given the hostility between the PPP and the army. The military's role in the hanging of Z.A. Bhutto was an important factor in defining PPP's relations with them. Benazir was not given oath of office till she conceded the civilian

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<sup>4</sup> For an analysis of Pakistan's Army's mindset see, Satish Nambiar, "The Pakistan Military's Mindset", in Satish Kumar ed., *India's National Security Annual Review 2006*, New Delhi: Knowledge World 2006, pp.292-93

government's powers pertaining to three areas which army considered as core to Pakistan's security and its own institutional interests: government policy towards India, Afghanistan and the nuclear issues<sup>5</sup>. It is not surprising that Benazir later lamented to Christina Lamb when she said, "I am in office not in power"<sup>6</sup>.

Having failed to defeat her in the 1988 elections, the establishment used the ISI in 1989 to subvert PPP's loyalists to vote against her in the National Assembly. Reportedly, they played the tapes of a secret meeting between Rajiv Gandhi and Benazir to win over her loyalists. According to an analyst, Lt Gen (Retd.) Hamid Gul and other intelligence officers believed that Bhutto would 'sell out' Pakistan to rival India because of her family's real or imagined connections with India.<sup>7</sup> The relationship between the two was never smooth; Benazir was sacked twice in 1990 and 1996 with the approval of the army.

Democratically elected governments were sacked at will till the troika system was done away with under the 13<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the constitution in 1997, which removed Art 58 (2b) and restored the supremacy of Parliament and civilian government. Prior to this amendment elaborate discussions took place between the then prime minister Nawaz Sharif and the then army chief Jehangir Karamat and the army accommodated the civilian government's proposal in return for the army chief's right to hold the post of Chairman JCSC simultaneously. It needs to be noted here that

PPP refused to cooperate with the PML in moving this amendment. Gen Jehangir Karamat's resignation in 1997 under pressure from the civilian government for his suggestion to have a National Security Council seemed to suggest at a superficial level that the army was forced by the turn of circumstances to accept civilian supremacy. However, subsequent events proved that the army as an institution was not prepared to play second fiddle to the civilian government on important issues.

It should also be mentioned here that the civilian governments also allowed the army to connect with people at the cost of undermining the civilian government's ability to govern by using the army in civilian duties like collecting electricity bills, helping in census exercises, fixing sewerage and managing the WAPDA. The military has also developed an interest in economic matters and acquired vast economic powers during long periods of military rule. To quote Ayesha Siddiqa: "The military echelons pursue policies to acquire opportunities and assets that facilitate capital formation, which enhances the position of the military officers and brings them onto a par with other members of the ruling elite"<sup>8</sup>. To safeguard these interests the military would not hesitate to intervene and finally take over power.

The Kargil war in early 1999 and the sacking of Gen Pervez Musharraf by Nawaz Sharif in October 1999 ultimately paved the way for military intervention after some years of uneasy relationship

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<sup>5</sup> It needs to be mentioned that Army created and funded Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad to defeat Pakistan People's Party. It tried to sponsor a no-confidence motion in 1988 by playing a cassette of Rajiv Gandhi-Benazir Bhutto meeting in Islamabad that it had secretly taped but failed and finally in 1990, her government was sacked by using the article 58-2b.

<sup>6</sup> Christina Lamb, *Waiting for Allah*, London: Hamish Hamilton, 1991, p.107

<sup>7</sup> Christina Lamb and Edward W Desmond, *The Times*, London, March 27, 1989

<sup>8</sup> Ayesha Siddiqa, *Military Inc.*, London: Pluto Press, 2007, p.60. Also see the chapter on "Expansion of Milbus", pp.139-173

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between the two institutions. Gen Musharraf, blamed Nawaz Sharif for seeking to undermine the army. He reportedly stated that “few at the helm of affairs in the past were intriguing to destroy the last institution of stability left in Pakistan by creating dissent in the ranks of the armed forces”.<sup>9</sup> Musharraf introduced his brand of democracy under a draft entitled “Sustainable Democracy in Pakistan” and circulated it widely. He made it very clear in the draft that the army had a role in the running of security affairs of the country. He divided the political parties and was able to get support from the PML-Q, otherwise known as the King’s Party. He played an important role in crafting the controlled democratic system that came to the fore after the 2002 elections. He enabled the alliance of religious forces known as Muttahida Majlis-e-Amal (MMA) which secured sixty seats in the National Assembly. He subverted each of the state institutions to perpetuate himself in power. The 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the constitution introduced significant changes that diluted the civilian government’s authority. The infamous Article 58 (2b) which according to him would prevent direct military intervention in future was restored. Due to political opposition, he constituted the National Security Council through an act of Parliament rather than making it part of the Constitution through the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

The military takeover of October 12, 1999 has some important lessons for political forces and the civilian governments:

- The military has always waited for the civilian government to be delegitimised both in its words and actions.
- It has taken advantage of political fractures within the system and the unending political deadlocks.

- The prevailing political atmosphere has always facilitated the army take-over. For example: the political impasse over constitution-making and deep rivalry among political forces made Iskander Mirza invite Ayub Khan to take over as he thought it will work out to his advantage. In 1977, the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) led by Air Vice Marshal (Retd.) Asghar Ali Khan wrote a letter to Gen Zia requesting him to take over and interestingly, Z.A. Bhutto also requested Zia to take over and conduct free and fair elections; in 1999 the Grand Democratic Alliance openly asked the Army to take over. Nawaz Sharif was also conducting himself in such a dictatorial manner that even Benazir Bhutto asked the army to step in. Finally, Nawaz forced the army to intervene in a way by sacking Gen Musharraf, when he was on a tour of Sri Lanka. A similar kind of situation may arise in the future given the relations between the political parties.
- The army has always found support from the political parties and people at the time of its take over as the civilian governments in the past have acted in the most arbitrary manner undermining democratic opposition. People perceive the army as a neutral arbitrator and see it as the only force which can replace an autocratic government.

However, the political scenario in Pakistan indicates that these lessons were not learnt. The following are some illustration of the lessons unlearned.

- For example: Zardari’s promise to restore the judges including chief justice made him unpopular and the army played a positive role in the February 2009 crisis thereby regaining its image as the neutral arbitrator.

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<sup>9</sup> Text of General Musharraf’s speech as appeared in *Dawn*, October 18, 1999

- The army is also likely to gather further strength from the continuing problems between the PPP and the PML-N. It regained the popularity which it had lost during the Musharraf's regime when it quietly advised President Zardari to restore Shahbaz Sharif's government in Punjab.
- The PPP has failed to build a working relationship with the main opposition party the PML-N. It is bogged down by charges of inefficiency and corruption. This has worked to the advantage of the army.

The army's popularity should be seen in the right context. The army had become highly unpopular during Musharraf's rule. His exit therefore generated a hope that the advent of democratic rule would minimise the army's role. Unfortunately, the current PPP government has not been able to consolidate democracy. Developments over the past one year suggest that the army has assumed its central role in domestic, foreign and security affairs after a brief interlude.

### **Civil-Military Relations since 2008: From Marginal to Central**

The relations between the civilian government and the military in the post-Musharraf phase have not witnessed any major shift given the political dynamics of the country. It needs to be kept in mind that the PPP has always had an uneasy relationship with the military. Mutual distrust has been a marked feature of their relationship. Even during Benazir's homecoming in 2007 after clinching a deal with Musharraf, an attempt was made on her life in which more than hundred people were killed. She openly accused the army and the ISI of hatching a plot to assassinate her. Security lapses that finally led to Benazir's assassination in December 2007 continue to remain a major controversy. That the PPP demanded the investigation into her death to be

conducted by the United Nations indicates the utter lack of trust in the internal security system dominated by the army.

After the elections of 2008, the PPP along with the PML-N campaigned for the removal of Musharraf from Presidency. This campaign led by political parties (in which the lawyers also actively participated) forced him to resign. Earlier under pressure, Musharraf had given up his uniform and chosen Gen Kayani as his successor. Previously, Gen Kayani was the military secretary to Benazir when she was the prime minister and he also reportedly negotiated the deal between Musharraf and Benazir that facilitated her return from exile. Gen Kayani's rise was the beginning of the end of Musharraf's regime. Given the prevailing anti-Army sentiments Gen Kayani approved the withdrawal of around three hundred army officers posted in civilian departments. The army assisted the Election Commission in conducting free and fair elections that saw PPP's emergence as the largest party. Under Gen Kayani, the army, as an institution, also distanced itself from various controversies relating to Musharraf and played a neutral role forcing Musharraf to resign. It played an important role in negotiating with the political parties to spare Musharraf from being tried by the court of law on charges of treason. Once he left the scene, the army regained its stature.

The army has not been very happy with the close relations that the PPP government under Zardari has cultivated with the US. Gilani's crucial maiden visit to Washington in 2008 helped the PPP government to come closer to the US, after Musharraf's exit. The army was then having several problems with the US on operational matters like intelligence sharing and drone attacks and was extremely critical of September 2008 ground operation by the US troops. It found the civilian government wanting in its reaction to such US interventions.

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Further, President Zardari's statement that India was not a security threat and Pakistan would not use its nuclear weapon against India was not to the liking of the army. To the great discomfort of the army he had also reportedly stated that "we have a Parliament which is already pre-agreed upon a friendly relationship with India. In spite of our disputes, we have a great future together". He emphasised greater trade between the two countries as a way forward. The fact that army did not approve of Zardari's view on India was confirmed on 19 November 2009 when the PPP Information Secretary Fauzia Wahab admitted that the President and the Army Chief have major differences on threat perceptions from India. Interestingly, the Parliamentary Committee suggested that "Pakistan's strategic interests should be protected by developing stakes in regional peace and trade by developing trade ties with neighbouring and regional countries"<sup>10</sup>. It is therefore not surprising that President Zardari was designated as a 'security risk' for Pakistan.<sup>11</sup> To allay the army's concerns he resigned from the Chairmanship of the Nuclear Command Authority (NCA), a power that he had inherited as per the 17<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the constitution, and handed over the power to Prime Minister Gilani.

It was also reported in the Pakistani media that the political differences between Prime Minister Gilani and President Zardari were growing as Gilani felt marginalised in the affairs of the state because of an interfering President. Therefore, an asserting Prime Minister, supported by the army, reportedly asked the National Security Advisor Mohammad Ali Durrani to resign for his public statement regarding Mumbai made on the direction

of the President without consulting the Prime Minister. Gilani also refused to approve the President's nominee as Pakistan's Ambassador to France. The uneasy relationship between the army and Zardari also indirectly contributed to differences between the Prime Minister and President.

The PPP government for the first time in Pakistan's history, and of course after the prior approval of the army, initiated a debate on the defence budget in the National Assembly even though the control of the civilian government over the army remained notional. This process, nevertheless, gave an impression of the democratisation of defence spending while subjecting the budget to the scrutiny of the Parliament. The defence budget however did not generate any debate and was passed without any cuts. Similarly, for the third time in Pakistan's history the military and intelligence agencies gave an in camera briefing about the security situation in the tribal areas to Parliamentarians. Legislators like Ayaz Amir complained that the presentation did not have anything which was not known to the Parliament. Though the civilian government and army gave the impression that there was a strong coordination between the two institutions, their action reflected a growing sense of mistrust about each other's intentions.

The government, on June 25, 2008 had deputed the chief of army staff for the principal application of military effort' and to politically engage people through their political representatives and simultaneously pay attention to the economic development of the region. It was suggested that

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<sup>10</sup> A reference to the Report of the 17 member Parliamentary Committee can be found in "Foreign Policy and the Wishes of the People", *Daily Times*, April 15, 2009

<sup>11</sup> See two interesting reports: Muhammad Saleh Zaafir, "What led to Change in N-Command", and Shakeel Shaikh, "Fear", in *The News International* (internet edition), December 1, 2009

the army chief would have the authority “to decide on the quantum, composition and positioning of military efforts”. This meeting was chaired by Prime Minister Gilani and was attended by the chief minister and the governor of the NWFP, along with foreign minister, frontier affairs minister and national security advisor, army chief and the ISI chief<sup>12</sup>. The civilian government also increased salaries and perks of the military personnel and announced extra grants to the soldiers deployed in FATA whereas no such benefits were given to the police or the paramilitary fighting the militants in equally difficult situations.

On the political front the army continued to remain important in spite of several setbacks in restoring peace in the FATA. The successful military operation in Swat and South Waziristan has restored people’s faith in the military in the meanwhile. It has also regained some degree of political legitimacy during the Punjab crisis when the governor removed the chief minister after the Supreme Court declared his election ‘null and void’. Many believed that this was done with the active connivance of President Zardari as it was difficult for him to deal with the PML-N over many issues—the most important being restoration of the Chief Justice. This crisis threatened to derail democracy as the lawyers’ protest paralysed the country. Gen Kayani was actively involved to resolve this issue and President Zardari held a series of meetings with him before he restored Shahbaz Sharif as the chief minister. Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry was finally restored as the Chief Justice of the Supreme Court.

The Mumbai attack in November 2008 again strained civil-military relations in Pakistan. Immediately after the attacks, Gilani’s proposal to

send the ISI chief for further investigation into the attacks was opposed by the army. As a result the government back-tracked from its earlier statement to say that it would send a Director level officer of the ISI to help in the investigation. The government took a hardline and refused to own Kasab as its citizen till the *Guardian* newspaper (London) carried an interview with Kasab’s father who confessed that Kasab was his son. Many analysts in Pakistan believe that given the war hysteria in the wake of the Mumbai attacks, the army regained some of its lost glory. Even the civilian government’s tough stand subsequently was prompted by the intervention of the military establishment. The army clearly wanted to use the plea of Indian threat to shift some of its troop from the western border to the eastern border with India and use this to highlight the Kashmir issue internationally. It also appeared that the Pakistan army was not comfortable with the idea of India-Pakistan dialogue where they did not have any direct role to play. The Director General of the ISI, Lt Gen Shuja Pasha in a meeting with the officials of the Indian High Commission openly conveyed the need to include the army in the dialogue process. This indicates their lack of faith in the civilian government in general and the PPP government in particular.

### **War on terror and Pakistan’s Military:**

The war on terror elevated the Pakistani military’s status as an important partner of the US. The Pakistan army has always shared a strong relationship with the Pentagon compared to the State Department which has helped the military to tide over stringent foreign policy measures that at times have threatened US-Pakistan relations. Due to its close relationship with the Pentagon, Pakistan

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<sup>12</sup> Iftikhar A Khan “Carrot and Stick Plan to Tackle Militancy: COAS gets Vast power/ Tribals to Expel Foreigner”, *Dawn*, June 26, 2008

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military has been able to procure sophisticated weapons that many fear, would be used against India as they have limited use in the Western border<sup>13</sup>. In spite of differences between the US and Pakistan over several operational matters, the Pakistan army has received generous aid from the US thus far.

The US military assistance of about more than US \$ 10 billion, since the beginning of the war on terror, has strengthened Pakistan army.<sup>14</sup> Unabashed US support has manifested in various forms which has undermined the civilian government. The Kerry-Lugar Bill that was approved by the Congress had made civilian control of military one of the pre-conditions for continued aid from the US. It needs to be mentioned that the US was extremely reluctant to let Gen Musharraf go out of power. This is one of the reasons why it had worked out terms of return for Benazir Bhutto in lieu of her support to Musharraf as the President of Pakistan.

The civilian aid passed by the US Congress in September 2009 became a major bone of contention for the Pakistan army that was slowly building up its relations with the US. The US \$ 7.5 billion aid over five years has a precondition that necessitates civilian oversight of the military. The military in the past has resisted this as 'interference' in its affairs to undermine its role in Pakistan – the saviour of the nation. According to a *New York Times* report the army chief after a meeting with the president and the

prime minister insisted that the foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi should visit the US to convey this message<sup>15</sup>. The army sent a public message that it had legitimate 'concerns' about the Kerry-Lugar bill and would like the Parliament to debate it. This issue was also taken up in the corps commanders' meeting. Both the president and prime minister had no objection to the conditionality because they felt the funds were required urgently. Moreover, it felt safe to have a powerful guarantor outside of the country given the predatory nature of the Pakistan army.<sup>16</sup> The Kerry-Lugar Act also known as "Enhanced Partnership with Pakistan Act of 2009" says that during fiscal year 2011-2014, no security related assistance may be provided to Pakistan in a fiscal year until the US Secretary of State, under the direction of the president, makes a certification (Section 203)" to appropriate congressional committees that "(T)he security forces of Pakistan are not materially and substantially subverting the political or judicial processes of Pakistan" [Section 203 (c)(3)] Section 302 (a) (15) of the Kerry-Lugar act also says the Secretary of State must offer the following every six months: 'an assessment of the extent to which the Government of Pakistan exercises effective civilian control of the military, including a description of the extent to which civilian executive leaders and parliament exercise oversight and approval of military budgets, the chain of command, the process of promotion for senior military leaders, civilian involvement in strategic guidance and planning, and military involvement in civil

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<sup>13</sup> See, "Military Aid to Pakistan has been Used Against India: PM", available at [http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/military-aid-to-pakistan-has-been-used-against-india-pm\\_100182257.html](http://www.thaindian.com/newsportal/uncategorized/military-aid-to-pakistan-has-been-used-against-india-pm_100182257.html), accessed on February 14, 2010.

<sup>14</sup> See a report by Julian E Barness and Paul Ritcher, "US Plans to Boost Civilian Aid to Pakistan", *Los Angeles Times*, March 24, 2009

<sup>15</sup> Jane Perlez, "Pakistan Aid Places US in the Midst of a Divide", *The New York Times*, October 12, 2009.

<sup>16</sup> This guarantee has not worked in the past. For example after the withdrawal of Pakistani forces during the Kargil war, the US issued a strong warning to the Pakistan Army not to stage a coup on Sharif's insistence.

<sup>17</sup> The electronic version of the full text of the Act can be obtained from the following web address of the US Government Printing Office (GPO): [http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111\\_cong\\_bills&docid=f:s1707enr.txt.pdf](http://frwebgate.access.gpo.gov/cgi-bin/getdoc.cgi?dbname=111_cong_bills&docid=f:s1707enr.txt.pdf)

administration."<sup>17</sup>

An important aspect in the civil-military relations has been the pressure exerted by the US on the military for accommodation of the civilian political leadership. Whether it was to give a warning to the military not to conduct a coup in 1999 or putting pressure on Musharraf to reach an understanding with the political parties, the US has been an important player in the democratisation effort, of course as and when it has suited its own interest. Benazir Bhutto's return was negotiated by the US as it began to realise that continued support to the military regime could be a liability. The US was apprehensive about Musharraf's exit given the rapport it had established with the government on the ongoing war on terror. The PPP tried its best to convince the US that the exit of Musharraf and ushering in of a democratic dispensation would be important to tone down the anti-US sentiments that prevailed in Pakistan. It urged on the US the necessity to have faith in the democratic regime to deliver on this count. Therefore, it is not surprising that the PPP's relations with Washington warmed up after Gilani made his first visit in August 2008.

As an effort to demonstrate its commitment to the war on terror and indicate that the civilian government was really in charge Gilani gave instruction to put the ISI under the Ministry of Interior, before he left on his maiden trip to the US. The Press Information Department published a notification in the newspapers on July 26, 2008 which stated that the ISI, from now onwards, would function under the administrative, financial and operational control of the Ministry of Interior under

rule 3(3) of the Rules of Business of 1973. The activities of the ISI had been under the US scanner for a very long time. During his visit to Islamabad Mike Mullen, US Joint Chiefs of Staff had provided incriminating evidence of ISI's involvement in fuelling insurgency in Afghanistan. Controlling the intelligence agency was considered as one of the important levers both to have a handle on the war on terror and to prevent it from sabotaging the civilian government as was the case in the past.

However, the government was forced to reverse its decision within twenty four hours saying that there was a "misunderstanding" and the ISI would continue to function under the prime minister. The ISI has effectively remained with the army and the civilian government hardly ever had any control over the organisation. The ISPR in a notification, which indicated a clear division on the issue, stated that the army top brass was not even consulted by the government before issuing the notification even though coordination of various organisations for national security was discussed.<sup>18</sup> The ISI in the past has been used to spy on civilian governments making it highly controversial in Pakistan politics. There were media reports that the Pakistan government was considering the US suggestion to reform the ISI. It was also proposed to take away two functions of the agency i.e. internal security and coordinating the war on terror.<sup>19</sup>

The military aid to Pakistan has strengthened the Pakistan army and built its arsenal. The US has granted US\$ 700 million each year for strengthening its counter-insurgency capability. This aid would continue till 2013 as the US believes by that time the army would be capable enough to take on

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<sup>18</sup> "ISI controversy Result of Misunderstanding : ISPR", *Daily Times*, July 28, 2008, Hamid Mir, "How decision was reversed so Soon", *The News International*, July 28, 2008

<sup>19</sup> "ISI's Functions to be discussed in the US", *Dawn*, July 28, 2008.

<sup>20</sup> Baqir Sajjad Sayed, "Petraeus Paid Secret Visit to Islamabad", *Dawn*, May 29, 2009



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insurgency.<sup>20</sup> At the same time the US wants to strengthen the civilian oversight of the military. The Kerry Lugar Act takes a first step towards introducing institutional control of the army which has left the military weary of US intentions. The Army feels that the civilian government has a hand in the insertion of this clause. What angered the army the most was the fact that the government accepted the Kerry-Lugar Bill without any protest. However, since 2001, the US has paid Pakistan for the military facilities it used for its operation in Afghanistan apart from US\$ 10 billion worth of military aid which has been provided in the expectation that the military would deliver. Its aid policy received a severe blow when President Musharraf openly acknowledged that Pakistan was diverting US military aid to strengthen its capability to fight India rather than strengthening its counter-insurgency capabilities.<sup>21</sup>

### **Future of Civil-Military Relations**

Civil-military relations have not seen any significant shift after Pakistan reverted to civilian rule in 2008. The military has slowly regained its legitimacy in Pakistan's politics. Successful operations in Swat and North Waziristan have restored some of the lost glory of the army which had seen several reversals in its operation in other tribal agencies. The 26/11 Mumbai attacks and subsequent jingoistic war cries in Pakistan (based on the perception that India might launch an attack) have revived the army's image as the ultimate saviour. Later, with its successful intervention in settling the political crisis in Punjab and its role in the restoration of Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry as the chief justice, the army was able to emerge as a major power broker.

War on terror and various military aids have

strengthened Pakistan army's fighting capabilities and helped it to emerge as a powerful actor that will determine the success of the war on terror. The army also knows that it is central to the US war on terror. The role of the civilian government is to provide popular legitimacy to the war effort because it is a democratically elected government. It needs to be pointed out here that the US had earlier lent its support to the military rule at the cost of the democratic forces for several years until Musharraf became a liability. The move towards democracy was done with the Pakistan army's consent and the blessing of the US. Given the critical dependence of the US on the Pakistan army for its counter insurgency efforts in Afghanistan, it will not hesitate to stand by the Pakistan army, in case there is a strain in civil-military relations. The army's assertion was quite visible in early 2010, when Gen Kayani, rather than the civilian government, was seen to be taking the initiative in laying down the agenda for Pakistan-US strategic dialogue during March 23-25, 2010. In fact, secretaries of the government of Pakistan were reportedly summoned to the GHQ to apprise the army chief about their requirements to firm up the agenda for this dialogue. Gen Kayani also accompanied the Pakistani delegation and was received warmly in the US. Some reports even stated that he was the 'star of the show', indicating the importance the US accorded to the Pakistani army to fight its war on terror in Pakistan-Afghanistan.

In the mean time, Zardari's position has weakened after the supreme court declared the National Reconciliation Ordinance (NRO) illegal and listed some cases against him dating back to 1998-99. The judiciary's dismissal of Zardari's order to appoint judges to the apex court in February 2010 and Zardari government's capitulation over

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<sup>21</sup> "Musharraf Admits US Aid Diverted", September 14, 2009, see [http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south\\_asia/8254360.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/8254360.stm)

the issue suggests that the uneasy relation between the executive and the judiciary is likely to continue in the future. The 18<sup>th</sup> amendment to the Constitution has also stripped him of the dictatorial powers he used to wield until now. There are also pressures on the Zardari government from many quarters. The French newspaper *Liberation* reported a US\$ 4.3 million kick-back to Zardari for the *Agosta* submarine. The timing of this report and several others indicates a well-planned media campaign to oust Zardari. The current political situation only helps the army, which has always taken advantage of the differences within the political parties. The army is reportedly repairing its relations with Nawaz Sharif. There were reports in December 2009 that Nawaz Sharif and army chief met in Lahore. This suggests that after the exit of Musharraf the relations between the army and the PML-N are being re-worked. The army realises that without the support of the PML-N it would be difficult to get rid of the PPP government. At another level, the PPP and the PML-N are trying to come together but it is not going to be easy because the PML-N has not shown much interest in the relationship and considers PPP as its main political opponent. To add to the volatile political situation, the PPP has also opened up dialogue with the PML-Q.

It is interesting to note that because of mounting pressures on Zardari and the necessity of becoming more acceptable to the public, he has changed his position vis-à-vis India, and in clear contrast to his earlier stance that 'India is not an enemy', he has reportedly declared in Muzaffarabad that Pakistan will wage a thousand years' war with India to liberate Kashmir.

## Conclusion

The political class in Pakistan has remained feudal in its outlook and action. It has an interest in the continuation of an inequitable social and political order in Pakistan because it helps the

feudal elite to perpetuate its hold on power. However, these political forces have not managed to hang together and establish a democratic political system in Pakistan. They have remained divided and have brought the country almost to the brink of several political crises that have often threatened democracy and strengthened the hand of the Pakistan army. In the recent past, the relationship between the two main political parties, the PPP and the PML-N, has been less than cordial giving the military an opportunity to intervene and re-establish its reputation as the only reliable institution which can guide Pakistan's future. The army has also sought to undermine the political leadership even while it has engaged some leaders quietly. Various retired army officers have selectively leaked information regarding Nawaz Sharif to undermine him politically. Similarly the revelation of the terms of understanding between Sharif and Musharraf was made to damage him politically.

The army has also not completely severed its ties with the Islamic jihadists. This is reflected in its reluctance to pursue the Haqqani group given his strategic relevance to Pakistan's Afghan policy. It follows the dual policy of fighting Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) at home and retaining its links with the terrorist groups operating in Kashmir and Afghanistan. It is likely that Pakistan army will continue to use the jihadists in furthering its strategic interests vis-à-vis India. There have been efforts in the past to purge some of the army officers suspected to have links with the jihadists. However, the military-mullah nexus is likely to continue and it will have an influence on the manner in which it develops its outlook on various domestic and foreign policy issues. The involvement of airmen in plotting an attack on Musharraf convoy is a case in point. The Pakistan army was affected by Zia's Islamisation drive, and its officers developed sympathy for the jihadist during the long war in

Afghanistan and had deep involvement in training and facilitating jihadists in Kashmir.

Above all, it is most likely that the military will remain central to Pakistan's domestic and external stability. Institutionalisation of democracy over time may help ease civil-military relations and bring about some coordination between the two in devising the foreign and defence policies of Pakistan, however, the military will continue to have a large say on Pakistan's policy towards India, Afghanistan and nuclear issues. As long as the civilian governments do not interfere in the military's institutional affairs and important foreign policy goals that impinge on army's institutional interest they can continue in power.

In this context, the reorientation of Pakistan's security perceptions can only help redefine the role of the army in Pakistan politics. At the moment, Pakistan needs to take stock of its internal security situation where ethnic assertions, rise of radical militants and sectarian divides have posed a grave threat to the state's existence. The political forces,

the military and other institutions of the state need to come together and evolve a consensus and focus on internal threats rather than waste their energy and attention on non-existent external threats from India. However, as things stand today, the political forces are getting weaker and the internal security situation is deteriorating very fast. Pakistan is slowly moving towards a situation where the army will emerge as the only option in Pakistani politics. In such a scenario, there is not going to be any fundamental change in the relations between the military and the civilian government in Pakistan. What Benazir Bhutto had said when she became the prime minister for the first time still holds true, "the army is a very powerful institution. . . . Anyone thinking that after the elections the power of the army will automatically wane is being unrealistic". In any case, an economically weak and politically unstable Pakistan with an overdeveloped military machine having deep linkages with the radical Islamic forces is certainly a dangerous proposition. ■

## CHAPTER VII

# PAKISTAN'S COUNTER-INSURGENCY CAMPAIGN: AN ASSESSMENT

Since 2004, the Pakistan Army has waged several campaigns to contain the raging insurgency in the frontier provinces of FATA and NWFP. These campaigns conducted as intense conventional battles and replete with high calibre weapons and aerial assets have left over 2000 troops dead and over 3400 injured. Besides this, the counter-insurgency operations have also been a cause of the large-scale dislocation and alienation of the local population. Many analysts have criticised this heavy handed approach and Pakistan's consistent failure to prepare its forces for counter-insurgency operations. The primary obstacle to counter-insurgency operations has been its conventional military doctrine built around the possibility of a potential Indian invasion. This purposeful evasion can be attributed to a deliberate attempt to divert popular attention towards India and thus underline the importance of the army in the Pakistani political system. The strong opposition from military constituencies to force transformation is yet another factor, and the scant regard paid to building the required operational capabilities to tackle insurgency is obvious. The moot question is whether the Pakistan army is really keen on developing required counter-insurgency capabilities. If yes, then how far would the Pakistan army proceed in the organisational and doctrinal context? And if not, then how much does it impinge upon its future security concerns.

This chapter attempts to analyse the impact of the ongoing counter-insurgency operations on the military doctrine, structures and capabilities in Pakistan. It begins with an assessment of the current insurgent leadership in the frontier provinces, its motivations, capabilities and tactics; followed by an examination of the military responses undertaken by the Pakistani armed forces thus far to contain the Taliban insurgency. The operational dilemmas and dichotomies that inhibit building of the desired COIN capabilities have been identified and discussed. This is followed by an assessment of the possible options available to Pakistan to transform its armed forces into a viable counter-insurgency force. And finally, the chapter concludes by presenting a few plausible scenarios that may emerge in Pakistan in the long term. The security implications in the Indian context are also discussed.

### **The Taliban Insurgency**

The Taliban insurgency began as early as 2002, when the Al-Qaida and the Afghan Taliban fighters were driven out of Afghanistan by the US Armed Forces. The relatively insignificant insurgency in the Pashtun belt in due course coalesced as the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The alliance now unites more than 20 disparate militant groups and commanders throughout the FATA and the NWFP. The Taliban alliance had remained united under

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the leadership of the now deceased Baitullah Mehsud, but on occasions has also reflected shifts in allegiance and tribal loyalties. For instance, Hafiz Gul Bahadur and Mullah Nazir, senior leaders of the alliance committed to fighting the US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, have generally remained ambivalent about their stance vis-à-vis Pakistan.

Though the alliance features a decentralised command and control set-up with emphasis on regional power structures, it has not shown any signs of fragmentation or vulnerability to the 'divide and rule' tactics adopted by the Pakistan administration. The Pakistan military and the ISI have played a key role in maintaining close relations with several key tribal leaders. But then the Taliban leaders too have learnt to hedge against the federal policies by cutting deals, frequently assassinating collaborators and prominent tribal leaders, Qari Zain being one of them. Cooperation with the US is perceived as inimical to the Taliban interests, and this is also known to drive cohesion between the disparate Taliban groupings.

Several assessments have been made of the strength of the Taliban fighters operating in the FATA and the NWFP. Some conservative estimates suggest that the number of militants operating in the tribal areas to be between 30,000 to 40,000, while the more exaggerated estimates point towards 1,50,000 militant cadres and more. The strength of the militants is also reported to have increased due to the pattern of military operations undertaken in the past six months. There could have even been some double counting due to the presence of Al-Qaida, Uzbek and Afghan militants in the region. And the Punjabi militant cadres no longer engaged on the Kashmir front could have added up to the assessed strength.

Since all of these estimated militants cannot be hardcore ones, it could be assumed that around ten

per cent of them are highly motivated, another 20 to 30 percent are ambivalent about their role vis-à-vis Pakistan and the balance 60 to 70 percent mere camp followers or 'accidental guerillas', as David Kilcullen calls them. All in all, the first two categories comprising approximately 12,000 to 16,000 militant cadres form the core of the counter-insurgency problem in Pakistan. The important issue is that, no matter how the militant strength is calculated, the insurgency is quite sizable by empirical standards and poses a formidable challenge to the Pakistan military.

The Taliban insurgency in the frontier provinces is a curious mixture of Pashtun nationalism and religious extremism. There are several other issues such as lack of governance, large-scale unemployment and stifling tribal structures, which do not necessarily drive the problem, but get entangled with other causative factors in the region. By de-legitimising the tribal leadership under the *maliks* through frequent deals with the Taliban, the establishment has contributed to worsening the problem. Economic motivations too have played a role in the emergence of the Taliban. The money to wage insurgency comes from Al-Qaida activists, the mullahs who replaced the maliks, and the royalty earned from mining rights in the region. Contributions from donors, taxes, drugs, smuggling and dacoity have also filled Taliban coffers. The Taliban have also exploited the resentment against feudal structures in the Swat region. In fact, the Taliban have been successful in delivering to the people of the area some notional system of governance, have adopted a policy of economic redistribution which appeals to the poor Pashtuns of the region, put in place a speedy (Islamic) justice delivery system (often disparagingly termed as kangaroo courts) and taken quick action against local criminal gangs and therefore, continue to earn the support of a large section of the society in the frontier provinces.

The Taliban strategy in the frontier provinces seems to be very complex. While some leaders are focused against the US and NATO forces in Afghanistan, there are others who are committed to a more expansionist agenda within Pakistan. On the domestic front, the Taliban essentially seeks to control certain stretches of the FATA, take advantage of the discontent amongst the local populace, and cultivate operational cells in urban areas of Peshawar and deep within Pakistan. As regards their fighting abilities, the Taliban have developed a reputation of being tough fighters and are fairly well-equipped. The recent exchanges in the Swat district revealed that the Taliban combatants possessed sniper rifles, machine guns, rocket launchers, mortar tubes, night vision goggles and bullet proof jackets. It is unclear whether the Taliban alliance also possesses surface to air weapons or missiles and artillery. The Taliban are known to use state-of-the-art communication equipment and pick-up trucks to facilitate coordination and transportation.

Though the Taliban cadres do not receive any formal training, the new recruits manage with some rudimentary training in guerrilla tactics given in makeshift camps located all across the frontier provinces. The training deficit is made up by their familiarity with the terrain, local culture and age-old fighting tradition. Their cadres are trained to dig in and prepare fortified positions essentially to protect themselves from aerial strikes and high calibre weapons. They are also known to indulge in extensive tunnelling to escape from prepared positions. Suicide bombing is yet another powerful and lethal weapon available to the Taliban. This represents a careful blend of a terrorist tactic into an insurgency campaign. The use of IEDs and roadside bombs by militant groups has had devastating effects. The issue of salience here is that the Taliban alliance has been fairly successful in establishing parallel authority in areas under

their control for dispensing local justice, conducting policing duties, taxing the public and maintaining a large irregular force to fight Pakistani security forces.

### **Pakistan's Counter-insurgency Approach**

Tribal unrest in the frontier areas began soon after the US invasion of Afghanistan. US military operations at Tora Bora, because of lack of troops and coordination with the Pakistani authorities, enabled the Al-Qaida and Afghan fighters to escape and establish themselves across the Durand line in Pakistan. Since Pakistan had mentored the Afghan Taliban for several years, it felt that they could be contained at will. Their presence in the frontier provinces was ignored by the Pakistani leadership, and this gave them an opportunity to reconstitute and consolidate their influence in the region. The presence of Al-Qaida and Afghan Taliban leaders in the region and local grievances discussed earlier allowed the rise of the Pakistani Taliban in the frontier provinces.

The worsening security situation and growing pressure from the US eventually compelled the Pakistani military to move against the militants. In 2004, the Frontier Corps was tasked to launch operations in South Waziristan, but the setback received at hands of the Taliban forced the Pakistan army to deploy in strength. The military operations too proved to be a disaster with the security forces losing 200 men as well as several desertions in the process. The operations caused large-scale collateral damage and nearly 50,000 people were displaced. The debacle led to the deployment of an additional 80,000 troops for high intensity operations against the Taliban. The military operations instead of defeating the Taliban led to an interesting process of deal-making between the militants and the Pakistani security forces.

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Each time the militants came under pressure, they cut a deal with the security forces, which in turn gave them the time and space to regroup and prepare for the next fight. Another major operation was launched in late 2007 in Swat and the Bajaur Agency to get rid of the Taliban militants who had established their presence in the region. The ill consequences of this military offensive actually led to the spread of violence in Swat and Malakand Division in early 2009. The Pakistan army responded with conventional methods including air strikes thus displacing more than two and a half million people from the region. Attempts to clear Taliban controlled areas with brute force proved counter-productive, and the repressive tactics adopted would have prompted many displaced people to join the Taliban.

Pakistan's approach to counter-insurgency operations in the frontier provinces from 2004 to 2009 has followed a set pattern. The reliance on heavy calibre weapons and aerial platforms seems to have been in response to the mounting pressure from the US to do something to contain the Taliban. The operational emphases have largely been on weapon platforms based search and destroy missions, similar to those adopted by the US in Iraq from 2003 to 2005. Lack of people-centric operations has been the prime cause of failure in containing the Taliban spread. As several analysts have said, the Pakistan army simply lacks the concept to fight counter-insurgency operations and continues to treat these operations as low intensity conflicts. The military outcome so far has been that it still continues to fight in Swat and South Waziristan, and has yet to make decisive inroads into North Waziristan.

The other aspect has been Pakistan army's ambivalence vis-à-vis the Afghan Taliban who are fighting against the US and NATO forces in Afghanistan. Selective targeting of militant groups and lax operations along the Durand line to check

cross border infiltration have proved counter-productive in containing the Taliban. Other ill-advised strategies such as, divide and rule, crown the war lord, brutal repression, decapitation etc have begun to backfire, and in fact have created more cohesion amongst the Taliban. The Pakistan counter-insurgency campaign has failed to address the broader grievances of the local population, and its perceived alignment with the US has constrained its strategic and tactical options. Pakistan is yet to focus on a campaign centred on the well-being of its people in the frontier region and is yet to understand the nature of insurgency, the centre of gravity and the force composition required to undertake a successful counter-insurgency campaign.

The approach per se has to focus on a political solution rather than military action. A balanced approach has to focus on 'people-centric' rather than 'enemy-centric' operations. This would imply emphasis on 'winning hearts and minds' rather than coercive military action. And this needs to be capped by a political and ideological offensive to deny legitimacy to insurgents. The most recent definition on COIN calls for a comprehensive civilian-military campaign to contain the insurgency. Military operations have to be aimed at securing the people so that the developmental agenda can be pursued. Military capacity is necessary but is not the only pre-requisite for successful counter-insurgency operations. The military campaign undertaken by the Pakistan military so far demonstrates that it is yet to evolve a well-thoughtout counter-insurgency strategy.

## **Dilemmas and Dichotomies**

Pashtuns are often dubbed as the perfect insurgents. Constituting approximately 74 percent of the NWFP and 99 per cent of the FATA populations, the Pashtuns are the second largest ethnic group in Pakistan. They have always been

known to fiercely resist efforts aimed at pacification, nation-building and external rule. In fact, the tribes in Waziristan have never been subjugated by any foreign power, including Pakistan. The British tried defeating these tribes in 1897, 1919, 1930 and 1936 but never succeeded fully in their efforts. The Pakistan military too has failed repeatedly since 2004 and several peace deals only demonstrate their inability to subdue these tribes. This implies that any effort aimed at even a pacifist and people centric counter-insurgency operation is bound to encounter some resistance and hostility from the local population. In other words, the approach has to be more nuanced and resourceful in the frontier provinces, than its general conceptual understanding in the Pakistani establishment.

The Pakistan-Afghanistan border is rife with mountain passes and trails facilitating cross-border infiltration. The border stretching 1640 miles is riddled with over 300 odd illegal and manned crossings. Cracking down on cross-border movement in the absence of an elaborate border control mechanism and adequate troops is extremely difficult. This cross-border movement facilitates flow of money, weapons, equipment and militants to the advantage of Pakistan and Taliban. Inability to check cross-border movement of Taliban cadres is therefore a major operational lacuna of the current military strategy in Pakistan.

The frontier region is also very large in size. The FATA and the NWFP are 27,000 and 74,000 square kilometres respectively, which makes it extremely difficult to build an effective force ratio for counter-insurgency operations. A related issue is that only three percent of FATA and 15 percent of the NWFP population live in urban areas, and the remainder is widely dispersed along the countryside. The dispersed population calls for an even higher force ratio to secure the affected populations. The militant

groups are known to exploit these ungoverned territories and coupled with the dispersed population, it necessitates a more ingenious counter-insurgency approach.

Limited mobility in the FATA and the NWFP, due to lack of suitable roads and tracks affects the conduct of military operations. A sparse road network coupled with a diffused population impinges upon its ability to deploy and sustain troops for operations. The army is often forced to occupy isolated posts with supply lines susceptible to the militant attacks. Securing these lines of communication is troop-intensive and detracts forces from primary operations. The larger the logistic tail, the more the number of troops needed to ensure operational success.

Tactical air mobility is the key to successful operations in the mountainous region. It is not known whether Pakistan is going full throttle and wholeheartedly utilizing its present fleet of rotary wing aircraft comprising Bell-412 utility helicopters, Cobra gunships and Mi 8/Mi 17 class of helicopters to deter the insurgents and support logistical operations. These air assets require safe and secure operating bases within operational reach of the insurgency affected areas, thus raising yet another logistical dilemma for conduct of effective counter-insurgency operations.

Poor force to population ratios have been yet another dichotomy in Pakistan's counter-insurgency campaign. As a guide line, a force to population ratio of 25:1000 is prescribed worldwide. While this ratio evolved by James Quinlivan, a military analyst and senior mathematician at Rand Corporation in the US, has several inconsistencies, it is still a favoured measure to evaluate the effectiveness of counter-insurgency campaigns. The force ratio is essentially a function of the agitative capacity of the rebel population in



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an affected area. The Pakistan army has been undertaking counter-insurgency campaigns since partition. But since most of these have been based on high calibre weapons, the Pakistan Army has had little experience in working out ideal force ratios for a COIN campaign. Even for troop intensive cordon and search operations in Karachi in years 1992 to 1995, the force ratios have never been more than 3.2:1000, an extremely poor ratio for operations. While various case studies reveal that a force ratio of 20:1000 is adequate, the Pakistan army has continuously maintained a low ratio of 15:1000 in the frontier provinces. The large number of insurgents (estimated to be around 40,000) and an extremely difficult terrain complicate the adequacy of even a 20:1000 force ratio for the Pakistan army. Reluctance to deploy additional troops to meet the required combat ratios is perhaps the biggest lacuna in the counter-insurgency operations being undertaken by Pakistan.

### **Pakistan's Counter-insurgency Options**

The NWFP and the FATA collectively report a population estimate of 26 million, which on a force to population ratio of 20:1000 requires a field force of approximately 5,20,000 troops. The estimated deployment stands at around 1,50,000 troops, with a breakdown of approximately 70,000 and 80,000 troops in FATA and NWFP (including Malakand) respectively. The shortfall of 3,10,000 troops is the minimum mathematical requirement to formulate a viable counter-insurgency strategy for the frontier provinces in Pakistan. This needs to be weighed against total force levels available within the state of Pakistan.

Regular army troops in Pakistan along with the reservists total about 10,20,000. The paramilitaries which include the Frontiers Corps and the Pakistan Rangers total another 1,25,000 troops. The police forces are another 3,50,000 men and around 1,00,000

plus lashkars can be marshalled. All in all, the total force potential stands at 16,00,000 soldiers and policemen. These figures clearly indicate that while the Pakistani state possesses the numerical capacity to deploy for an effective counter-insurgency campaign, it has restrained itself from deploying a viable military component to contain the raging insurgency in the frontier provinces.

The mechanics of a counter-insurgency campaign also depend on the nature of forces employed and their proportion. Each type of force has its own strengths and weaknesses for a counter-insurgency campaign. However, a common problem with security forces is their inherent reluctance to fight fellow tribals or communities at someone else's insistence, including the government of the day. In the case of Pakistan, the issue is acutely sensitive as Pakistanis in general do not support operations against the Taliban or military cooperation with the US. Notwithstanding this, the Pakistan army is the only one which is most suited to undertake protracted counter-insurgency operations. It is a well-trained and professional force but lacks the motivation and skills to fight the Taliban. Re-training the conventional force for counter-insurgency operations could prove to be a major asset for the campaign in the frontier provinces. However, since only 20 per cent of the troops hail from the Pashtun belt, the Pakistani army lacks the soft skills such as the knowledge of terrain, language and local customs, to pursue the subsequent phases of the counter-insurgency campaign.

On the other hand, the Frontier Corps which is drawn from tribal areas is knowledgeable in terms of terrain and demography. But then these troops have inherent limitations in confronting their tribal brethren, the Taliban. These troops also lack training, equipment and good leadership. The Frontier Corps however can be employed to extend security cover to the vulnerable populations, thus

sparing the Pakistan army to confront the Taliban. The Pakistan police too can play a pivotal role in the counter-insurgency efforts, but it faces several functional limitations. Under the given circumstances, the best option is to boost the force to population ratios and offset the Taliban's advantage by employing lashkars, who are familiar with the terrain, language and demography, and who may well like to take on the Taliban.

The fundamental constraint for undertaking effective counter-insurgency operations is the Pakistan military's obsession with its eastern borders with India. Pakistan's fears of a strong and superior force in the neighbourhood which is ready to launch at short notice and break its territorial integrity, obfuscates its approach towards tackling the Taliban. The close proximity of Pakistan's lines of communication, their industrial centres and major cities to the international boundary affects its strategic calculus. Identifying minimum inescapable deployment along its eastern borders would enable the Pakistan army to assess the force availability in dealing with the Taliban.

A re-aggregation of the available force levels would reveal that Pakistan is capable of fielding 5,20,000 troops to wage an effective campaign in the frontier provinces.<sup>1</sup> Besides the police, paramilitary and military force levels already deployed, the re-aggregated figures would include additional 1,50,000 troops from eastern borders, 40,000 troops from Karachi and Quetta Corps, 30,000 policemen, 40,000 rangers and 1,00,000 plus lashkars. The availability of troops could even be enhanced if the force to frontage ratios vis-à-vis

India is increased. Some analysts have suggested that this could make additional brigades available for operations in the FATA and the NWFP. The imbalance caused along the eastern borders could be offset by investing in superior war fighting technologies or further lowering the threshold for use of nuclear weapons.

While all this is well-said, the resistance in the political circles to affect this re-deployment is obvious. The senior military leadership is bound to strongly canvas against any re-deployment for several reasons. The most important reason is of course the suspicion of India, but the other reason could be the apprehension that prolonged commitment for counter-insurgency operations may degrade its conventional combat potential. Perhaps the biggest fear is that adoption of a counter-insurgency strategy would reduce it to the status of a glorified police force, and that in turn, would compromise its status as the nation's most powerful institution.

The other inhibiting factor is the difficulty in adapting to counter-insurgency operations, especially for an army so steeped in conventional operations. Fighting militants calls for a different set of soldierly skills, battle procedures and conceptual practices. This can be hard for a conventional force to achieve, if it doesn't get adequate time to re-orient itself. Re-training 5,20,000 troops for COIN operations may take a long time and also be quite expensive. The American deployment of 4000 trainers in Afghanistan to raise and train 1,26,000 Afghan soldiers is expected to take up to seven years and cost up to 20 billion

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<sup>1</sup> Sameer Lalwani, "Pakistani Capabilities for a Counterinsurgency Campaign: A Net Assessment", New America Foundation, Washington, September 2009. available at <http://newamerica.net/sites/newamerica.net/files/policydocs/NAFPakistanSept09.pdf> (accessed March 4, 2010)

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dollars, inclusive of the equipment needs.

Besides the cost and time factor, the Pakistan army fears that the force transformation could have a negative effect on its readiness vis-à-vis India and overall professionalism of the force – a point made earlier in this chapter. All in all, there is no serious motivation for the Pakistan army to transform itself for counter-insurgency operations. Moreover, a counter-insurgency strategy requires tremendous emphasis on unified civilian and military decision making at the national and provincial level. And since the Pakistan military is not accustomed to sharing the stage with the civilian leaders, its ability to effect serious consensual counter-insurgency operations may be suspect.

### **Likely Scenarios**

The foregoing discussion proves beyond doubt that the Pakistan military possesses sufficient capacities to contain the Taliban insurgency, without jeopardizing its defence capability on the eastern borders. But what comes in their way are several inhibiting factors ranging from terrain, demography, military consensus, transformational hurdles and cost and the political will to undertake large-scale counter-insurgency operations. Notwithstanding these constraints, the state of Pakistan will increasingly come under pressure from the international community and the rational elements within Pakistan to perform. It may therefore be prudent to make an assessment of the security scenarios that may result as a consequence of the operational trajectories that the Pakistan army may adopt from time to time to counter the threat from Taliban. Three broad scenarios emerge – business as usual, slight improvement in the situation or a complete downslide of events in Pakistan.

One possible scenario is that, Pakistan continues to bide its time in the hope that the raging Taliban

insurgency subsides, and is eventually controlled by cutting new deals and accords. Since the US often talks about ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Taliban, and some recent reviews from Western media reiterate the need to disaggregate the Afghan Taliban, the Pakistan establishment too may be tempted to work on these lines. However, any efforts to disaggregate the Taliban would require detailed understanding of various factions, attentiveness to the resistance narratives and trust building initiatives based on genuine concern for local development and redressal of tribal grievances. This path would save Pakistan army from re-locating additional forces to the frontier region, the need to re-orient them for counter-insurgency operations and dilute its defensive profile along the eastern borders. Given a choice, the Pakistan army would prefer the option of ‘business as usual’ with limited accretion to force levels deployed in the frontier provinces and change the operational tempo to keep off the international pressure.

Another plausible scenario is that Pakistan does re-locate some additional troops from its eastern borders in an incremental fashion and in the process extracts a high ‘commitment’ cost from the US and Friends of Democratic Pakistan (FoDP). In the given context, the Pakistan army may even resort to re-training a portion of the force levels for counter-insurgency operations. The cost of undertaking a credible counter-insurgency campaign in the frontier provinces could have some ramifications for the growing Indo-US strategic partnership in recent years. The US could be forced to pay this cost in several different ways – immediate transfer of high end military technology to compensate for operational voids created along the eastern borders, restrain forward deployment of Indian troops, deny or constrain Indian military procurements in the pipe line etc.

The worst case scenario could result from a

premature exit of the US troops from Afghanistan. The Obama Administration's revised Af-Pak policy spelt out after his West Point speech in December 2009, hints at beginning of the withdrawal of the US troops by 2011. Even if it has been termed as a result-driven and not a calendar-driven pull out, the possibility of a pullout will bring an altogether different dynamic to the situation on the ground. Exit of the US troops would give the Pakistan establishment an opportunity to reclaim its influence in the Pak-Af region. It would be more than keen to back the Afghan Taliban in its pursuit to establish control over Kabul. The resulting situation could give a free run to both the Afghan and Pakistani Taliban in the long run. This in turn could lead to further radicalisation of the society and institutions in Pakistan. But then having known and managed the Taliban leadership in the past, it would continue to play one against the other in order to ensure that the tribal insurgency does not spill over to the Pakistani heartland. In the process, it may indulge in providing some political and economic concessions to the Pashtun belt to calm down the tribals.

Should the Pakistan military establishment fail to control the resulting tribal violence beyond the Pashtun belt both in Afghanistan and Pakistan, it may have to pay a serious price in the long term. Increased instability in the region may even afflict some of the Muslim dominated areas in the neighbourhood, especially the province of Xinjiang in China and some of the central Asian States. The resulting situation may also fuel the fledgling insurgencies raging in Balochistan and Gilgit-Baltistan.

### **Implications in the Indian Context**

The evolving situation in the frontier provinces of Pakistan does not portend well. Though it seems that the Pakistan establishment under increasing

pressure from the US is trying hard to tackle the problem, there is as yet no sign of how soon the threat could be contained. Terrorism when under pressure tends to move to areas which offer little or no resistance and the operational tempo built up by the security forces could have different results. It could lead to the elimination of the Taliban or push them into newer areas where they could flourish with ease. These areas could be anybody's guess. The worst case could be the large-scale influx of 'Talibanised' cadres into the Indian hinterland. While the situation in Jammu and Kashmir could still be controlled, Indian security forces are yet to develop the capability of handling terror in urban areas. India needs to seriously prepare for it, lest it gets too late to build capacities to combat the menace when it crops up. At the same time, the security agencies will have to invest considerable time and effort to check the occurrence of untoward incidents prompted from across the border. This would entail better intelligence gathering and sharing, equipping and training of forces and involving local communities for ensuring security of the populated areas.

### **Conclusion**

Fighting the Taliban in the NWFP and the FATA has been a kind of a turning point in the history of Pakistan. So far, it seems that the counter-insurgency operations undertaken in Swat have been successful in containing the Taliban threat. But this success may be short-lived, as the army has still not managed to effectively contain the insurgent leadership ensconced in North and South Waziristan, even if combined operations by the US and Pakistani security forces have been able to eliminate the top leadership. The Taliban insurgency that emerged in early 2002, now unites more than 20 disparate militant groups under an umbrella organisation called the Tehrik-i-Taliban. The alliance features a decentralised command and

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control structure, but even then it continues to gain in strength and internal cohesion. The alliance has an estimated strength of 30,000 to 40,000 cadres, of whom around 12,000 to 16,000 are considered to be hardcore militants.

The Pakistan army's approach to counter-insurgency operations in the frontier provinces from 2004 to 2009 has followed a set pattern. The military campaign has been unable to address the broader grievances of the local population, and Pakistan's perceived alignment with the US has narrowed the strategic and tactical options for Pakistan. Poor force ratios have also constrained Pakistan's counter-insurgency campaign. The NWFP and the FATA collectively need a field force of approximately 5,20,000 troops for effective counter-insurgency operations and the total force potential stands at 16,00,000 soldiers and policemen in Pakistan. These figures clearly indicate that while the Pakistani state possesses the numerical capacity to deploy the required force on the ground, it has not yet been able to go into its COIN operations

wholeheartedly. There has been a clear gap between its capacity and performance as a result of under-utilisation of its force potential.

Three probable security scenarios can result from the operational trajectories that the Pakistan army may adopt to counter the Taliban threat. One possible scenario is that, Pakistan continues to bide time and hope that the raging Taliban insurgency subsides, and is eventually controlled by cutting new deals and accords. Another scenario may be that Pakistan deploys some additional troops in an incremental fashion and extracts a high 'commitment' cost from the US. While it may induce Pakistan to undertake a credible COIN campaign it could have negative impact on the Indo-US strategic partnership. The worst case scenario could be a premature exit of the US troops from Afghanistan, which would give the Pakistan establishment an opportunity to reclaim its strategic influence in the region and foment further trouble for India by continuing to use terrorism as an instrument of state policy. ■

## CHAPTER VIII

# PAKISTAN'S NUCLEAR & MISSILE PROGRAMMES: ON A SHORT FUSE?

It has been the prime obsession of the Pakistani leadership to obtain parity with India at all levels. Shortly after the end of the 1971 war with India, the then Prime Minister of Pakistan Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, convened an important meeting in Multan in January 1972 and requested the scientists present there to work for developing a nuclear bomb for Pakistan. He also invited the noted Pakistani scientist, Munir Ahmed Khan, who was serving in the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) at that time to return to Pakistan and lead the scientific community in that pursuit. After two years, when India conducted the peaceful nuclear explosion in May 1974, Bhutto declared that Pakistanis would eat grass, but would develop a nuclear bomb.

As a first step in that direction, Pakistan signed a contract in 1975 with a French company, SGN (*Societe Generale pour les Techniques Nouvelles*), under IAEA safeguards for the construction of a reprocessing plant at the Chashma nuclear site. However, the deal was abrogated mid-way following US pressure on France citing proliferation concerns in the year 1977. It is believed that the facility was partially built and work on it has resumed in the recent past.

While the utility of the reprocessing plant was being discussed among the strategic experts, Pakistan covertly shifted to the uranium route for developing nuclear weapons following the services offered by Dr. A. Q. Khan in the mid-1970s.

Dr. Khan was a metallurgist at the URENCO's Almelo plant in the 1970s and he returned to Pakistan in 1975 with the secret blue prints for uranium centrifuge technology along with a list of Western supplier companies of the components needed. Under Dr. Khan's supervision, Pakistan could quickly setup a uranium enrichment plant at Kahuta. Interestingly, Pakistan had also developed 2-3 test sites at Ras Koh Hills in Chagai, Balochistan and the Kirana hills before 1980 at a time when the nuclear capability was being developed. This indicates Pakistan's dedication and resolve to attain nuclear capability. Thus, within a short span of less than six years, Pakistan could develop highly enriched uranium for the making of a nuclear fission bomb. Recent disclosures by Dr. Khan suggest that China had supplied Pakistan, in 1982, with 50 kg of highly enriched uranium, an unknown quantity of uranium hexafluoride and drawings of a nuclear weapon under a deal struck between Mao Zedong and Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in 1976. The US also looked the other way all these years despite the CIA being aware of Pakistan's clandestine nuclear weapons programme. The US was also believed to be instrumental in the acquittal of Dr. Khan in the cases filed in the Dutch High Court on the charges of stealing and smuggling of secret nuclear-enrichment technology.

Following the indefinite and unconditional extension of the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty

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(NPT) in 1995, India conducted five underground nuclear tests in Pokhran on May 11 and 13, 1998, to which Pakistan responded within days by conducting six nuclear tests on May 28 and 30, at Chagai hills and declared itself as a nuclear weapons state. International seismological experts, however, doubted the results of these tests and opined that the signals received suggest that only two tests were successful. Even after 12 years of the nuclear tests, neither the Pakistani nuclear establishment nor the military commented on the success of the nuclear explosions publicly nor were there any two opinions on the issue in Pakistan.

While India declared a no-first-use policy for nuclear weapons and a moratorium on nuclear testing immediately after the tests, Pakistan rejected the no-first use policy using the conventional imbalance with India as an excuse. Although President Asif Ali Zardari, hinted in November 2008 that Pakistan would like to offer a no-first use policy, he was forced to retract his words, following the objections by the Pakistan army. However, Pakistan declared that it would not resume underground nuclear testing, unless India would do so.

Like other states in possession of nuclear weapons, Pakistan maintains a high level of secrecy regarding nuclear materials it has acquired, the number of warheads it is in possession of, its weapons designs, storage sites etc. It is also not known how much success Pakistani scientists/engineers have achieved in mating the nuclear warheads with ballistic missiles and aircrafts. Though there were no indications about the design, size and explosive yields of the Pakistani nuclear weapons, it is commonly felt that they were implosion-type weapons with a yield of 15 kT. Recent estimates by various think-tanks suggest that Pakistan might be in possession of about 60-80 nuclear weapons. A few of these weapons could be in the assembled state, while a majority of the weapons are stored

in separate sites in a disassembled state.

There are no indications whether Pakistan is in possession of a thermonuclear weapon. During the 1970s and the 1980s, Pakistan had shown keen interest in the development of a thermonuclear weapon, but in later years, there was hardly any mention of this weapon in the statements of Pakistani political leaders, scientists and army officials. While it was reported that China had supplied Pakistan with a nuclear weapon design (CHIC-4), which it had tested earlier in 1966, highly enriched uranium and other materials, not many details were available in public domain about their interaction relating to the thermonuclear weapon. It was also reported that a Pakistani derivative of CHIC-4 was apparently tested in China on May 26, 1990. Thus, given the close relations between the two countries, the chances of sharing of information on the thermonuclear weapon may not be ruled out completely.

Following the nuclear tests in 1998 by India and Pakistan, many believe that Pakistani attitude towards India, though assertive in late 1980s and early 1990s, has become more aggressive than in the past. Be it the adventure in Kargil in 1999, deployment of armed forces following the Indian Parliament attack in December 2001 or tensions following the terrorist attack on Kaluchak army camp in May 2002, Pakistan has indulged in nuclear sabre-rattling. Subsequent to the 9/11 attacks, Pakistan had become a close and crucial ally for the US in its war on terror and the US pressure on Pakistan to cap, reduce and eliminate its nuclear capability has substantially receded. The sanctions imposed on Pakistan in 1998 following the tests, along with India, were also lifted in 2001.

The joint-statement by the then US President George Bush and the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in July 2005 in Washington to enter into civil nuclear cooperation, which ended the

three-decade long nuclear apartheid for India, raised serious concerns in Pakistan. It started canvassing against the deal describing it as discriminatory. According to Pakistan, India would be free to use its domestic uranium resources for weaponisation as the deal allows India to import uranium for its safeguarded nuclear power reactors. It also warned that the deal would scuttle the nuclear balance in South Asia and soon there would be an arms race. When its efforts did not bear fruit, Pakistan changed its course of action and started demanding a 'criteria-based approach' from the 45-member Nuclear Suppliers Group, than merely an India-specific exemption.

Though the Indo-US relations have been on the rise following the economic liberalisation by the P V Narasimha Rao government in 1991, the Bush Administration paved the way for a new and strategic partnership with India through the Indo-US nuclear deal. The aim was to strengthen the global nuclear non-proliferation regime by bringing several Indian indigenous nuclear reactors under the IAEA safeguards, in return for relaxing NSG guidelines for allowing nuclear trade by the NSG countries with India. This resulted in an end to the three-decade old nuclear apartheid for India and the deal recognised India as a state with advanced nuclear technology as well as a strategic programme. Though Pakistan demanded a similar treatment, the US said that it was not willing to consider such an option. India has offered to place 14 of its existing 22 reactors and also the reactors to be imported in the future under IAEA safeguards. In case of Pakistan, other than the two nuclear power reactors, KANUPP and CHASHNUPP, already covered by the IAEA safeguards, the rest of the nuclear facilities are strategic in nature and Pakistan cannot afford any of these installations being covered by the IAEA safeguards in return for having the NSG guidelines relaxed. As far as India was concerned, its impeccable nuclear track record on

proliferation also contributed significantly to the US action. In the case of Pakistan, the Dr. A.Q. Khan episode would have definitely been a dampener. The US was also aware of India's economic growth coupled with its growing demand for energy and its efforts to increase nuclear output, given its proven capabilities to design and operate nuclear power reactors. However, till date, Pakistan has not relented and is known to be demanding a similar deal from the US.

As an alternative, Pakistan turned to China to conclude an agreement on the lines of the Indo-US nuclear agreement. During the October 2008 visit to China by the Pakistan President, Asif Ali Zardari, a Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) was reportedly signed for the construction of two light-water nuclear reactors at Chashma. The reactors with a capacity of 340 MWe would come up at Chashma where China is constructing a second plant. It is understood that China would supply the nuclear fuel for the entire life time of these reactors. Pakistan also engaged with France for civil nuclear cooperation and announced that it had concluded an agreement with Paris. French officials later clarified that their cooperation with Pakistan was limited to the area of nuclear safety and it was not possible for France to export nuclear reactors and technology, overlooking the NSG.

Pakistan is also concerned by the launch of INS Arihant by India and claimed that it would create strategic imbalance in south Asia. It has announced that it would take corrective measures to bring back parity with India. Pakistan has also expressed on numerous occasions, reservations about the Indian 'Cold-Start' doctrine and maintains that the new initiative is against the normalisation of relations between the two countries.

Following the seizure of the ship 'BBC China' carrying shipment and designs required for the Libyan nuclear enrichment programme in October



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2003, the 16 year-old nuclear black-market ring operated by Dr A.Q. Khan was laid bare. The Musharraf government quickly summoned Dr Khan, who publicly acknowledged his clandestine dealings with countries like North Korea, Iran and Libya and apologised to the nation for his deeds. A day later Musharraf pardoned Dr Khan keeping in view 'his services to the nation' but confined him to his house for the next six-years. Pakistan also avoided exposing Dr. Khan to the international community and maintained that it had shared the relevant information with the US and the IAEA. Later, Pakistan declared that the Dr. A. Q. Khan chapter was closed. The repeated efforts of the US and the IAEA to interrogate Dr Khan have failed. The arrests and subsequent releases of other major players in the network like Tinnars, T. S. A. Bashir etc did not mean much. There are, however, no indications whether the Dr. Khan network actually ceased to exist. Accusing Khan to be acting on his own, former President, Gen (Retd.) Pervez Musharraf claimed that neither the Pak army nor previous governments were ever involved or had any knowledge of Dr. Khan's proliferation activities. On the other hand, Khan told AFP in a telephone interview that "I saved the country for the first time when I made Pakistan a nuclear nation and saved it again when I confessed and took the whole blame on myself".<sup>1</sup>

Pakistan boasts that it had established a nuclear Command and Control structure in February 2000, three years ahead of India, which was headed till November 2009 by the Pakistani President. Pakistan's nuclear command and control of nuclear weapons is based on three components, namely the National Command Authority (NCA), its secretariat called the Strategic Plans Division (SPD)

and the Strategic Forces Command. Besides the prime minister who is the chairman of the NCA, it consists of the defence minister, foreign minister, finance minister and the interior minister from the civilian government. From the military side, the NCA has the Joint Chiefs of Staff, three service chiefs and the Director General (DG), SPD as members (See Figure 8.1 for details).

The SPD, since its inception, is headed by a three-star general, Lt. Gen (Retd.) Khalid Ahmed Kidwai. It plays a central role in all issues relating to nuclear weapons and their development, storage and security (the structure of the SPD is shown in the Figure 8.2).

The two main elements of the NCA are the Employment Control Committee (ECC), which provides policy direction and has authority over the strategic forces. It was initially chaired by the president and included the prime minister and other cabinet ministers. The second committee was the Developmental Control Committee (DCC) and comprised military and scientific elements. The objective of this committee was to optimise the technical and financial efficiency of the entire programme and to implement the strategic force goals set by the ECC.

In November 2009, Pakistani President, Asif Ali Zardari relinquished the charge as chairman of the NCA and entrusted the responsibility to the prime minister who succeeded him on November 28, 2009. While many view that Zardari made the decision following pressure from government quarters and the military, it could be possible that Zardari wanted to avoid impeachment or prosecution. However, there was no information on the restructuring of the NCA so as to restore the balance.

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<sup>1</sup> See report, "Nuclear scientist says he confessed to 'save' Pakistan", April 7, 2008. Available at : <http://afp.google.com/article/ALeqM5hKZQFrI-rPtBKI4GfHYs4eg3eKkQ> (accessed February 12, 2010)

**Figure 8.1:**



**Figure**

Since 9/11, Pakistan has also received US nuclear security assistance in the form of aid and advanced-level training in the US national laboratories. About US\$ 100 million have been spent, besides the economic assistance provided to Pakistan. Pakistan also claims that it has not accepted any technology transfers from the US including the Permissive Action Links (PALs).

To allay concerns of the Western world on the safety and security of Pakistani nuclear weapons and other assets, Kidwai made a presentation in November 2007 to over 50 journalists from all over the world, to highlight the steps taken by the SPD to safeguard Pakistani nuclear weapons, their storage sites and movement. He later made two separate presentations to foreign military attaches and diplomats and elaborated the measures initiated and executed by Pakistan. According to him, a force of about 10,000 security personnel guards all the strategic sites and these measures were at par with those employed by other nuclear weapons states. Pakistan also claims to have established the Nuclear Security Action Plan (NSAP) which would be overseen by the Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) under the SPD. This was to address the issue of securing nuclear materials, radioactive sources from illegal trafficking and preventing their use in the development of radiological weapons.

Despite the tall claims by Pakistan regarding the safety and security of its nuclear weapons and other strategic assets, concerns do persist among the members of the international community because of the deteriorating security situation. Growing instability in Pakistan coupled with the advance of the Taliban forced the Pakistan military to undertake large-scale operations in the FATA region and more recently in South Waziristan. Simultaneously, terror attacks have escalated in various parts of Pakistan including at Wah cantonment.

Seymour Hersh, the noted US journalist, in his article in the *New Yorker* elaborated on the issue of nuclear safety in Pakistan. According to him, the Obama administration has been negotiating a highly sensitive understanding with the Pakistani military to allow specially trained US troops to provide added security for Pakistani nuclear weapons, in case of an emergency. Simultaneously, the Pakistani military would be given money to equip and train Pakistani soldiers and to improve their housing and facilities. To this end, the US Congress has approved in June 2009 a US\$ 400 million request.

Pakistan is in possession of F-16A/B and Mirage V aircrafts acquired from the US and France respectively for the delivery of nuclear weapons. It is widely assessed that Pakistan might have made modifications to these aircraft so as to use them for nuclear missions. In February 2010, Pakistan announced that it inducted the first squadron of JF-17 Thunder multi-role combat aircraft it jointly developed with China as part of its efforts to maintain a balance of conventional forces in the region.

Till 1992, Pakistan was known to be lagging behind in the ballistic missiles field and not much progress was reported in the development of medium-range ballistic missiles. The Hatf-1 and Hatf-2 were very short-range missiles and Pakistan encountered several difficulties in their development. Pakistan launched the liquid-fuelled Ghauri missile with a reported range of 1300 km in April 1998 and the test came as a shock for the entire world. Ultimately, it came to light that North Korean Nodong-1 missiles had been supplied to Pakistan and had been re-named as Ghauri. It was widely believed that Pakistan had struck a barter deal with North Korea, under which ballistic missiles were supplied to Pakistan in return for uranium centrifuge technology. North Korea was

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known to be operating a 5-MW research reactor at its Yongbyon nuclear complex from which it separated enough plutonium for a small number of nuclear weapons. The US believes that North Korea was secretly developing uranium enrichment capability and the issue was central in the six-party talks among the US, China, Japan, Russia, South and North Korea. Despite the denial by Pakistani leaders, the recent acknowledgment by North Korea that it had mastered uranium enrichment technology confirms Pakistani support for North Korea.

By the end of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, Pakistan started test-firing a variety of ballistic missiles including Shaheen-1, Shaheen-2 and Ghaznavi. In the beginning of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, Pakistan further displayed its capability to develop and launch cruise missiles viz., Babur and Ra'ad. The speed, with which Pakistan has developed, tested and deployed some of these missiles, indicates that Pakistan has benefited immensely from China through the imports of designs, materials, equipment and technology.

However, Pakistan is yet to develop substantial skills to develop and operate space assets for civilian/military applications. Though Pakistan is aware of the fact that space capabilities are essential for making its nuclear command and control credible, it is yet to make any headway in this field. As on date, Pakistan operates one leased satellite and is very anxious to develop/launch a satellite before 2012 by which time the sole slot allocated to Pakistan would expire. Towards meeting the target, Pakistan has concluded an agreement with China in 2008.

Pakistan does not have a 'no-first-use' policy on nuclear weapons. At the same time, there has not been much public debate or discussion on issues related to nuclear weapons in Pakistan. Though a nuclear doctrine was never formulated officially, Pakistan has reiterated on many occasions that its nuclear weapons are India centred and that it will use nuclear weapons if the very existence of Pakistan as a state is at stake. In an interview with Italian scholars in 2002, the DG of the SPD, Khalid Kidwai said that the nuclear weapons were "aimed solely at India" and "in case that deterrence fails, they will be used if ,

- India attacks Pakistan and conquers a large part of its territory (space threshold)
- India destroys a large part either of its land or air forces (military threshold)
- India proceeds [with] the economic strangling of Pakistan (economic strangling)
- India pushes Pakistan into political destabilization or creates a large scale internal subversion in Pakistan (domestic destabilization)".<sup>2</sup>

While ruling out any risk of inadvertent nuclear conflict, Kidwai emphasised that India and Pakistan would stay clear of the nuclear threshold and refrain from aggressive behaviour that could trigger any nuclear reaction. However, in the recent times there are several indications coming out from various military leaders which suggest that perhaps there has been some lowering of the nuclear threshold. Reacting to the Indian Army Chief's remarks on use of space for limited war under a nuclear overhang, the Pakistani Chief of Army Staff,

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<sup>2</sup> Kidwai's interview finds detailed mention in Paolo Cotta-Ramusino and Maurizio Martellini, "Nuclear Safety, Nuclear Stability and Nuclear Strategy in Pakistan: A concise report of a visit by Landau Network - Centro Volta", Como, Italy: Landau Network-Centro Volta, January 21, 2002, p.5. Available at: <http://www.mi.infn.it/~landnet/Doc/pakistan.pdf> (accessed February 12, 2010).

Gen. Pervez Kayani remarked that it would lead to incalculable consequences, meaning lowering of the nuclear threshold. Lt Gen (Retd.) Shahid Aziz, who was Chief of General Staff under Musharraf, speaking on a Television show in Pakistan talked about firing a nuclear-tipped missile across the Indian landmass into the Bay of Bengal as a force demonstrator. After the Mumbai terrorist attacks in November 2008, Lt Gen Hamid Nawaz, a former corps commander, also warned on a TV show that the conflict would turn into nuclear within hours, in the event India launched an attack on Pakistan. Such statements however were not limited to the military alone. Maria Sultan, Director General of the Islamabad-based South Asia Strategic Stability Institute (SASSI) also reiterated similar views in a TV show<sup>3</sup>. All these statements raise questions as to whether the red-lines laid down by Kidwai have been blurred.

### Scenario in Next 10 Years

Pakistan is a nuclear weapons state, which is actively engaged in the past few years in increasing and modernising its nuclear weapons stockpile. In 2008-2009, there were reports suggesting that Pakistan was constructing two more plutonium production reactors (of unknown capability); a reprocessing facility to support these reactors; expanding the Dera Ghazi Khan nuclear site; and had new nuclear-capable ballistic missiles/cruise missiles under production. Further, Pakistan is set to increase its nuclear weapons stocks in the next 10 years. Though it would be difficult to estimate the number, it might be mentioned that though the CIA estimated in 1999 that Pakistan would need another 20 years to double its stockpile from 25-35 nuclear weapons, it took only about 10 years to

achieve that. It is also difficult to estimate at what stage Pakistan would like to halt the production of the nuclear arsenal and nuclear materials.

Pakistan is also actively engaged in the development/production of ballistic missiles and nuclear capable cruise missiles. In the next 10 years or so, Pakistan is likely to be engaged in improving their performance, and accuracy. Pakistan would also like to place its long-awaited PAKSAT-1R into space with Chinese assistance in 2012. With no proven space capabilities, Pakistan may depend on China for its strategic requirements including satellite imagery.

In all probability, the Pakistan establishment might have decided to drastically increase its production of plutonium in the coming years. Towards achieving this, Pakistan is engaged in setting up additional facilities to produce nuclear materials. It is also likely that Pakistan might be interested to build plutonium-based nuclear weapons to supplement the uranium-based weapons.

With the current global recession, increased US pressure on the safety of nuclear weapons and increased reliance on outside financial support for its very survival, it is not known how Pakistan is going to sustain the development of its nuclear and missile programmes. In May 2009, it was reported that Pakistan's nuclear programme was facing severe budget cuts to the tune of 35 per cent that have hampered about 30 projects including some classified projects run by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC). It was also widely reported that senior nuclear scientists and officials holding key positions in the nuclear programme were upset with the situation and feared that the

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<sup>3</sup> In the programme called "Islamabad Tonight" on December 29, 2008. Can watch the video on [http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=1448968651699687880 &ei=WHCgS\\_7aHoG2wgOvsIyGDQ&q=maria+sultan&hl=en#](http://video.google.com/videoplay?docid=1448968651699687880&ei=WHCgS_7aHoG2wgOvsIyGDQ&q=maria+sultan&hl=en#)

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cuts were tantamount to a quiet and unannounced rollback and it would badly damage the programme.

A brief description of Pakistani space, missile and nuclear programmes is as follows.

### **Space Programme**

Pakistan realises that space technology is vital for a state possessing nuclear weapons, to make the nuclear command and control mechanisms credible. The giant steps taken by India in this field must be a source of concern and worry for Pakistan.

Unlike the nuclear and missile programmes, Pakistan's space programme is not well-advanced. Despite the fact that the nodal agency for space activities in Pakistan—the Pakistan Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO)—was established as a committee in 1961, not much progress had been achieved by it in the first three decades of its existence. The SUPARCO was given the status of a Commission in 1981. In 1962, SUPARCO began launching imported sounding rockets from a test range near the Indian Ocean and by 1970 SUPARCO developed the capability to fabricate rocket motors from raw materials. It has a solid-fuel manufacturing plant and maintains an instrument development facility and a rocket testing range.

In the early 1980s, SUPARCO, in collaboration with Hughes, conducted a feasibility study defining the broad parameters of PAKSAT. The project's estimated cost was US\$ 400 million. However, PAKSAT never came off the drawing boards.

Pakistan was successful only in sending two indigenously built satellites into space, namely Badr-I and Badr-II in 1990 from China, and in 2001 from Russia. They had a life span of six-months and two years respectively.

Pakistan was allocated five slots in 1984 by the International Telecommunications Union (ITU), but failed to put a satellite in the orbit in the stipulated time and subsequently lost four slots in that process. With the fear of losing the sole spot of 38° East in geo-stationary orbit, which was strategically vital, Pakistan scrambled to retain that slot. The satellite's footprints covers the commercially hot markets of India, Sri Lanka, Afghanistan, Africa and Europe.

As on date, Pakistan has only one operational satellite which is Pakistan's National Communications Satellite PAKSAT -1, at an orbital location of 38 East longitude. Pakistan is trying to replace PAKSAT -1 by PAKSAT IR before its life ceases in end 2012. Pakistan acquired the Hughes Global Systems Satellite (HGS3) on lease for five years in 2003 and renamed it as PAKSAT-1. Later, its lease was extended by another 5 years till end of 2012. Pakistan paid US\$ 4.5 million at the time of signing the contract and a sum of US\$ 4.5 million (US\$ 2.5 million as operational costs and US\$ 2 million as fees for transponders) a year to be paid to the company. Pakistan insisted that the leased satellite would be used only for commercial purposes. Pakistan also planned to recover the cost of the present satellite by selling the transponders to telecommunication or broadcasting companies in other countries, but there have been no indications in that direction.

Pakistan does not have the capability to develop its own satellite launch vehicle (SLV) or the capability to develop satellites. However, there has been much talk about it for a few years now. In 2001, Dr A.Q. Khan had reportedly stated that Pakistan was in the process of building a low-cost, light-weight SLV, but the plan never took off. Given this scenario, the future of Pakistan's launch vehicle programme remains quite bleak, particularly when SUPARCO's second priority happens to be remote sensory satellites rather than

SLVs. Apart from the obvious question of funding, which SUPARCO lacks, some analysts also question the country's capability to build and maintain an SLV. According to a renowned physicist Dr Pervez Hoodbhoy, Pakistan can at best construct one SLV if the SLV design and components are given to Pakistan, but to manufacture something from its own engineering and technical resources seems impossible. But this view was contradicted by Shahid Qureshi, Head of the Institute of Space and Planetary Astrophysics, Karachi University, who observed: "If we can launch a missile up to a range of 1,500km, why not build an SLV that can launch low-atmosphere satellites?"<sup>4</sup>

There were attempts by the Pakistan administration to suggest that it was keen to achieve progress in the development of satellites and their launch vehicles. In August 2005, the then President Pervez Musharraf had reportedly approved a project, costing about Rs. 19.3 billion, which was designed to be executed over six years. The aim of the project was to launch a self-controlled Remote Sensing Satellite System (RSSS) to ensure the strategic and unconditional supply of satellite remote sensing data for any part of the globe over the year. At that time, Musharraf instructed the SUPARCO to develop the capability to make and launch different types of satellites. However, not much was heard about the project later.

About a year later, Musharraf had again expressed his resolve to put Pakistan on the "world's map of space-faring nations". Speaking at ceremony to mark the passing out of the first batch of Institute of Space Technology (IST), he called on the SUPARCO to emulate the feats of institutions like PAEC, NESCOM and KRL.<sup>5</sup>

As its efforts to launch an indigenous satellite did not make any headway, Pakistan signed a contract with China Great Wall Industry Corporation (CGWIC) for the on-orbit delivery of the Paksat 1R communication satellite in October 2008. The satellite will have a service life of 15 years and will be launched on August 2011. The satellite will support all conventional and modern Fixed Satellite Service (FSS) applications. The satellite will have a total of up to 30 transponders: 18 in Ku-band and 12 in C-band. To ensure high degree of reliability/availability of the system, two fully redundant Satellite Ground Control Stations (SGCS) would be established in Karachi and Lahore, one to act as the Main and the other as Backup respectively. Again China is likely to assist Pakistan in the supply of equipment and assistance.

### Missile Programme

Though the Space and Upper Atmosphere Research Commission (SUPARCO) was created in 1961 to oversee all space research and development programmes, the surface-to-surface ballistic missile programme was launched only in the 1980s. The Hatf-1, with an estimated range of 80 km and 500 kg payload is the first short-range missile to be developed, followed by the Hatf-2, with an estimated range of 300km and a 500kg payload. Like the nuclear programme, Pakistan's missile programme was also heavily dependent on external assistance for technology, materials and assistance. Pakistan is known to be developing both solid- and liquid-fuelled ballistic missiles with Chinese assistance. Besides supplying a small number of M-11 missiles with a range of 300 km in the early 1990s, China also helped Pakistan build a turnkey ballistic missile manufacturing facility at

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<sup>4</sup> Sa'adia Reza, "Pakistan risks losing orbital slot if satellite not launched", *Dawn*, October 19, 2008.

<sup>5</sup> Reported *Dawn*, August 11, 2006. Available at <http://www.dawn.com/2006/08/11/welcome.htm> (accessed on February 14, 2010)



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Tarwanah, a suburb of Rawalpindi. Pakistan is believed to have built Ghaznavi (Hatf-III) short-range missiles based on the Chinese M-11 missiles. Ghaznavi was flight-tested for the first time in 2003 followed by test in 2004, 2006, 2008 and 2010 (some important facilities are shown in the Map-8.1).

By the late 1990s, China helped Pakistan develop the solid-fuelled Shaheen-1 (Hatf-IV) ballistic missile. According to Western strategic experts, the missile is modelled on the Chinese M-9 missiles. It was flight-tested on April 15, 1999 for the first time. It was reported that the missile was handed over to Pakistan army in 2003 and the army last test-launched it in May 2010. The missile can carry a payload of 1000 kg, but the range is not exactly known. While some put the range to be around 400 km, Pakistan claims its range to be 700 km. The National Development Complex (NDC) is developing these missiles.

Shaheen-II (Hatf VI) is a two-stage solid fuelled intermediate-range ballistic missile, which was successfully test-fired for the first time on March 9, 2004. Pakistan claimed that Shaheen II has a range of 2,500 km and can cover many parts of India. Efforts are on to increase its range to 3,500 km. There are indications that Pakistan is working on Shaheen-III as well.

In the late 1990s, Pakistan also acquired a small number of liquid-fuelled medium-range ballistic missile Nodong (Ghauri) ballistic missiles (also known as Hatf-V) from North Korea. Pakistan flight-tested the Ghauri missile on April 6, 1998 for the first time. The missile has an optimum range of 1,500 km and can carry a payload of 700 kg. The Ghauri-II is a newer variant with an increased range of 2,300 km developed by increasing the motor

assembly length and using improved propellants. The latest variant, Ghauri III is under development with a planned range of 3500-4000 km.

In addition to ballistic missiles, Pakistan is also known to be working on cruise missiles. Babur (Hatf VII) is the first land attack cruise missile to be developed by Pakistan. With a reported range of around 500-700 km, it can be launched from ground-based TELs, warships, submarines and aircrafts. Till date five test-launches have taken place, the first being in August 2005, and the last being in May 2009. A submarine launched version of the Babur is believed to be under development.

Pakistan also developed the air-launched nuclear capable cruise missile Ra'ad (Hatf VIII), which was tested for the first time in August 2007. Its range is similar to that of Babur. The second test was conducted in May 2009.

The *New York Times* reported in August 2009 that Pakistan has modified the anti-ship Harpoon missiles supplied by the US in 1980s to expand its capability to strike land targets.<sup>6</sup> This charge was reportedly made by the US in an unpublicised diplomatic protest in late June 2009 to Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani and other top Pakistani officials. Pakistan while rejecting the allegations suggested that Pakistan has indigenously developed the new missile.

## **Nuclear Programme**

Pakistani nuclear programme dates back to 1955 when it established Institute of Atomic Energy, with Dr Nazir Ahmed being the founding Chairman which was renamed as the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) a year later. In 1957, when the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) was

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<sup>6</sup> See Eric Schmitt and David E. Sanger, "U.S. Says Pakistan Made Changes to Missiles Sold for Defense", *The New York Times*, August 29, 2009. Available at <http://www.nytimes.com/2009/08/30/world/asia/30missile.html> (accessed February 12, 2010).

established, Pakistan joined it with the objective of benefiting from the peaceful uses of nuclear technology. During the 1960s, some progress was made to increase the knowledge base and build the basic infrastructure for research and development in the field of nuclear sciences. As a step in that direction, Pakistan set up the Pakistan Institute of Nuclear Science and Technology (PINSTECH) at Nilore, near Islamabad, which later served as a training ground for the future generation of Pakistani nuclear scientists (some important facilities are shown in the Map-8.2).

The first major nuclear cooperation agreement was signed with Canada in 1965 under which Canada supplied a 137 MWe nuclear power plant known as the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUPP). The KANUPP started functioning in 1971 under the IAEA safeguards. In December 1966, 10 MW nuclear research reactor (PARR-1) built with the US assistance became critical. Another research reactor PARR-2 became operational in 1989. China supplied a 300 MWe pressurised water reactor (PWR), the Chashma Nuclear Power Plant (CHASHNUPP) to Pakistan, whose design was similar to that of Chinese Qinshan Nuclear Power Plant. Its construction started in 1993 and the reactor was operational by May 2000. At the same site, a second reactor with a 325 MWe output is under construction and it is expected to be operational by 2010. Pakistan is also believed to be in consultation with China to import 600 MWe as well as 1000 MWe power reactors from China (*Nucleonics Week*, Volume 47, No. 40, September 5, 2006. p.1). As mentioned earlier, Pakistan and China have signed a MoU in October 2008 paving the way for the construction of two more nuclear power plants of 340 MWe each. The Shanghai Nuclear Engineering Research Development Institute (SNERDI) website has claimed in March 2009 that the design work on these reactors was under way. However, Pakistan's ambassador to China denied that there was any such agreement

(*Nucleonics Week*, November 6, 2008). Recently, Pakistani media reports claimed that the Federal Cabinet had ratified, in its last meeting in March 2010, the agreement under which China would provide 82 per cent of the total US\$ 1.91 billion financing to Pakistan as soft loan.

However, it is not clear, how China, being a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) would export nuclear reactors to Pakistan without clearance from the NSG. The present NSG guidelines stipulate that nuclear exports would be allowed only to those countries who have signed the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). The Chinese nuclear cooperation issue had earlier cropped up at the time when China joined the NSG on May 27, 2004. China maintained that its commitment to construct the C-2 was made earlier on May 4, 2004.

Despite the heavy odds in importing nuclear reactors and materials from outside, Pakistan maintains that development of nuclear energy remains a top-priority for its government. In 2005, the Planning Commission and the PAEC formulated the Energy Security Plan (ESP) which formulates plans to increase the installed nuclear capacity to 8800 MWe by 2030. To meet this target, Pakistan is also negotiating with France on possible nuclear cooperation, but Paris has reportedly made it clear that the cooperation would be limited to the supply of safety and security equipment for Pakistani nuclear assets. France also ruled out supply of any nuclear reactors, citing the NSG guidelines.

Pakistan is known to be pursuing a clandestine nuclear weapons programme since the 1970s. Following the separation of East Pakistan after the 1971 war Zulfikar Ali Bhutto convened the Multan meeting of scientists on January 20, 1972 and nominated Munir Ahmad Khan as the new Chairman of the PAEC. Bhutto, for the first time,

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openly asked the scientists present at the meeting to help Pakistan develop a nuclear bomb, aimed at narrowing down the military disparity between India and Pakistan.

Following the French refusal to supply Pakistan with a safeguarded plutonium reprocessing plant under US pressure, Pakistan embarked on the uranium enrichment route to develop nuclear weapons technology. The major boost to its aspirations came when Dr A. Q. Khan, a German-trained metallurgist, offered his services to Pakistan. Dr. Khan had an extensive knowledge of gas centrifuge technologies, which he had acquired through his position at the classified URENCO uranium enrichment plant in the Netherlands. He brought with him secret designs of uranium enrichment technology from Europe. He was put in charge of Engineering Research Laboratories (ERL) in 1976 for building, equipping and operating this facility, which was later renamed as Khan Research Laboratories (KRL) in recognition of his services. Pakistan also employed an extensive clandestine network to obtain the necessary materials and technology for developing uranium enrichment capability. By the mid-1980s, Pakistan had an operating uranium enrichment facility; and as early as 1989-1990, the US concluded that Islamabad had acquired the capability to assemble a first-generation nuclear device.

Apparently with a view to developing light and compact nuclear weapons, Pakistan also started working on the plutonium route since 1990s. With the Chinese assistance, Pakistan constructed a 40 MWth heavy water plutonium production reactor at Joharabad near Khushab, which became operational by 1998. Though there were no reports on the functioning of this plant, it is believed to produce 8-10 kg of plutonium per year. A spent-fuel reprocessing plant has also come up at New Labs in PINSTECH with Chinese assistance.

Despite the growing instability in Pakistan in the recent times coupled with the global economic recession, there are indications that Pakistan is constantly engaged in stepping up its capabilities to develop nuclear weapons. The tacit acceptance by US officials and the subsequent disclosures by the Washington-based Institute for Science and International Security (ISIS) suggest that Pakistan has been pursuing the modernisation of its nuclear weapons programme vigorously. Satellite imageries obtained by ISIS shows that Pakistan is constructing two additional plutonium production reactors adjacent to the first reactor. While the construction of the second reactor is being completed, work on the third reactor work is progressing rapidly. The ISIS experts, David Albright and Paul Brannan, reported on March 24, 2010 that the recent imagery of the site indicates that the reactor is in initial operation. To support these two new reactors, a second reprocessing plant is also coming up at the site. Some reports suggest that Islamabad is constructing newer installations, especially at the Dera Ghazi Khan nuclear complex. As of today, Pakistan has established several nuclear facilities required for the nuclear fuel cycle.

The ongoing construction of two new plutonium production reactors at Khushab (with unknown capacity), would again raise the same question: how Pakistan is planning to feed the new reactors? Pakistani officials must have negotiated for the uranium required for the operation of these new plants and possibly could have made alternate arrangements for the uranium. With all the NSG countries declining to offer nuclear cooperation with Pakistan because of their stringent export control laws, Pakistan might have got an assurance from China to supply uranium clandestinely at least for the near future. The recent revelations by Dr. Khan that China had supplied Pakistan, in 1982 with 50 kg of highly enriched uranium enough for the making of two nuclear weapons, besides supplying

the nuclear design, would only confirm these views.

In any case, the construction of these two reactors by Pakistan is indicative of the fact that it would pursue the plutonium route to nuclear weapons more vigorously. With the fading out of Dr. Khan and his global network of illegal procurements, Pakistan might be finding it difficult to arrange for spares and equipment for the Kahuta plant. The problems related with the domestic production of uranium would also contribute to pursuing the plutonium route.

### **Nuclear Materials**

Pakistani nuclear programme, since its inception, is inherently a military oriented programme. Most of its facilities were established with covert assistance and were not known to outside world for many years. Pakistan has two research reactors, namely the PARR-1, PARR-2, a plutonium production reactor at Khushab, and two nuclear power plants at Karachi and Chashma. A second reactor unit is under construction at Chashma. Pakistan is also constructing two plutonium production reactors at Khushab.

Pakistan also operates a uranium enrichment programme at Kahuta while a second plant is under construction at Golra. Pakistan has a pilot-scale centrifuge plant at Sihala. There are also reports suggesting that a plutonium reprocessing plant is also coming up at New Labs at PINSTECH. Pakistan has to provide for enough uranium for running all these programmes. However, it cannot import uranium, even for its nuclear plants under IAEA safeguards as Pakistan is not a party to the NNPT and current NSG guidelines stipulate that member states only supply nuclear materials and equipment to states who have signed the full-scope safeguards agreement.

The current uranium reserves in Pakistan are estimated at 11, 200 MT. The first uranium mine

was opened in Bagchalchur in Dera Ghazi Khan and mining operations here were closed in the year 2000. A second deposit of uranium in DG Khan was discovered in Nangar Nai in the year 1980 and the mining operations began in 1996, though some reports claim that operations began only in the year 2000. The second uranium mine was opened at Qubul Khel in 1992 and mining operations began in 1995. Uranium deposits were also found in Taunsa in 1999 where mining operations began in 2002-03. Pakistan had established an ore processing plant at DG Khan in 1977-78 with a capacity of 200-300 tonnes. Milling is done at DG Khan and also at the Atomic Energy Minerals Centre in Lahore. Uranium is purified and converted to uranium hexafluoride gas at DG Khan, whose capacity is 200 tonnes. Uranium hexafluoride gas is enriched in centrifuges to weapons grade at Kahuta plant.

The current uranium reserves of 11,200 MT would allow Pakistan to make about 1600 MWe of nuclear energy through operation of nuclear reactors for their full life span. In the absence of an external supply of natural uranium, the Pakistani claims to achieve 8800 MWe energy by 2020 would not be possible. It is to be seen how Pakistan overcomes the fuel crisis if it is serious about achieving its target of 8800 MWe.

In comparison, India has the estimated natural uranium reserves of about 91,000 MT which would be suffice for 13,000 MWe. But, India, well aware of the uranium shortage, had long planned for the three-stage nuclear power programme where the Fast Breeder reactors will come into the picture. The role of these reactors is to produce more uranium than they consume, and the third stage would be taken over by thorium-based reactors. India has enormous stocks of thorium and hence the ultimate goal is to utilise these thorium reserves for nuclear energy production. Pakistan, however, unlike India, had no such plans to develop fast breeder reactors.

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At the current level, Pakistan's annual production of natural uranium is about 30-40 MT. Pakistan's KANUPP nuclear reactor consumes about 15 MT of natural uranium per year. Besides, Pakistan is also operating the 40 MWth Khushab reactor, which was dedicated to the production of plutonium for weapon purposes. This reactor consumes about 18.25 MT of natural uranium. Pakistan is also known to be operating the Kahuta uranium reprocessing plant, which is also fed on natural uranium.

Interestingly, Pakistan's position at the UN Conference on Disarmament (CD) in Geneva is not always linked to that of India. Conscious of disparity in the stocks of nuclear fissile materials held with India, Pakistan has been demanding at the CD that the past stocks of the fissile materials held by the other countries should also be included for verification. India, however, argues that the ban should only be on the future production of nuclear materials. The logjam at the CD could be overcome only in May 2009 after more than 12

years, when agreement was reached on a work-plan which would address the four contentious issues namely, FMCT, prohibition of space-based weapons, nuclear disarmament and provision of negative security assurance to non-weapon states. However, Pakistan objected to the consensus citing security issues, because of which the CD ended the session without an agreement. Pakistan reiterated its stance again when the CD resumed in January 2010. The decision to take an uncompromising stance appears to have been taken at the highest level. The NCA which met under the new chairmanship of Prime Minister Gilani, observed that Pakistani position at the CD would be determined by its national security interests and the objectives of the strategic stability in south Asia. It may be possible that Pakistan is intending to increase its nuclear fissile materials stocks for its weapons programme. This also substantiates Western allegations that Pakistan is expanding its nuclear weapons programme in a big way. ■

## CHAPTER IX

# PAKISTAN'S RELATIONS WITH INDIA: THE UNENDING QUEST FOR PARITY

### Pakistan's Perception of India

Pakistan's perception of India is premised on the 'two nation theory' and rooted in the belief that India as a Hindu-majority state could never have a good relationship with the Muslim-majority state of Pakistan. Flowing from it, there is a pathological suspicion of India which prompts the ruling class to believe that India would never get used to Pakistan's sovereign status and conspire eternally to suck and reabsorb it. This fear psychosis is compounded by the fact that Pakistan suffers from an acute identity crisis because of its inability to generate a popular consensus on what should form the basis of the Pakistani nation. Various attempts to build an identity based on Islam have failed. The inter-sectarian differences have disallowed the state to bank on any particular version of Islam.

Therefore, the elite of Pakistan sought to generate and perpetuate anti-India sentiments, which have formed the basis of the Pakistani nation.<sup>1</sup> It has provided Pakistan with the only glue that binds the people together. The official line on Pakistani nationalism has been to define it in exclusive terms, in direct opposition to the ideal and values that India stands for. For the elite, Pakistan has to be, what India is not. Such an

exclusive definition has also deepened the sense of distrust towards India and sustained an adversarial relationship with it. Its policies towards India, therefore, are devised in a zero-sum way. Anything that would benefit India has to be shunned even if that were to benefit Pakistan in some way.

This insecurity complex, vis-à-vis India, is compounded by the military reverses Pakistan has suffered in each of its misadventures against India in 1947, 1965, 1971 and 1999. Particularly, India's role in the vivisection/dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971 rankles in Pakistani minds to this day. Hence, the elite in Pakistan feels that there is an urgent need to checkmate India at every step. Producing the nuclear bomb was thus regarded as an existential necessity and as a deterrent, even if Pakistanis were to "eat grass", as Zulfikar Ali Bhutto famously stated in the early 1970s. Simultaneously, India has to be kept engaged internally so that it would have neither the time nor resources to attack Pakistan.

However, much of this sense of insecurity is self-inflicted. Pakistan's basic approach to India is rooted in a communal perception of history. The identity of Pakistan has been created very carefully in direct opposition to the secular, democratic and

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<sup>1</sup> Senior Pakistani journalist Khaled Ahmed came out with this observation during the course of his presentation in the SAFMA Regional Conference, "Interstate Conflicts in South Asia", at The Ashoka Hotel, New Delhi, India, on October 9, 2004. He also said that 99 per cent of Pakistani nationalism was based on anti-Indian sentiments.

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multi-cultural identity of India. There is a tendency to project Pakistan as the heir to the Muslim empires that enveloped much of the Indian subcontinent for several centuries. As a corollary, the myth of one Muslim Pakistani soldier as being equivalent to ten Hindu Indian soldiers is propagated to strengthen the morale of the Pakistan army.

Thus Pakistani perception and policies are conditioned by a convoluted insecurity complex on the one hand and an exaggerated self-importance as an Islamic power with a manifest destiny on the other.

Pakistan has refused to accept India's natural preponderance in south Asia and sought to equalise/balance India at all levels either through alliances with external powers or through massive investment in its defence-preparedness. It regards India as a pseudo-secular hegemonic state seeking to impose its will on all its smaller neighbours by all means. Seen from a communal perspective, Pakistan has viewed Indian predominance as Hindu predominance and as a certain threat to its existence as an Islamic state. Unable to evolve as a democracy and labouring under military control, Pakistan refuses to accept the Indian emphasis on diversity and democracy and interprets India's stand on Jammu and Kashmir on communal lines.

Unfortunately, the communal perception of India permeates Pakistan's thinking on trade and commerce and cultural exchanges with India. Very often, in both English language and vernacular media, the image of the Hindu *baniya* (the trading or merchant caste) is deliberately built up in a pejorative manner to reinforce propaganda against India. In school text books also the Hindu is portrayed as an untrustworthy *kafir*. The anecdotal accounts of many Indian diplomats and visitors to Pakistan show how small children in Pakistan would make their hatred perceptible at the very mention of the word 'Hindu'.

Strangely, in spite of concerted effort to nurture such an anti-India mindset, one comes across a precipitate sense of goodwill and willingness to engage the Hindu Indian at the popular level in Pakistan. However, such bonhomie at the popular level, during people-to-people contacts does not have any visible impact on official reactions from Pakistan. It is difficult to predict whether a democratic Pakistan would respond to such popular sympathy and be inclined to have a peaceful relationship with India.

It is rather strange that, even after acquiring nuclear weapons as a deterrent to any probable all-out Indian attack, Pakistan continues to be plagued by a sense of insecurity. Repeated Indian assurances to the contrary (which include former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee's declaration during his visit to Minar-e-Pakistan, Lahore, in 1999) have failed to convince Pakistan that India is reconciled to Pakistan's sovereign existence and would not pose any physical threat to it, unless provoked. Pakistan has rather continued with its strategy of 'bleeding India' through cross-border subversion. It has raised a constituency of armed non-state actors (for example Lashkar-e-Taiba, Jaish-e-Muhammad, Harkat-ul-Mujahideen, Hizb-ul-Mujahideen etc.) to spread terror in India by all possible means. The most effective of them, Lashkar-e-Taiba, has even gone to the extent of asserting itself as the only true and usable 'nuclear bomb' that Pakistan has in its arsenal.

Even when Pakistan has been compelled to pursue peace through dialogue with India under pressure from outside, it has kept this option open. As investigations into the serial bomb blasts in India during 2006-2007 and the Mumbai carnage in November 2008 invariably reveal, Pakistan continues to use terror as an instrument of its policy towards India even when there is enough evidence to prove that such policy has started affecting its own internal security.

## Strategy to Counter India

As has been outlined above, Pakistan has sought to deal with the perceived Indian threat by seeking parity with India through various means, i.e., alliance with external powers, acquisition of strategic weapons, use of terrorism as an instrument of its foreign policy towards India and by tarnishing India's image through hostile propaganda on Kashmir and its role in regional politics.

It has also launched several armed operations against India (Operations Gulmarg 1947, Venus-1948, Gibraltar and Grand Slam-1965 and Badr-1999) and consistently denied involvement of the Pakistani state in any of them. However, memoirs of Pakistani officials (both civilian and military) clearly indicate that the Pakistani state had planned and implemented these operations to seize control of the Kashmir valley and inflict a conclusive defeat on the Indian army. Even after successive defeats at the hands of the Indian army, its sense of belligerence is driven by the basic assumption which led Ayub to war in 1965: "As a general rule Hindu morale would not stand more than a couple of blows delivered at the right time and place. Such opportunities should, therefore, be sought and exploited".<sup>2</sup> Pakistani army continues to appeal to the "Superior Valour and Martial Qualities of the Pakistani (Punjabi and Pathan Muslim soldier) vis-à-vis the Hindu Indian soldier, as proved in 1965 war".

This sense of martial superiority is boosted by a missionary zeal that Pakistani Muslims are blessed by Allah who would support them in their act against non-believers or *kafirs*. Even if Kashmir

were to be wrested away from Indian control tomorrow per chance, this missionary appetite would not be satiated. Pakistan has developed its army as an army of believers and sought to inculcate Islamic ethos in its soldiers. It can be best observed from the motto it has selected for its army (*Iman, Takwa and Jihad-fi-sabilillah*)<sup>3</sup>, which lays emphasis on holy war.

## Obsession with Kashmir

Pakistan's obsessive antipathy towards India manifests most visibly in its approach towards Kashmir. Pakistan considers it a *terra irredenta* (unredeemed territory). It is regarded as an unfinished agenda of partition. There is thus a propensity to project Kashmir as the core dispute between India and Pakistan. The Pakistani argument holds that as a Muslim majority state, it should have rightfully belonged to Pakistan. This is contrary to the fact that at the time of the partition, the popular resistance movement in erstwhile Jammu and Kashmir state, led by National Conference, was decidedly against partition on religious lines. It professed to be a secular movement and aimed at a secular administration. That explains India's inclination to hold a plebiscite even if the king of the state should seek to accede unconditionally to India under threat from Pakistani lashkars in October 1947.

It was Pakistan's concern that the Kashmiris might spurn its offer that made it non-committal over the issue during the late 1940s. India's stance changed only when Pakistan's unjustified demands

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<sup>2</sup> Maj (Retd) Agha Humayun Amin, "Grand Slam— A Battle of Lost Opportunities", *Defence Journal*, September 2000. Available at : <http://www.defencejournal.com/2000/sept/grand-slam.htm> (accessed on February 21, 2010)

<sup>3</sup> The motto of the Pakistan Army is analysed in detail on the Pakistan Army's official website available at: <http://www.pakistanarmy.gov.pk/AWPReview/TextContent.aspx?pld=17&rnd=108#iman>



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were accorded precedence over Indian concerns by external mediators. Pakistan's refusal to withdraw its troops from the territory under its control basically killed the UN resolutions for plebiscite. Kashmiris went on to affirm their faith in the Indian constitution and adopted democracy in early 1950s. Pakistan continued to interfere with the democratic administration of the state and took due advantage of political turmoil within the state to strengthen militancy therein during the mid-1960s and the 1990s.

At the same time, it brought about extensive changes in the demography as well as administrative arrangement in the other part of the Jammu and Kashmir state which was under its control. The Northern Areas comprising Gilgit and Baltistan were *de facto* merged with Pakistan and ruled by brute force. The remaining areas were called Azad (or Free) Kashmir and subjected to nominal representative rule under a ministry in the central government. For all practical purposes a middle ranking secretary was the *de facto* head of administration in Azad Kashmir.

### **Official Bilateral Relationship**

It is interesting to note that in spite of an abiding sense of rivalry between them, the leaderships of the two states have talked to each other on many occasions. It is also quite amazing that the two countries resolved the issue of water sharing rather amicably in 1960 through negotiations under the auspices of the World Bank. However, if one were to analyse bilateral relations between the two countries, almost all the leaders of Pakistan, Liaqat Ali Khan, Ayub Khan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, his daughter Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif had almost a common approach towards India. They sought to checkmate India at every cost at all levels. Even if they would choose to talk, they would stick to their agenda of weakening India's influence by all means, i.e, alliance with external powers (like

US and/or China), use of terrorism/subversion as an instrument of foreign policy vis-à-vis India, and building up of anti-India mindset at the domestic level to support and sustain the adversarial posture vis-à-vis India.

It is also worth mentioning that even when Pakistani leaders expressed their willingness to talk, there was always a parallel process at work within Pakistan to continue to either 'wreck India from within' and acquire strategic weapons as well as conventional arms and ammunition to balance India. From 'Operation Gibraltar' to 'Operation Kargil' and now attack on Mumbai, process of dialogue has been followed by military adventures disguised as militancy or terrorist activity by non-state actors. Against this backdrop, it is useful to analyse the ongoing peace process with India, which has not yet been called off even under grave provocations.

### **Peace Process with India (2004-till date)**

The 'Composite Dialogue' between India and Pakistan which started in October-November 1998 resumed in February 2004. It encompassed eight different issues, which are: (i) Peace and Security, including CBMs; (ii) Jammu and Kashmir; (iii) Siachen; (iv) Sir Creek; (v) Wullar Barrage/Tulbul Navigation Project; (vi) Terrorism and Drug Trafficking; (vii) Economic and Commercial Cooperation; and (viii) Promotion of Friendly Exchanges in Various Fields. Apart from the dialogue on all these issues, technical and expert level talks on Nuclear CBMs, Conventional CBMs, Cross Line-of-Control CBMs, Cooperation between Coast guards, Narcotics Control Agencies, Civil Aviation etc were also held regularly. The most significant achievement of the Composite Dialogue till the Mumbai attacks had been the successful continuation of the ceasefire on the International Border, LoC and AGPL, which came in to effect in

November 2003. The process was also buttressed by intensification and expansion of people-to-people interaction, as a result of the establishment of several transport linkages between the two countries and people-centric Confidence Building Measures (CBMs).

### ***Bilateral Trade: Unable to Realise Full Potential***

The effect of Composite Dialogue was visible on bilateral trade to some extent, even if there was a reluctance on the part of Pakistan to realise its full potential. Bilateral trade stood at US\$ 1.86 billion in 2007-08, while it was US\$ 859.33 million in 2005-06, \$ 616 million in 2004-05 and US\$ 344.29 million in 2003-04. In 2006-07 India's exports to Pakistan were valued at US \$ 1.34 billion and its imports at US \$ 0.32 billion. Unofficial trade which increases the transaction costs for end users in Pakistan through third countries is also significant.

Pakistan continues to restrict items of import from India through a positive list of 1075 items. Even after signing SAFTA, the regional trade agreement, Pakistan has refused to extend the negotiated tariff concessions to India on items outside the positive list thereby negating the letter and spirit of the agreement. Both countries agreed in August 2007 to allow each other's trucks to cross at Wagha/Attari border up to designated points on either side and the agreement was implemented with effect from October 1, 2007. The Srinagar-Muzaffarabad truck service across the Line of Control (LoC) for trade in agreed items also started on October 21, 2008. However, due to the negative trade policy of the Pakistan government, such measures have largely failed to realise their full potential.

### **Other Areas of Engagement**

India and Pakistan have done particularly well in creating opportunities for people-to-people

contact through facilitation of cross-border and cross-LoC travel. The two countries have thus far agreed to continue the Delhi-Lahore bus service, launch bus services between Amritsar and Nankana Sahib, between Srinagar and Muzaffarabad, between Poonch and Rawalkot, resume the bi-weekly Delhi-Attari-Wagah-Lahore Samjhauta rail service, establish the Munabao-Khokrapar rail link and to increase frequencies of air services. Apart from this, there have been attempts to address humanitarian issues relating to prisoners and fishermen. Technical level joint working groups on agriculture, health, science & technology, information, education, I.T. & telecommunications, environment and Tourism have also discussed these issues at the official bilateral level. However, the attack on Mumbai stalled this process of engagement.

From January 2010, two large media groups in India and Pakistan, the Times of India and the Jang Group respectively, have launched a peace initiative titled *Aman Ki Asha*, which aims at creating a constituency of peace in both the countries involving "all segments of society - the civil society, students, the business community, artists, politician, and academia". This Track II initiative has taken off in right earnest but its success will largely depend on the way the relationship shapes up at the official level.

### ***Out-of-box Thinking on Kashmir***

During 2004-2007, Musharraf issued many statements on Kashmir, which included the one revealing his wish to sidestep UN resolutions on Kashmir. He came out with many proposals which indicated that he was floating many trial balloons to find out the extent of Indian flexibility over Kashmir. The Pakistani foreign ministry's brief on Kashmir did carry Musharraf's four step formula which proposed that all proposals unacceptable to India, Pakistan and the Kashmiris should be taken

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off the table and the best solution acceptable to all should be taken up for discussion.<sup>4</sup> However, media reports suggest that neither Musharraf nor Pakistani foreign office made any attempt to isolate solutions unacceptable to India, even if Manmohan Singh, the Indian Prime Minister, reportedly asked Musharraf about this during their meeting at the United Nations in September 2004. At best, Musharraf argued during his meeting with Indian journalists on April 18, 2005 that tentatively options like self governance, autonomy, joint control and independence could be taken up for discussion.

If Musharraf advocated out-of-the-box thinking and advocated (in October 2005) division of whole of Kashmir into seven different regions and ascertain popular opinion on their accession to India or Pakistan, then he was basically referring to the old Dixon formula and had his eyes fixed on the valley of Kashmir. This is in line with Pakistani thinking on Kashmir right since 1947. In fact, close examination of the Pakistani foreign office's pronouncements relating to Kashmir shows that it continues to project Kashmir as the core dispute. Its official brief on Kashmir states even today: "We have also reiterated in unequivocal terms that the Jammu and Kashmir issue is the core issue, which cannot be sidelined and put on the backburner".<sup>5</sup>

### **Peace Process with India under the Present Administration**

The present democratic administration, which came to power after February 2008 elections, had

reservations about Musharraf's foreign policy which included his policy towards India and Kashmir. However, it was interesting to see that 'foreign policy' or 'policy towards India' received scant attention in the manifestoes of most of these parties. A close reading of these manifestoes revealed that there was a consensus that the Kashmir issue was to be resolved in accordance with the wishes of the people of Kashmir and that solution to Kashmir would have to be peacefully arrived at through negotiations with India. Most importantly, the two most popular parties, the PML-N and the PPP, wanted to pursue peace with India with vigour. The PPP outlined very clearly that it "will pursue the composite dialogue process agenda that it initiated with India, including Kashmir and Indo-Pak issues" and that "it will not allow lack of progress on one agenda to impede progress on the other".<sup>6</sup>

Immediately after the elections, Zardari drew lot of criticism in the Pakistani media for reiterating this position. He stated clearly on March 1, 2008, that good relations with India would not be held hostage to the Kashmir issue and the two countries would wait for the future generations to resolve the issue in an atmosphere of trust. He reiterated this later and went on to state: "We don't feel threatened by India. India should also not feel threatened by us...I want change and reconciliation." During the course of this interaction with Indian media through a satellite link up on November 22, 2008, he offered a no-first-use of nuclear weapon against India.<sup>7</sup> This was forgotten because of the terrorist attacks on Mumbai

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<sup>4</sup> See for details the Brief by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs, Government of Pakistan provided on the Ministry's website: <http://www.mofa.gov.pk/pages/Brief.htm>.

<sup>5</sup> Ibid.

<sup>6</sup> See "Towards peace and prosperity in Pakistan", PPP manifesto, p. 20. Available at: <http://www.ppp.org.pk/manifestos/2008.pdf> A critical analysis of manifestos of different political parties on their policy towards India is provided by I.A.Rehman, "Too early to kill hope", *Dawn*, March 6, 2008.

three days later. However, in spite of the fact that he had drawn lot of domestic criticism for his stand on peace process with India, he has not changed his line.

Before the Mumbai attack, the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh met both Pakistan Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani (on 1 August 2008 in Colombo on the sidelines of SAARC summit) and Pakistani President Asif Ali Zardari (on September 25, 2008 in New York), during the UN General Assembly meeting, wherein the new democratic leadership expressed its interest in carrying the process forward. In fact, on the very day, terrorists from Pakistan attacked Mumbai, Pakistani foreign minister was in New Delhi to restart the process of dialogue.

However, following the Mumbai attacks, the leadership of Pakistan dithered and relapsed into a mode of denial, which was taken seriously by India. In fact, immediately after the attacks, the civilian leadership condemned the attacks and offered to send the ISI chief to New Delhi to help investigate the case. However, there was perceptible resistance from the Pakistani army on this issue and the civilian leadership had to go back on its pledge and started advocating a policy of denial which led India to suspend the talks.

Zardari made the offer of a pact with India to allow each other to question terror suspects in the other country, however, it was not taken seriously by India. This was because he did not seem to be in control of things in Pakistan. His statements that the perpetrators were non-state actors, that there was no involvement of state agencies in the matter and moreover the unwillingness of the state to take immediate action against Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the

terrorist outfit responsible for the carnage, only exposed his sense of helplessness further. The Pakistani state reacted only after substantial international pressure. The UN designation of LeT as a terrorist organisation and its leaders like Hafiz Saeed, Zakiur Rehman Lakhvi and Haji Muhammad Ashraf as terrorists on December 11, 2008, forced Pakistan to take action on December 12, 2008. This was full 16 days after the Mumbai attacks. This was despite the fact that one of the terrorists, Ajmal Kasab, captured during the attacks had confessed his links with LeT and telephone calls made by the terrorists were traced to Pakistan.

That Pakistan was not serious about bringing the perpetrators of Mumbai crime to justice became even clearer when in early June 2009, the Lahore High Court held the evidence produced against Hafiz Saeed and other co-accused too weak to prosecute them and asked the government to release them. Later in July 2009, the Supreme Court of Pakistan also turned down prosecution charges against Saeed and others. The Indian dossier given to Pakistan for action was dealt with in a frivolous manner and so far Pakistan is not treating Indian evidence with any seriousness.

All this indicates that even if the civilian leadership may be intent on picking up the thread and pushing the process forward, it will have no control over elements in the Pakistani security establishment, who would continue to dictate Pakistan's foreign and security policies vis-à-vis India. In fact, emotional reactions following Gilani's offer to send the ISI chief to India after the Mumbai attacks, by even liberal commentators in Pakistani media, indicates that there is a tendency, even amongst the informed and influential people in Pakistan, to regard the army or security

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<sup>7</sup> Vinod Sharma and Zia Haq, "There is a bit of India in every Pakistani: Zardari", *Hindustan Times*, November 22, 2008. Available at: <http://www.hindustantimes.com/There-is-a-bit-of-India-in-every-Pakistani-Zardari/H1-Article1-353488.aspx> (accessed February 12, 2010).

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establishment of Pakistan as a sacred and inviolable organ of the state, which commands more respect than the elected democratic leadership in all important matters concerning the Pakistani state. The fact that finally the issue of sending in the ISI chief was hushed up and no step was taken against the LeT in the immediate aftermath of the attacks shows the incapacity of the civilian leadership to control the levers of power in Pakistan. It is only a truism to say that Pakistan's India policy continues to be dictated by the GHQ rather than *Aiwan-e-Sadr*.

### **Engagement, Post-Mumbai**

Post-Mumbai the official Indian stand on dialogue with Pakistan has been quite predictable. India has stuck to its stance that it will join the dialogue process only after Pakistan brings perpetrators of Mumbai attacks to justice. Manmohan Singh has reiterated this in his meetings with Zardari in Yekaterinburg, Russia (June 16, 2009), and with Yusuf Raza Gilani in Sharm-el-Shaikh (July 16, 2009), Egypt. A lot of hue and cry was raised in India on the inclusion of Balochistan in the joint statement at Sharm-el-Shaikh. Pakistan has been accusing India of meddling in Balochistan and helping the Baloch insurgents through its consulates in Kandahar and Jalalabad. There is a strong view in India that this would complicate matters for India given Pakistan's bid to lower India's image at the international level and dilute India's demand for visible Pakistani action on Mumbai carnage.

India has expressed its readiness to talk only on issues relating to terrorism and security at the moment. It has sought to put pressure on Pakistan through official dialogue to bring the perpetrators of Mumbai tragedy to justice. India reiterated this stand at the foreign secretary level meeting that was held in New Delhi on 25 February 2010. India also

handed over two more dossiers to Pakistan containing additional names of terrorists and evidences of their involvement in terrorist activities in India and urged Pakistan to take adequate steps in this regard. The future of composite dialogue will depend on the way Pakistan addresses Indian concerns on terrorism.

### **Some Options**

The above discussion suggests that Pakistan seems to have a well-defined policy towards India. However, in contrast, India does not have any defined policy option towards Pakistan. At this juncture it is useful to ask what should be India's policy towards Pakistan after the Mumbai attacks. Various options available to India are : a) business as usual, restart dialogue and continue to engage Pakistan at various levels, b) benign neglect, c) adopt a proactive policy (play on the faultlines; keep up international pressure; and prepare for the effects of disintegration or any such eventuality).

#### ***Business as usual***

Each of these options needs careful elaboration. There are different segments in the civil society in India advocating these options. Those advocating 'business as usual' would argue that Pakistan is passing through a crisis and by not talking to the civilian leadership in Pakistan, India will only fall into the traps set by the spoilers. While it is true that the civilian leadership has no control over the country's security and foreign policy, India's engagement with it would steady the process of transition from a military dominated system to a democratic and representative one. In view of the positive sentiments expressed by the leadership of various political parties, it can be argued that there is a critical mass emerging in Pakistan, who seek peace and mutual understanding with India even if that may not automatically mean that level of mutual suspicion and hatred will disappear

overnight. There is a value in engaging the pro-peace constituency in Pakistan on a long term basis. India should pursue the dialogic track without expecting too much out of such a process. Advocates of this policy would argue that the cost of not engaging may be greater than engaging Pakistan in the long run. Moreover, the elements, bent upon hurting Indian interests, may not be under the control of the Pakistani state any longer. That is why, by cancelling the talks and assuming an adversarial position, it may only create a situation which will reinforce the hold of the military over power in Pakistan. Also, India may not be able to handle pressure from the international community to restart dialogue with Pakistan. Therefore it is in the interest of India to help Pakistan evolve as a strong and stable democracy, which will automatically be at peace with itself and the world.

### ***Benign Neglect***

The critics of the above policy would argue that engagement at a time when the establishment in Pakistan is unwilling to take care of genuine concerns of India would be tantamount to rewarding Pakistan for its misconduct. This would embolden elements opposed to India and silence the voices of sanity. They suggest that India should rather adopt a policy of 'benign neglect'. India can deal with a hostile Pakistan without maintaining the charade of talks that are ineffective. Not talking to Pakistan will impose some constraint on Pakistan's behaviour and force it to shun the strategy of subversion vis-à-vis India. They would say that if India leaves Pakistan alone, the contradictions within Pakistan, which are at an unmanageable level at the moment, may soon lead Pakistan to disaster. A fragmented and failing Pakistan will have less time for mischief vis-à-vis India. By not doing anything and staying aloof, India may benefit more than by getting engaged in a process that has witnessed a parallel surge in terrorist activities throughout India, sponsored by elements within

Pakistan. India should rather strengthen its internal security mechanism and take measures to dissuade its citizens from falling prey to hostile propaganda from across the border. If such a stance is coupled with a policy of working with the international community over the issue of terrorism in Pakistan, this may compel introspection in Pakistan and force its security establishment to rethink its policy of sponsoring cross-border terror on India.

### ***Counter Strategy***

There is a third view that India must have an aggressive counter-strategy in place to deal with Pakistan. It should take advantage of the fragility of the state system and exploit the faultlines in Pakistan and encourage secessionist elements within Pakistan. It should drive home the message that India will not sit silently and suffer Pakistan's pinpricking in a stoic fashion. Critics of such a policy would argue that India may not be able to control the fallout of such a policy and a disintegrating Pakistan will be a bigger headache for Indian policy makers.

With these options in mind, Indian policy makers should make a realistic assessment of possible fallout in each case and do a proper cost-benefit analysis before choosing any one of them. India is regarded as an ascendant power in the global arena and as a regional super power in south Asia. Thus, its dealing with Pakistan will always be viewed as a measure of its maturity and discretion. India has to guard its security and strategic interests (vis-à-vis Pakistan) and simultaneously prove its intentions to the wider world as the bigger and more responsible power. It can hardly adopt a regional Monroe doctrine and expect its neighbours to submit to its preponderance especially at a time when the region is so effectively penetrated by global capital and external influence. That is why, despite India's genuine concerns, India may have to find some

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way of engaging Pakistan constructively. Simultaneously, India should work with international community to put pressure on Pakistan to stop using terror as an instrument of

its foreign policy. It can take up a stand that talks for peace will have to be continually weighed against Pakistan's will and intentions to stop sponsoring terrorism against India. ■

# CHAPTER X

## PAKISTAN 2020: POSSIBLE SCENARIOS AND OPTIONS

### The Context

The discussions in the earlier chapters underline the uncertain security environment and internal turmoil in Pakistan. In this context, it is necessary to construct the scenarios likely to occur in Pakistan and formulate India's options in the event. It is important to examine whether the present situation would lead to greater chaos and instability in Pakistan, or are there any visible and positive signs of recovery in its domestic situation. While it may not be possible to predict the future conclusively, the key drivers that affect the situation in Pakistan could be identified and analysed, in order to build a few plausible scenarios. Thinking about the future can help prepare for uncertainties and discontinuities in Pakistan, and their possible fallout in the Indian context. This chapter attempts to isolate the key drivers that would shape Pakistan's behaviour in the future. Basing the analysis on these, three plausible scenarios that may emerge by 2020 are discussed in this chapter.

### Scenario Building: Methodology

Pakistan is in the throes of serious internal unrest. A wide range of political, economic and social imponderables will determine future course of events in Pakistan. While these may be relevant in one context or the other, there is a need to assess their importance in the evolving context. The following sections analyse some of the key drivers

Methodology	
Step 1	Identification of Key Drivers
Step 2	Examination of Drivers
Step 3	Impact-Uncertainty Analysis
Step 4	Identification of Trend Lines
Step 5	Preparation of Scenarios

which could shape the future prospects in the region. A number of high impact and highly uncertain drivers, which could cause a disproportionate effect on the security situation, have been discussed. Each key factor has been analysed at length to visualise the general trend lines. These trend lines have then been inter-woven to build three plausible scenarios for Pakistan. The scenarios are 'suggestive' in nature and by no means 'prescriptive' to enable a meaningful policy correction in the Indian context.

### The Key Drivers

The key question that needs to be addressed here is: What shape will the state of Pakistan take by 2020? To address this question, six key drivers have been analysed. These will decide the direction in which Pakistan is likely to evolve in times to come. These are as follows:

#### *Driver No 1: Political Dynamics*

The post-Musharraf period witnessed a change



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in the political dynamics of Pakistan. There was temporary unity amongst the major political forces to get rid of Musharraf, the disgraced military ruler. However, this unity could not survive Musharraf's departure. Though much was expected from the Zardari-Sharif duo, their strong mutual animosity inhibited the process of democratic revival and weakened the political forces vis-à-vis the army in Pakistan. In fact, the fragile political structures have already started showing signs of stress in Pakistan and the military is gradually regaining its lost image in the prevailing political conundrum.

The emerging political situation raises several questions. Can Pakistan ever have a stable political structure? Can the legitimacy of the government in power be challenged by the Pakistan army? Which internal and external factors could possibly revitalise the political process in Pakistan? Is political rejuvenation a plausible scenario at all in Pakistan? Would this call for drafting of a new federal constitution? Can the current constitutional arrangement be tweaked to strengthen the political structures and processes? Would the existing feudal and tribal structures enable vibrant political structures and activity in Pakistan? How bad is the law and order situation in Pakistan? How effective are the police forces and civilian law enforcement agencies? What are the prime reasons for sectarian and ethnic violence in the provinces? The future course of events looks quite grim in both the short and the medium term. The continuing political fragility in Pakistan is sure to have an adverse impact on its health and structural well being in the long term.

### ***Driver No 2: Radicalisation of the Pakistani Society***

Growing fundamentalism and radicalisation of Pakistani society is a major cause of concern. Unprecedented acts of terror and incessant bloodshed caused by militant and sectarian groups

reflect a deep sense of radicalisation within the state of Pakistan. The ability of radical forces to strike at will, even against the most powerful state institutions, raises doubt about the very survival of the Pakistani state. What will be the role of Islam in Pakistan in this context? The previous political dispensation used Islam blatantly to appease the radical fringes of the civil society to stay in power. Would the Pakistani state ever be in a position to contain radical forces or would it continue to connive with them in pursuit of its convoluted internal and external policy objectives? How much does the sectarian divide affect cohesiveness of the Pakistani state?

### ***Driver No 3: The Military***

Ever since the Indo-Pak War of 1971, the Pakistan army has for the first time come under serious domestic and international pressure to perform. The military resources seem badly stretched in containing the raging insurgency and growing acts of terror. The counter-insurgency operations have been characterised by a conventional mindset and driven largely by use of heavy calibre weapons. Its inability to re-orient conventional force levels for an effective COIN campaign is a major cause for concern.

Can the Pakistan army sustain itself for protracted operations? Will the army continue to remain a cohesive force? Would the army possibly lean in favour of radical forces? Is the military really in a position to set things right in Pakistan? Is it logistically too over-stretched to undertake successful counter-insurgency operations against the Taliban? Do the raging insurgencies affect conventional operations along its eastern borders? Does the Pakistan army intend to create tailor-made forces to counter insurgency in the frontier provinces? The future course of events in Pakistan surely looks uncertain. Continued engagement for protracted counter insurgency operations would affect its conventional combat potential in the long term.

#### ***Driver No 4: Economy***

The current economic situation is grim. While the immediate outlook may look reasonable, the long term view does not look good. Pakistani economy could stabilise in the medium term because of IMF loans, the US multi-billion dollar aid and pledges from the Friends of Democratic Pakistan (FoDP). There are pressing economy related issues of dependence on foreign aid, a large fiscal deficit, poor economic activity, decreased savings and remittances and high defence spending. Can the confidence in the economy be restored? Can the Pakistan establishment take unpalatable decisions to restructure its failing economy? Can the economy get over its dependence on foreign aid? Will the prevailing environment give a fillip to new investment policies and projects? Can the state of Pakistan ever get over its macro-economic and structural defects such as low domestic savings, investment deficit, foreign trade and fiscal deficits? Is the equitable management of national resources and creation of a conducive business environment possible in Pakistan? Would Pakistan be in a position to address the economic issues effectively, provide employment opportunities and contain inflation in the long term? The long term impact of the failing economy on the wellbeing of the state is likely to be adverse.

#### ***Driver No 5: Relations with India***

Pakistan has sustained a hostile relationship with India since its very inception. It has fought four wars with India and supported insurgencies in Punjab and Kashmir. How has this animosity served Pakistan's interests? So long as Pakistan regards India as its prime threat, it will continue to be trapped in an unhealthy race for conventional and nuclear parity with India. This is bound to cause a severe strain on its meagre resources. In recent times, the relations with India have been at a low ebb post 26/11. This can be ascribed to India's

reluctance to resume the composite dialogue with Pakistan, until the 26/11 perpetrators are brought to book. Would Pakistan ever accept its clandestine role in fomenting terror in the Indian hinterland? Would Pakistan ever shut down Kashmiri and Pakistani tanzeems? How can the two countries address contentious issues? How can India scale down Pakistan's fears of a conventional strike along its eastern borders? And how does India contain Pakistan's drive for acquiring strategic depth in Afghanistan? The relations do not look too promising at the moment. The future trajectory of the Indo-Pak relationship will largely be governed by domestic events within Pakistan.

#### ***Driver No 6: Foreign Policy***

Pakistan has benefited militarily and economically from being a front line state for the West during the Cold War, and again in the global war against terror. It has used its geo-strategic location to make itself indispensable to the West, and also to extract advantages from the West. It has used Western help to strengthen itself militarily which has helped it in sustaining its rivalry with India. The West considers Pakistan as a haven for militant activities and a threat to peace and stability and thus it is likely to have a long-term engagement with Pakistan. How will Pakistan deal with the US? Will it blindly follow the US diktats or will it defy the Americans at some point of time? Will China play an active role in propping up Pakistan against India? What will be the level of Saudi involvement in Pakistan politics and its economy? Will the precarious security situation in Afghanistan be defined and driven by Pakistan or will the converse happen? How would rest of the Islamic world view the recovery or fall of Pakistan? How does the world view the safety and security of its nuclear arsenal? Could the fragility of the security of nuclear weapons become a prime cause of concern in the international context?

Key Drivers (a)	Impact (b)	Uncertainty (c)	Broad Outlook (d)
Politics	High	High	Fragmented or stable?
Radicalism	High	High	Extreme or moderate?
Economy	High	High	Stable or failed?
Military	High	High	Under civilian control or the most important power centre?
Relations with India	High	High	Hostile or friendly?
Foreign Policy	High	High	Principled or opportunistic?

Pakistan today is at the crossroads of history. The international opinion on Pakistan is fairly negative at the moment. Much will depend on how Pakistan conducts its foreign policy in the coming days.

### Impact – Uncertainty Analysis

The foregoing discussion is tabulated above to delineate the broad trends in Pakistan. Each driver (column a) is evaluated for its impact (column b) and uncertainty (column c) and then leads to the most plausible outlook (column d).

### Graphic Representation

Since each of the key drivers is considered to be of high impact and highly uncertain, these have been plotted on an XY scatter chart to derive a

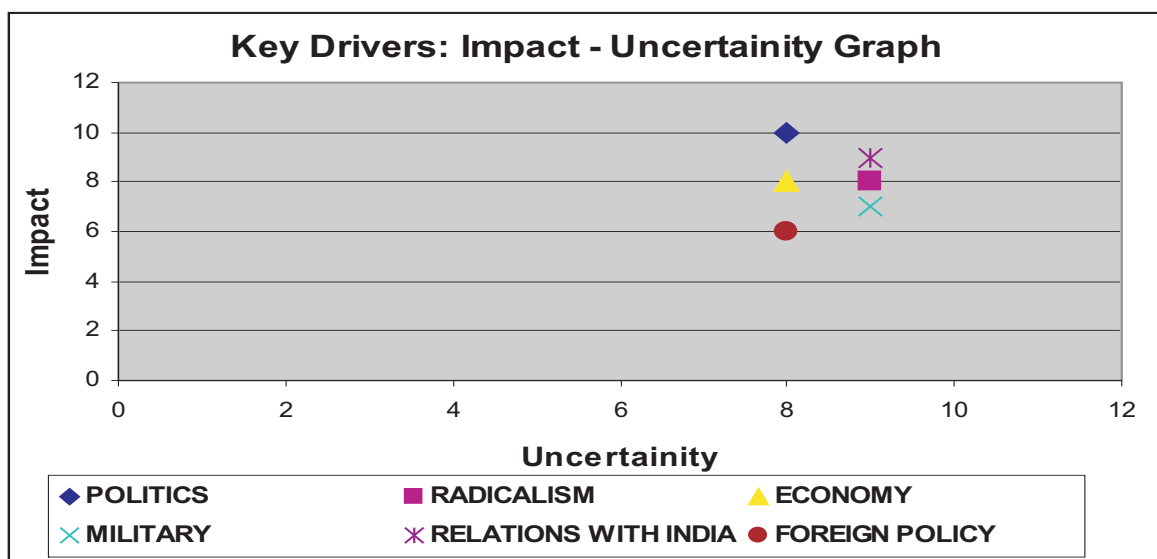
probable behavioural pattern. The drivers have been rated on a scale of 0-10. The graph has been created on the basis of comparative values as follows: Politics (8,10), Radicalisation (9,8), Economy (8,8), Military (9,7), Relations with India (9,9), and Foreign Policy (8,6).

### Plausible Scenarios

Depending on how the six drivers play out, the following three scenarios can be considered plausible for Pakistan in the next 10 years, leading up to 2020.

#### Scenario I- Lebanonisation

In this scenario, the key drivers continue with their current downward trend, which leads to



<b>Lebanonisation</b>	
<b>Factors</b>	<b>Trend</b>
Politics	Fragmented
Radicalisation	On Sharp Rise
Economy	Lack Lustre
Military	Stronger
India Relations	Tense
Foreign Policy	Opportunistic

gradual deterioration of the security situation. The government in power is unable to convincingly address issues of good governance. Maladministration robs the government of its legitimacy. Opposition parties increasingly become combative and try to pull down the government. The military starts manipulating the political parties and fears of a likely coup flourish. The judiciary becomes assertive and occasionally oversteps its legal and constitutional mandate. The economy does not pick up despite several sharp infusions of external aid. Unemployment rises, economic distress levels remain high, inflation soars and production constraints lead to food shortages, profiteering and corruption. Agriculture and manufacturing sectors remain weak. Low confidence levels in the economy leads to large flights of capital and de-valuation of the Pakistani rupee. The right wing political and radical parties become active and Islamists continue to expand their influence inside Pakistan. The Pakistan army under international pressure continues to play the cat-and-mouse game on the issue of Islamists. To forestall the threat from India, the Pakistan army ramps up militancy inside India. Provincial grievances mount and movements for secession pick up pace. Parts of Pakistan become un-governable. Pakistan gets Lebanonised. The military takes over the reins of the country.

**Scenario II - Stable Pakistan**

In this scenario, the key drivers surprisingly look

up and there is marked improvement in the security situation, due to strong coordinated action by the civilian government and the military. The mistrust between the two disappears, as they both realise that Pakistan is in danger and concerted corrective action is required. The political climate in Pakistan stabilises. And political differences no longer tell upon issues of governance. The army stands sidelined and the political atmosphere turns against the Islamists. But the army still continues to exercise major influence over issues of national security. The economic situation remains difficult but a tentative recovery seems underway. Foreign aid flows provide some relief.

There is increased public investment in the social sectors and infrastructure projects. The counter-insurgency campaign witnesses some success and the danger of Islamists acquiring control of the state recedes. The law enforcement agencies are able to penetrate and break the jihadi

<b>STABLE PAKISTAN</b>	
<b>Factors</b>	<b>Trend</b>
Politics	Constructive
Radicalisation	Under Control
Economy	Fairly Stable
Military	Sidelined
India Relations	Friendly and Cooperative
Foreign Policy	Balanced

networks and substantially degrade their capability to strike against the state. The Pakistan army and intelligence agencies no longer make distinction between good and bad jihadis. LeT and JeM are targeted and gradually decimated. Pakistan no longer regards India as the number one enemy. Kashmir is relegated to the background. Nuclear CBMs hold and both countries sign the CTBT. Relations with India improve which in turn leads to boom in trade, travel and investment between the two countries. Greater autonomy is conceded

to the provinces which effectively addresses the grievances of disaffected provinces like Balochistan. Pakistan becomes stable and prosperous.

### **Scenario III - Implosion**

In this scenario, the key drivers show a sharp downward slide and the situation deteriorates badly. The campaign against Islamists stretches the Pakistan army beyond its ideological and

<b>Implosion</b>	
<b>Factors</b>	<b>Trend</b>
Politics	Directionless
Radicalisation	Very Extreme
Economy	Unsustainable
Military	Stretched
India Relations	Near Collapse
Foreign Policy	In Disarray

logistical limits. The consensus on combating the insurgency breaks down within and between the political and military establishment. Divided opinion within the armed forces ensures that no effective action is possible against the jihadis. The basic orientation of the Pakistan army remains anti-India. The army continues to parley with the Taliban and at the same time partakes American dollars for the fight against terrorism. The Islamists extend their operations into Punjab and Sindh. The law and order situation deteriorates, and with it the hopes of economic revival also disappear. There is political instability and failure to manage affairs leads to rise of ethnic nationalism. Balochistan is on

the boil and Gilgit-Baltistan reverberates with calls for independence. China shows a more than normal interest in Gilgit-Baltistan to buffer its sensitive border province of Xinjiang. Karachi descends into ethnic blood-letting. The safety of nuclear weapons becomes a serious issue. Attempts to snatch these weapons are met with limited success. The anarchic situation leads to a stream of refugees into India. The jihadi elements take advantage of the situation and infiltrate in large numbers. This in turn leads to horrendous acts of terror and law and order becomes unmanageable in some parts of the country. The US exits from Afghanistan and this brings the Taliban back to power in Kabul. This further de-stabilises the region and in turn de-stabilises Pakistan. China takes advantage of the situation and increases its influence on both Afghanistan and Pakistan. Pakistan implodes.

### **Summation**

These are the three broad scenarios. There are several intermediate scenarios also in which some key drivers pan out positively and others do not. But the crucial point to note is that, unless some serious effort is made at the domestic level, the state of Pakistan continues to face prospects of instability in the long term. A stable and democratic Pakistan is usually considered to be in everyone's interest including India.<sup>1</sup> But then the big question is whether Pakistan can succeed in holding itself together against various fissiparous tendencies that afflict it today? ■

## CHAPTER XI

# DEALING WITH AN UNSTABLE PAKISTAN: INDIA'S OPTIONS

The previous chapters have analysed the different dimensions of the current situation in Pakistan and explored the likely scenarios that might emerge in the next ten years. While stable Pakistan is perceived to be in the interest of regional security, one cannot be too optimistic at this point about the emergence of a stable and peaceful Pakistan. The Indian policy towards Pakistan, so far, has been dictated by the assumption that Pakistan will remain stable and that its government will be able to control the situation there. Indian public opinion, despite the bad state of affairs, has expressed itself in favour of a stable and peaceful Pakistan being in Indian interest. India has subscribed to a composite dialogue process despite the fact that the Pakistani agencies have been involved in various subversive acts aimed at destabilising India. On Kashmir too India has engaged with Pakistan in the hope that soft borders will reduce tensions and unite the divided Kashmiris. India engaged with the military dictator General Musharraf even though he was the architect of the Kargil misadventure. India has also exercised considerable restraint despite the attack by the ISI supported terror groups on the Indian Parliament and despite 26/11. It has not hesitated to engage with whosoever is in power in Pakistan.

However, the situation is changing. India's approach may require adjustments as Pakistan becomes unstable. Multiple centres of power have

emerged in Pakistan and the civilian government does not seem to be in charge. The composite dialogue has been suspended as Pakistan has failed to dismantle the infrastructure of terrorism on its soil.

In the coming years, India-Pakistan engagement will become even more complicated as Pakistan becomes more unstable and radicalisation of the Pakistani society gathers pace. Radicalisation has already begun to affect the institutions of governance. The civilian governments at the centre and in NWFP have been compelled to make deals with the radical elements even though these deals have been short-lived and counterproductive. In the short to medium term – 5 to 10 years – the Pakistan army is likely to remain embroiled in long term counter-insurgency. This might change the character of the Pakistan armed forces which in turn will have major impact on Indo-Pak relations. It is still too early to say whether the Pakistan army, generally regarded as a professional army, will itself get radicalised.

The scenarios painted in the last chapter are not predictions. They seek to capture a range of plausible developments. India's policies will have to be formulated on the basis of following likely trends in Pakistan:

- An increasingly unstable Pakistan may manifest in several ways – Lebanonisation or in the worst

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case scenario even disintegration.

- Multiple centres of powers will emerge with the army being the most important.
- The army's behaviour might become unpredictable due to a variety of factors including the increasing radicalisation of a section of it. It will also need more resources to fight the insurgency. This will, in turn, affect Pakistan economy adversely. This could result in incoherent and inconsistent policies.
- The army will get more aggressive as it finds itself fighting to save Pakistan; and its own identity. This could result in more sabre-rattling and brandishing of the nuclear threat.
- For Pakistan, India and not the Taliban remains the prime threat. It is very much likely that agencies in Pakistan will continue with their present strategy of using terror as a tool of pressure against India.
- Within Pakistan, the society will get fragmented. The ethnic, linguistic and provincial fault lines may get accentuated. Insurgency in Balochistan might get worse. Sindh and NWFP will not remain unaffected. They will challenge Punjab's dominance.
- Pakistan's economy will suffer due to the deteriorating internal situation. Pakistan's dependence upon external assistance will increase which might help but would not cure Pakistan's economic ills. A faltering economy will accentuate Pakistan's internal problems.
- There could be flight of capital from Pakistan if the situation gets out of control. There are indications that many of the elite have already secured alternative homes outside Pakistan and their children are sent out for education in Western countries. Thus, an outflow of Pakistanis to other countries cannot be ruled

out. Pakistan has seen in 2008 and 2009 a massive movement of internally displaced people due to the worsening security situation, radicalisation and military action. India should factor in the possible flow of refugees into India in the event of an implosion.

- The civil society in Pakistan remains weak but its members are keen that India's policies should not be such that they strengthen the hands of Pakistani hardliners. They expect India to strengthen the civil society. Many people from the poorer sections will continue to visit India due to family ties, cultural exchanges and for receiving better medical treatment.
- The people in Gilgit-Baltistan, who have suffered at the hands of Pakistan in the last six decades, look towards India with some hope and expectation considering that India regards these areas as part of India. India needs to develop a well-thought-out forward-looking policy to engage with the people of Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (POK) who are legally Indian citizens.
- China's influence and presence in Pakistan is growing steadily. The China-Pakistan military and nuclear nexus is a matter of security concern for India. The nexus will only deepen in the coming years. India has to be mindful of the growing Chinese influence in POK. The Gwadar port is of great strategic importance for both Pakistan and China. In an unstable Pakistan, Chinese influence will grow further. China will like to ensure that its Xinjiang province is not threatened by radical groups based in Pakistan. The Pakistani government and the army will become even more dependent upon China.
- Developments in Afghanistan will have major impact on Pakistan. President Obama has

announced that US troops will start pulling out of Afghanistan from July 2011. If Taliban return to power, Pakistan may wish to impose its will on them. But, the return of the Taliban can also have a negative impact on Pakistan's integrity as this could give a fillip to Talibanisation of Pakistan where a significant minority is still sympathetic to Taliban. In any case, Pakistan will continue to seek strategic depth and annul India's influence in Afghanistan.

- US-Pak relations are likely to be on a roller coaster ride. If the US leaves Afghanistan facilitating the return of the Taliban, the US interest in Pakistan might decline. Even if the US does not leave Afghanistan in the near future, the relationship between US and Pakistan is likely to remain under stress as anti-US feeling in Pakistan is high and may grow in the future. Pakistan is extremely unhappy at the increasing warmth in Indo-US relations.

### India's Options

India's policy towards Pakistan will be shaped by the emerging reality based on the above trends. In such a scenario, the anti-India mindset of its military and the ruling elite is not likely to change and may in fact worsen. In such a scenario what should be India's policy options?

- India need not be apologetic about its policies towards Pakistan. It should make clear that it has genuine security concerns in Pakistan and that it would deal with them appropriately.
- India's policies will need to be based on hard reality and not on any wishful thinking that suddenly Pakistan will change course and become friendly towards India.
- In an unstable Pakistan, the society will get differentiated. The idea of Pakistan may be

challenged by many groups. Therefore, India should be prepared to engage and deal with all sections of Pakistani society which may be amenable towards better relations with India. In this regard India should engage with the Mohajirs, the Barelvis, the Shias, the Baloch, the Gilgitis, the Baltis and civil society groups and not just the government of the day. India should also take care that Indian actions do not give a pretext to anti-India constituencies in Pakistan to unite against India.

- India cannot let its guard drop as Pakistan becomes unstable and unpredictable. Thus, India must remain prepared to deal with any military challenge that Pakistan may throw at it. At the same time India should foresee and deal with any challenge posed by the Taliban and other radicalised groups in the future.
- India must not let its policies be overly securitised as this will detract it from its fundamental task of ensuring inclusive growth for its people. In other words, the challenge from Pakistan should not make India think only in terms of military responses. India should develop a wide variety of responses, using both hard and soft power options to deal with Pakistan. Thus a nuanced approach to Pakistan will be required while dealing with challenges like 26/11. It would be prudent not to rule out any option and choice of any option should be made judiciously.
- India should use its soft power proactively. It should develop a range of policy options which aim at developing people-to-people contacts. This will help create constituencies in Pakistan which look at India not as a threat but as an opportunity. Offering scholarships to students from Pakistan can be considered as also help in providing medical treatment to Pakistanis. India's visa policy should be made



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more liberal for Pakistanis trying to take advantage of opportunities in India. *Aman ki Asha*, the media initiative started in January 2010, should be used as an opportunity to indicate its benign intent. At the same time it should be ensured that security agencies are well-equipped to stop the infiltration of terrorists from Pakistan.

- India should closely monitor the developments within Pakistan particularly in the context of provincial and sectarian faultlines which may deepen in the coming years. India should be sensitive to developments in Sindh and Punjab, the two provinces which share borders with India. India must maintain contacts with people from different regions of Pakistan.
- Diplomacy should be the first line of defence for India. India should sensitise the international community about the serious threats to international security that an unstable Pakistan presents, particularly in the context of the security of nuclear weapons.
- India at the moment has limited options to nudge Pakistan in the right direction as the Pakistani military elite has an obvious anti-India mindset. However, India must offer Pakistan the alternative of bilateral and regional cooperation as a way out of instability. An increase in bilateral trade could help the Pakistani economy enormously and also create constituencies on both sides with stakes in peace and stability.
- India should try to open its links with the Pakistani military, the most important player in Pakistani polity, even if it may be difficult to begin with. A structured dialogue with Pakistani military will help India both in understanding the military's view-point and getting its own point of view across directly.
- Nuclear CBMs should be strengthened and followed through.
- It is important that India should deal with the separatists in Kashmir by itself rather than through Pakistan. Pakistan should have no role in the resolution of India's internal problems. Confidence building measures to strengthen links between the two parts of Kashmir should be encouraged.
- Water is likely to emerge as a major issue in Indo-Pak relations in the future. The highly irresponsible and misleading propaganda in Pakistani media forecasting wars, even a nuclear conflict, over water should be effectively countered through dissemination of facts. The Indus Water Treaty (IWT) is coming under stress as Pakistan has delayed the projects proposed by India on the western rivers. India should pursue its water policy more assertively. The concerns of the Kashmiri people regarding the IWT and their demands on the western rivers need to be underlined in bilateral discussions. India should ensure optimal use of eastern rivers within the limits set by the IWT. Legal instruments relating to the possibility of stopping or suspending IWT can be explored to put pressure on Pakistan if it does not stop its subversive policies towards India.
- India must offer proposals for bilateral and regional cooperation with Pakistan in a proactive manner. This will create international goodwill and expose Pakistani insincerity about pursuing peace with India.
- India must retain at all times a decisive edge over Pakistan as far as conventional military might is concerned.
- India should assess the importance of Pakistani military getting involved in fighting

insurgency on the western front. A two-front situation is developing for the Pakistani army. The Pakistani army is not as yet geared to simultaneously fight India as well the Taliban. However, India remains the common enemy of both the Taliban and the Pakistan army. India should not follow any policy which would bring them together against India.

To sum up, Indian policy towards Pakistan must be geared to the new unfolding situation in Pakistan. India has a range of options, both soft and hard, to deal with the situation. India's growing economic profile and its rising international recognition give it a chance to deal with the Pakistan problem in a much better way than was the case before. The challenge before India will be how to protect itself from the consequences of a blow-back from an unstable Pakistan and also to evolve a sophisticated approach combining hard and soft options in dealing with it.

Finally, there are a few recommendations for the Pakistani establishment and civil society. Pakistan needs to change its mindset towards India which perceives India as an eternal enemy and threat. Nothing can be farther from the truth. Indian public opinion is in favour of a stable, prosperous

and peaceful Pakistan. Pakistan has to make an honest appraisal as to what it has gained from nurturing and sustaining an enduring enmity with India. The policy of bleeding India and gaining strategic depth against India has proved to be counterproductive.

The Pakistani leaders make the strategic error in thinking that India does not want a sovereign and united Pakistan. This impression must be corrected. They should not blame India but themselves for the disintegration of Pakistan in 1971 and the genocide in East Pakistan. Pakistan broke up because of its own contradictions. The Pakistani leadership should appraise— as many Pakistanis seem to be doing at the moment— the role that religion should play in Pakistani society and polity. They should realise that Pakistan will profit immensely by linking up with the growing Indian economy and promoting regional cooperation which will help Pakistan tide over the current economic crisis. There is enormous potential in bilateral cooperation and regional cooperation to the benefit of Pakistan, India and the south Asian countries. Pakistan should seek salvation in south Asia and recognise that good relations with India will help it in evolving as a peaceful and progressive country in the comity of nations. ■

# APPENDIX I

## PROFILES OF SOME TERROR GROUPS OPERATING IN PAKISTAN

There are several terrorist groups that are operating in Pakistan which have transformed that country into a hub of international terrorism. Some of these groups are funded, patronised and trained to achieve Pakistan's strategic objectives in Kashmir and Afghanistan and are described as strategic assets. There are other groups who have been targeting the Pakistani state for ideological reasons. Some of these Taliban groups perceive the Pakistani state as an agent of the US. Though Islamabad initially tried to make a distinction between Taliban and Al-Qaida elements and pursued only foreign terrorist on its soil after 9/11 these home-grown militants which Pakistan had spared have now emerged as a threat to Pakistan's stability and its political future.

The Taliban and the groups associated with it are active in implementing their ideology of creating an Islamic state in the tribal regions and have established basic organisational structures. They have divided their leaderships into two wings. One wing looks into policy issues while the other deliberates on military issues and is responsible for executing different strategies. There are links between various groups that are operating in Pakistan in terms of ideology, training and financial resources. The intelligence agency, the ISI still maintains links with many of these groups, something that prevents their decimation. They have also changed their names, grouped and regrouped under different banners making it

difficult to deal with them legally. LeT which was Kashmir focused now have shifted its area of operation beyond Kashmir to include entire India and now boasts of a global network to carry out its activities. Recent arrest of David Coleman Headley is a case in point.

Apart from Taliban groups operating in the tribal areas there are other groups like the Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)— now renamed as Tehreek-e-Khuddam-ul-Islam (Movement of Servants of Islam), Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)— now renamed as Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD— Party for propagation of Islam), Harkat-ul-Mujaheedeen (HuM) — now renamed as Jamiat-ul-Ansar (JuA—Party of Hosts), which are mainly operating in Kashmir and have also been involved in terror attacks in other parts of India. Apart from these groups there are sectarian groups who are mainly operating inside Pakistan but have links with several other terror groups. Their operations are targeted at Afghanistan and Pakistan who they consider as their enemy for sacrificing Afghan 'cause' at US insistence. Profiles of some of these groups are discussed below.

### **Haqqani group**

The group was formed by Jalaluddin Haqqani in the late 1970s during Soviet occupation of Afghanistan. Haqqani established various training camps and madrassas in tribal regions across the Afghan-Pakistan border and became very popular both in Pakistan and Afghanistan because of his

contribution to 'Jihad' during Afghanistan war. He was also the interior minister during Taliban's rule. The group remains active on its ideology even today and enjoys support from Al-Qaida and other international terror groups. There are thousands of cadres of this group on both sides of the Durand Line. They are strong opponent of the Northern Alliance and Shia sects. Haqqani is the head of the Taliban group in North Waziristan

At present his son Serajuddin Haqqani alias Khalifaji heads the operational wing of the group. This group serves as a bridge between foreign terrorists and the Pakistani and Afghan Taliban and has also established political wing and think tanks consisting of Arab and Central Asian experts.

The military wing is headed by his two other sons Nasiruddin and Badruddin Haqqani. The military wing coordinates with various Kashmiri and Arab groups. The Haqqani group has influence over other groups working in Afghanistan and Waziristan and in event of disputes or clashes among the groups arbitrates and mediates between them.

### **Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan**

The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is an umbrella group of the Taliban which has spread its tentacles across different tribal agencies and other parts of Pakistan. The TTP was founded by Baitullah Mehsud in 2007 and the group operated from its headquarters in Makeen, South Waziristan. The commanders and supporters of this group are present in South and North Waziristan, Kurram, Aurakzai, Mohmand, Khyber, and Bajaur. This group has established branches in Punjab, Sindh and Balochistan and recruits people from there. Its supporters are also present in more than a dozen of districts of NWFP. Media reports reveal that Baitullah used to run a syndicate of terrorists in Karachi and South Punjab for robbing in banks and extortion through kidnappings. Following Baitullah's death in a drone attack the TTP leadership has gone to his deputy Hakimullah

Mehsud. Despite the speculations that Baitullah's death and feud over succession of leadership will lead to the TTP's disintegration, the organisation has unleashed a series of attacks in different cities of Pakistan, including an audacious attack on the Army General Headquarters in Rawalpindi on October 13, 2009.

### **Tehreek-e-Taliban (North Waziristan)**

This group was part of the Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan till 2007-08, but due to some dispute with the TTP it broke away and formed another group in 2009 under the leadership of Gul Bahadur. This group is considered pro-Pakistani government and is opposed to the Mehsud group and foreign terrorists in Pakistan. This group participated in a flush out operation launched by the Pakistan army against the Uzbek commander Tahir Yuldashev and pushed the Uzbeks out from Southern Waziristan.

### **Mehdi Militia and Haideri Taliban**

The Mehdi Militia and the Haideri Taliban are Shia militant groups and were established to counter the TTP and its allies. The Mehdi Militia was founded by Hussein Ali Shah while the Haideri Taliban was formed by Abid Hussein in the militancy infested Kurram Agency. Both the Shia groups consist of eight to ten thousand fighters. Both the organisations enjoy support from Iran and Afghanistan's Northern Alliance. In Kurram Agency alone these groups enjoy enormous support from the local populace. Commanders from the Northern Alliance were seen fighting against the TTP and Qari Hussain in Kurram Agency.

### **Amar-bil-MarooF wa Nahi-Anil-Munkar**

Haji Namdar was instrumental in founding the *Amar bil MarooF wa Nahi Anil Munkar* (Promotion of Virtue and Prevention of Vice

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(PVPV)). The organisation represents a rigid version of Islam, and draw inspiration from Salafi School of thought who believe in direct contact between God and man.

Haji Namdar was one of the influential persons of this group who supported the Taliban in Afghanistan. But after a photograph in a Peshawar based Urdu language daily, showing him seated next to the Frontier Corps Colonel Mujahid Hussain, he was termed as “a government puppet posing as mujahid”. This became the reason for a rift between him and Baitullah Mehsud’s aide Hakimullah Mehsud and led to his assassination by the TTP in 2008. Now this group is headed by Commander Niyaz Gul.

### **Lashkar-e-Islam**

Lashkar-e-Islam (LeI) represents the Deobandi School of thought<sup>1</sup>, akin to the LeT and Jamiat-ul-Mujahideen (JuM) and justifies use of force for religious ends. The organisation has around 5000 well trained fighters. This group was founded by Haji Mangal Bagh of the Afridi community in the Khyber Agency initially to fight against the criminals in the area. Later this organisation took steps to set up an alternative system based on the formula of the Taliban and took the initiative to punish those who did not offer Namaz, forced closure of shops and markets during prayer time and punished those found involved in immoral activities.

Since the PVPV considered Ansar-ul-Islam (AuI) its ideological enemy it sided with the LeI to counter its influence in Khyber agency. LeI was the first organisation to set up an FM radio in the region to unleash a propaganda war against its rival group AuI resulting in violent clashes. This group has been taking stringent action against its opponent, the AuI, and as per an estimate around 600 peoples have been killed during factional fights. This group executed different crimes in Peshawar in 2009 which is considered its biggest target.

### **Ansar-ul-Islam**

Ansar-ul-Islam (AuI) represents the Barelvi school of thought<sup>2</sup>. This group has its influence in the Khyber Agency and was founded by Pir Saifur Rahman. In late 2003, the AuI also set up its own FM radio and launched a propaganda war against its rival LeI. Amid the escalation of bloody feuds between rival factions in Khyber in February 2006 a tribal Jirga ordered Pir Saifur Rahman to leave the area to ease tensions. Now this group is headed by Mehbubul Haq. Since the TTP is also focusing on Khyber which is close to Peshawar, it may become a flash point for a conflict between the two in near future.

### **Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM)**

Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Muhammadi (TNSM) was founded by Sufi Muhammad in

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<sup>1</sup> Deobandi school of thought is affiliated to Sunni sect of Islam. It originated from Madrassas of Deoband city in India where revival and purification movement of Islam began in the 19th century. The leaders of the movement called on Muslims to “return to the basics of Islam” as they believed that Muslims in the Indian subcontinent were drifting from the tenets of Sunnah (Prophet Muhammad’s way of life) and Quran into the realm of Sufism, which they termed as a Hindu conspiracy to introduce Hindu rituals into Islam.

<sup>2</sup> The Barelvi school of thought is also affiliated to the Sunni sect of Islam. Peace tolerance, harmony and acceptance of other faiths and sects have remained at the core of the Barelvi interpretation of Islam. The Barelvis take a relatively a liberal view of the religion including Sufism and see no problem in praying at tombs and shrines of saints who they term as intermediaries between man and God, which separates them from Deobandi school of thought within the Sunni sect and their interpretation of basic tenets of Islam. Interestingly, the Barelvi branch of Sunni Islam also originated from India in the city of Bareilly in Uttar Pradesh.

the Malakand division of Swat in 1992 with the objective to enforce Sharia law in Pakistan. The Musharraf Government outlawed the organisation in 2002 and put its founder in prison. After Sufi Muhammad's imprisonment his so-in-law Mullah Fazlullah, took over the leadership of TNSM and aligned with Baitullah Mehsud and the TTP. By 2008 TNSM gained foot hold in the Swat valley and forced the Pakistan government to sign a peace deal that allowed them to enforce Sharia law in the valley. The truce deal between the government and the local Taliban could not last as the TNSM orchestrated the seizure of Buner in 2009, close to Islamabad, prompting the Pakistan army to launch an operation which ended with dismantling of Fazlullah's Imam Dheri headquarters.

Apart from these groups, the other groups which played a catalytic role in the Talibanisation of the tribal regions are LeT, Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), SSP, HuM, JeM, Harkat-ul-Jihad-e-Islami (HuJI) and Harkatul Mujahideen-e-Islami. These groups shifted to the tribal regions when the government of Pakistan disbanded them following international pressure. They are assisted by the Haqqani group operating in Waziristan.

Analysing the basic structure and activities of these organisations in tribal regions one can reach the conclusion that these organisations are active in promoting Talibanisation but with different perspectives. Some organisations have limited their activities to Afghanistan and consider such activities inside Pakistan wrong. These are the "good Taliban" and enjoy the support of the Pakistani government. There are several differences within these groups which have resulted in the creation of new groups. Often government agencies have aggravated these rifts.

### **Tehrik-e-Nafaz-e-Fiqh-e-Jafaria (TNFJ)**

It was established in 1979, in reaction to Zia's

Islamisation programme on the basis of Hanafi Fiqh. It is a Shia organisation and presented six-point demand to Zia, including the implementation of Fiqh-e-Jafaria for the Shias of Pakistan. Believed to be supported by Iran, this organisation has been involved in sectarian violence in Pakistan but most of its attacks have been retaliatory in nature.

### **Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP)**

Sipah-e-Sahaba Pakistan (SSP) is an offshoot of Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI). They received substantial support and funding from Saudi Arabia and Kuwait. Based on the Deobandi version of Islam, the party was founded in the Jhang district of Punjab in 1984. It was established by Haq Nawaz Jhangvi after he broke away from the JUI. It had the support of small time traders in Pakistan and was initially ranged against the Shia landlords in Jhang. SSP has reportedly managed to set up 17 clandestine branches abroad, in the UAE, England and Canada.

These offices are a major source of party funding, apart from donations from Saudi Arabia. They emerged as natural allies of the Taliban and were able to establish training camps and operate from Afghanistan. In the mid-nineties Lashkar-e Jhangvi (LeJ) was born out of the SSP. After General Musharraf imposed a ban on the organisation, it renamed itself as the Millat-e-Islamia Pakistan. Its student group which was also banned termed itself as the Dars-e-Quran committee in various colleges and later changed its name to Islamic Student Movement of Pakistan. Due to its anti-Shia activities, it was banned later.

### **Lashkar-e-Jhangvi**

LeJ is an offshoot of the Jamiat-ul-Ulema-e-Islam (JUI). It is considered by many as an armed wing of the SSP. It broke away from the SSP in 1996 and was founded by Riaz Basra and Malik Ishaque and Akram Lahori. It derives its name from Maulana Haq Nawaz Jhangvi who was one of the founder

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members of SSP. Riaz Basra was killed on May 14, 2002. The organisation is currently headed by Maulana Akram Lahori who is under police custody. According to some reports the LeJ split in 2000 and one group was headed by Riaz Basra and the other group by Qari Abdul Haye alias Qari Assadullah. The LeJ was banned by the Musharraf government. Even though the leaders of SSP disassociate themselves from the activities of the LeJ, the two share close links and draw their cadres from same madrassas. It has close links with the Taliban and operated training camps in Afghanistan before the US war on terror.

The organisation has been involved in anti-Shia violence and has attacked *Imambaras* and is responsible for killing of Shia doctors and professionals. It is based primarily in Punjab and Karachi. It has also targeted Pakistani Christians, Western interests and attempted to assassinate Nawaz Sharif twice in 1999. It has close links with , JeM, HuM, and HuJI. Both LeJ and LeT are part of Osama bin Laden's Global Islamic Front. It is supposed to have 300 active members with regional units which are coordinated by the central unit. This is further divided into small; cells consisting of five to eight members who work independently of each other. The organisation has since changed its name to Tehrik-e-Islami Pakistan (TIP).

### **Sipah-e-Mohammad**

Sipah-e-Mohammad is a Shia sectarian organisation and is considered the military wing of TNJ. It is led by Ghulam Raza Naqvi. The organisation is believed to have been created in 1993 and consists of members of the erstwhile TNFJ, TNJ and Imamia Students Organisation. It is active in Punjab province, the hotbed of Sunni militant activities with the village of Thokar Niaz Beg on the outskirts of Lahore as its headquarters. According to an intelligence estimate, the strength of the group was nearly 30,000. It was banned by General Musharraf in 2001. This organisation is riddled with factionalism. The groups under the

leadership of Major (Retd.) Ashraf Ali Shah and Naqvi have been engaged in incessant fighting and the organisation is now defunct after the law enforcing authorities killed most of its leaders and arrested its cadres. Individual members have operated in their individual capacity. It changed its name to Millat-e-Jafaria in 2001 after the ban imposed by General Musharraf.

### **Major Pakistani based jihadi groups Operating in India**

#### ***Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM)***

Jaish-e-Mohammad, yet another Deobandi organisation created in the name of Jihad against infidels was formed in January, 2000 in Karachi by Maulana Masood Azhar after he was released in exchange for the passengers in the hijacked Indian aircraft IC814 in Kandahar. He announced his intention to raise an anti India force, the Jaish-e-Muhammad, during a Friday sermon in the Binouri Mosque in Karachi soon after his release. He was earlier associated with Harkat ul Ansar which changed its name to Harkat-ul-Mujaheedin after it was put under the list of terrorist organisations by the US. Azhar is reportedly close to Osama bin laden and has travelled with him to Sudan. He received support from the Pakistani state for waging 'jihad' in Kashmir and opened militant training camps in Afghanistan with the support of the Taliban. The Pakistan government had arrested him after immense pressure by the international community for his links with Indian Parliament attack in December 2001. However in 2002 he was released as the Lahore High Court did not find any evidence against him to keep him under house arrest. The JeM has close links with other sunni sectarian organisations and received official patronage until the Jaish decided to launch a suicide attack on President Musharraf. By 2003, JeM had splintered into Khuddam ul-Islam (KUI) and Jamaat ul-Furqan (JUF). Pakistan banned KUI and JUF in November 2003. JeM is involved in legal activities like commodity trading, real estate and

production of consumer goods to generate funds apart from the donation it receives from various sources. It has its network in seventy eight districts of Pakistan and maintains large centres in Waziristan, Malakand, Kohat, and Muzaffarabad, the capital of PoK. It is believed to have used assault rifles, mortar, IEDs and rocket grenades. Its main weapon has been the usage of suicide bombers.

### ***Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT)***

Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), the armed wing of Pakistan based Sunni religious organisation- Markaz-ud-Dawa-wal-Irshad, was formed in 1989. The organisation has been through several reincarnations after it was banned in 2002. A favourite of the Pakistani establishment for its militant activities in India, this organisation made a comeback in the form of Jamaat-ud-Dawa till it was banned in 2008. It has been responsible for several deadly attacks in India and is believed to have close links with the Pakistani intelligence agency, ISI that facilitates the cadres' movement into India. The LeT maintains ties with religious and militant groups around the world ranging from the Philippines to the Middle East through the Markaz-ud-Dawa-wal-Irshad. Presently, it is headed by Hafiz Saeed, He is one of the prime accused in the Mumbai 26/11 terrorist incidents. Pakistan had reportedly arrested Hafiz Saeed after his organisation was banned by the United Nations but he was set free by the court as the government of Pakistan could not prove any of the charges against him. The organisation gets its recruits from Pakistani madrassas and is believed to provide hefty rewards to its cadres for their success in various jihadi operations. It has several mouth pieces to propagate its views. Some of its magazines are *alDawa*, *Gazwa* (in Urdu) and the *Voice of Islam*. It is believed to

have split into two organisations namely al Mansurin and al Nasirin. Its reincarnated front organisation Jamaat-ud-Dawa (JuD) remains a formidable force. JuD has been engaged in charitable activities which have earned it the support and sympathy from the people of Pakistan. It established its credentials in the Kashmir earthquake in 2005 where its workers were the first ones to reach the quake affected areas with relief material. It has links with the Taliban and Al-Qaida. After its ban it has been operating from the tribal agencies.

### ***Harkat-ul-Mujahideen(HuM)***

Harkat-ul-Mujahideen emerged as Harkatul Ansar in the 1980s with a mission to fight the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the group reorganised its cadres and moved them into Kashmir. Harkat-ul-Ansar (HuA) changed its name to Harkatul Mujahideen and split into Harkat-ul-Mujahideen and Harkat-ul-Jihadi Islami (HuJI) after it was banned by the US in 1997. According to some sources HuM and HuJI merged in 1993 to form Harkat-ul-Ansar. Later the HuM was revived when HuA was banned. Its website describes it as a purely jihadi organisation. The HuM announced its merger with JeM in Kashmir. In 1993 under the leadership of Sajjad Afghani the HuM entered Kashmir jihad. Its head Maulana Fazlur Rahman Khalili was one of the signatories to Osama bin Laden's 1998 call for jihad. In 2001, HuM was declared a terrorist organisation. After the ban on HuM it was named Jamait-ul-Ansar which was again banned (*Daily Times*, 12 Aug 2004). It is based in Muzaffarabad and is currently operating in Kashmir. According to media reports it has resurfaced as AlHilal trust which is based in Karachi. ■



## APPENDIX II

### THE IMAGE OF PAKISTAN IN MEDIA

The vast array of factors responsible for the evolution of a weak Pakistani state have been amply underlined in the diversity of literature available on Pakistan. While foreign observers like Selig Harrison (April 2009) have argued that the “slide of Balkanisation” in Pakistan could only be arrested if the autonomy provisions of the 1973 Constitution were respected and strengthened, Pakistani writers like Usman Khalid (February 2009) vehemently disagreed with any such approach. Khalid contended that such measures would weaken the Pakistani state, as autonomy based on ethnic divisions was hard to achieve in the country due to the mixed geographical spread of different ethnicities across different provinces.

Many analysts have also focussed on the factors behind growing challenge of Islamic radicalism to Pakistan. Some like, Zaid Haider (January 2009) and Hassan Abbas (May 2009), pointed to the declining system of overall governance and the weakened government control in Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), particularly, as an explanation for the outbreak of Islamic militancy. However, foreign observers like Jones and Mason (2008) attributed this phenomenon to the signals of a varied and differentiated treatment that Islamabad sends to the Baluchis on the one hand and the Taliban on the other. The authors also rejected the notion of “ungoverned spaces” and argued that this terminology is a severe blow to recognising the

tribal code in FATA— Pashtunwali. The authors traced the growth of Talibanisation in Pakistan to Musharraf’s policy of appeasement and suggested that a solution to the problem lay in rebuilding the tribal structures from inside, while reducing the pressures on them from outside. This, they argued, would help in restoring the traditional balance in the system. Meanwhile,, in an article published in the *Washington Post* (May 2009), Selig Harrison asked the US to support Pashtun demands and a merger of FATA and NWFP, followed by consolidation of Pashtun enclaves in Balochistan and Punjab into a single Pakhtunkhwa province. He felt that this move could be important not just because the Al-Qaida relied heavily on Pashtuns for recruiting its cadres, but also to alienate that entity from Pashtuns.

The spread of radical elements to Karachi and Punjab is yet another challenge, which has been highlighted by many scholars. Ahmad Rashid taking note of the geographical spread of Taliban wrote in the *New York Review of Books* (May 2009) that the Taliban had made inroads into Punjab under the ambit of the Tehreek-e-Taliban. An editorial in the *Christian Science Monitor* (May 2009) drew attention to the phenomenon of the Talibanisation of Karachi and contended that there were 3,500 madrassas in the city that were indoctrinating the youth. An editorial in *AlJazeera* (July 2009) attested to this development, stating that the Pakistani

Taliban had not only been using Karachi to fund their fight across Pakistan, they were also adding to the ethnic tensions between Muhajirs and Pashtuns, the largest local ethnic communities.

Military operations by the Pakistan army have been criticised by many scholars on various grounds. Rahimullah Yusufzai (July 2009) expressed concern over the spatial spread of those operations, which he cautioned would “overstretch Pakistan’s armed forces”. He also pointed out that another repercussion of the military action would be the coming together of Pakistani Taliban commanders, which he argued, would in many ways blur the distinction between the ‘good’ and ‘bad’ Taliban. Saleem Safi (June 2009) in an essay titled “Coherent Strategy Against Militancy” proposed that instead of military action, it was important to address the basic causes of Islamic militancy and that a political solution was the only answer. Safi emphasised that it was important to root out the ideological basis of the Taliban and noted that the main reason for intelligence failure was the weakened socio-economic structure of FATA, which was further worsened by the recent military operations. Safi urged the government to also involve religious parties and other influential tribal personalities with any negotiating process in future. Meanwhile, an editorial in *Christian Science Monitor* (June 2009) pointed out that popular support was considered to be the primary reason for the success of the ongoing military action.

In an interview published in *Arab Times* (July 2009), Imran Khan, leader of Tehrik-e-Insaf, pointed out that military operations would contribute to the further Talibanisation of society and emphasised that rather than focusing on political personalities in Pakistan, the concerns of people should be given priority. Hassan Abbas (2009), assessing the police infrastructure in Pakistan asserted in an article that unless the state parted with the outdated,

unaccountable, authoritarian and oppressive system of policing, victory in any of the insurgency operations would be far-fetched. Abbas also pointed out that inadequate training and investigation facilities and lack of funds, among others, were some of the areas, which made functioning of the police ineffective.

External aid to Pakistan has been yet another remedy offered by many analysts to shore up Pakistan’s economy and bail the country out of its current predicament. Ahmed Rashid in an article in *Washington Post* (2009) stated that the US Congress should clear expeditiously emergency funds for Pakistan and the first year’s US\$ 1.5 billion should have no conditions attached. He pointed out that the U.S. lawmakers should stipulate that aid for Pakistan should focus on development, and no conditionalities be attached to aid for agriculture, education and job creation. Jayashree Bajoria (April 2009) also offered her solution for Pakistan’s economic ills by highlighting the need to strengthen the Pakistani economy against collapse. She wanted special emphasis to be laid on boosting trade with Pakistan, where investments to develop energy, water, and transport infrastructure should be undertaken. Making economic aid programmes more transparent, she argued, should be the primary goal of the international efforts to salvage Pakistan economically, which was basically suffering from infrastructural constraints, corruption, weak intellectual property rights, and a feudal system of land distribution.

Indo-Pakistan engagement received considerable attention from analysts worldwide. Farrukh Saleem (July 2009) painted a murky picture of the future of Indo-Pak relations. He felt that given the tense environment on the borders and the rising defence expenditures in both the countries, a composite dialogue would mean little.

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A commentary in *Christian Science Monitor* (June 2009) meanwhile suggested that India should seize the opportunity to engage Pakistan in the post-Mumbai attacks period, as *jihadis* could use this period to destabilise Kashmir. The commentary offered a number of suggestions for taking the Indo-Pakistan summit forward: (a) high-level intelligence cooperation between the two countries should be encouraged; (b) an institutional approach for facilitating such confidence could be built on the lines of America's IMET, which is a military education programme; (c) India should clarify its objectives in Afghanistan, and Pakistan should be invited to monitor Indian efforts which would enhance transparency and (d) Pakistan should send the perpetrators of the Mumbai attacks to India for

trial. The commentary further pointed out that while in Kashmir, India should systematically reduce its troops and focus on economic growth and opportunity, Pakistan, on its part, should stop supporting the *jihadis*. An editorial in *Khaleej Times* (June 18, 2009) supplemented the above arguments by proposing that the Kashmir issue be addressed by the leaders of the two countries in their future engagements, who should "exhibit maturity and strong willed commitment to reach a level of understanding that allows the people of Kashmir to decide their fate." Another commentary in *Khaleej Times* (June 11, 2009) suggested that India should be respectful of Pakistan's investigative agencies and trust its judicial system. Kashmir, it observed, should be an integral part of the bilateral talks. ■

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## APPENDIX III

## ECONOMIC INDICATORS OF PAKISTAN

## Annual data and forecast

	2005 <sup>a</sup>	2006 <sup>a</sup>	2007 <sup>a</sup>	2008 <sup>b</sup>	2009 <sup>b</sup>	2010 <sup>c</sup>	2011 <sup>c</sup>
<b>GDP<sup>d</sup></b>							
Nominal GDP (US\$ bn)	109.9	127.3	143.0	165.2 <sup>a</sup>	166.5	174.4	186.1
Nominal GDP (PRs bn)	6,500	7,623	8,673	10,284 <sup>a</sup>	13,095 <sup>a</sup>	14,571	16,100
Real GDP growth (%)	7.7	6.2	5.7	2.0 <sup>a</sup>	3.7 <sup>a</sup>	1.9	3.7
<b>Expenditure on GDP (% real change)<sup>d</sup></b>							
Private consumption	12.9	1.0	4.7	-1.3 <sup>a</sup>	5.2 <sup>a</sup>	2.1	3.8
Government consumption	1.7	48.3	-9.6	39.0 <sup>a</sup>	-13.5 <sup>a</sup>	3.8	4.2
Gross fixed investment	13.5	19.9	13.6	3.8 <sup>a</sup>	-6.5 <sup>a</sup>	1.7	4.5
Exports of goods & services	9.6	9.9	2.3	-5.3 <sup>a</sup>	9.0 <sup>a</sup>	-0.2	0.9
Imports of goods & services	40.5	18.7	-3.5	3.6 <sup>a</sup>	-9.2 <sup>a</sup>	1.5	2.2
<b>Origin of GDP (% real change)<sup>d</sup></b>							
Agriculture	6.5	6.3	4.1	1.1 <sup>a</sup>	4.7 <sup>a</sup>	3.9	3.5
Industry	12.1	4.1	8.8	1.7 <sup>a</sup>	-3.6 <sup>a</sup>	0.2	3.4
Services	8.5	6.5	7.0	6.6 <sup>a</sup>	3.6 <sup>a</sup>	1.9	4.0
<b>Population and income</b>							
Population (m)	165.9	169.5	173.3 <sup>b</sup>	177.3	181.4	185.5	189.6
GDP per head (US\$ at PPP)	2,051	2,201	2,341 <sup>b</sup>	2,383	2,450	2,477	2,546
Recorded unemployment (av:%)	7.7	7.7	12.9 <sup>b</sup>	13.6	15.2	16.2	16.7
<b>Fiscal indicators (% of GDP)<sup>d</sup></b>							
Central government revenue	13.3	14.0	12.8	15.1	14.4	14.1	14.9
Central government expenditure	16.5	18.2	17.3	22.8	19.6	20.0	19.8
Central government balance	-3.2	-4.2	-4.5	-7.6	-5.2	-5.8	-5.0
Net public debt	53.9 <sup>b</sup>	51.5 <sup>b</sup>	50.9 <sup>b</sup>	51.5	46.4	48.2	49.3
<b>Prices and financial indicators</b>							
Exchange rate PRs: US\$ (end-period)	59.83	60.92	61.22	79.10 <sup>a</sup>	83.20	86.88	88.82
Consumer prices (end-period; % change)	8.5	8.9	8.8	24.0 <sup>a</sup>	10.8	6.8	7.8
Stock of money M2 (end-period; % change)	16.5	14.6	19.5	19.0	20.6	16.0	11.3
Lending interest rate (av; %)	8.2	9.9	10.2 <sup>b</sup>	12.4	13.3	12.5	11.5
<b>Current account (US\$ m)</b>							
Trade balance	-6,340	-9,647	-10,587	-16,769	-10,372	-13,318	-14,149
Goods: exports fob	15,433	17,049	18,188	21,328	18,285	18,330	18,494
Goods: imports fob	-21,773	-26,696	-28,775	-38,097	-28,657	-31,649	-32,643
Services balance	-3,830	-4,912	-5,044	-5,363	-3,021	-3,199	-3,568
Income balance	-2,514	-3,131	-3,740	-4,294	-1,681	-3,652	-3,702
Current transfers balance	9,079	10,941	11,085	11,024	12,668	14,664	15,273
Current-account balance	-3,605	-6,750	-8,286	-15,402	-2,406	-5,505	-6,146
<b>External debt (US\$ m)</b>							
Debt stock	33,158	35,877	40,680	46,249	51,140	55,612	56,214
Debt service paid	2,429	2,290	2,600	3,917	3,423	4,132	4,091
Principal repayments	1,702	1,437	1,504	2,891	2,456	2,835	2,785
Interest	727	853	1,095	1,026	967	1,297	1,305
Debt service due	2,429	2,290	2,600	3,917	3,423	4,132	4,091
<b>International reserves (US\$ m)</b>							
Total international reserves	10,948	12,816	15,689	8,903 <sup>a</sup>	15,304	16,347	16,978

<sup>a</sup> Actual, <sup>b</sup> Economist Intelligence Unit estimates, <sup>c</sup> Economist Intelligence Unit forecasts, <sup>d</sup> Fiscal years (ending June 30th).

Source: The Economist Intelligence Unit, Country Report, December 2009

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