

Post Us Withdrawal Threat Scenario for Pakistan

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Abstract

Pakistan and Afghanistan are immediate neighbors having 2240 km common border formally known as Durand Line. Despite shared geography, ethnicity and faith, relations with Afghanistan have never been smooth. Rather, they have been quite bitter & painful. Bilateral relations between Pakistan and Afghanistan have been poor, beginning immediately after Pakistan became independent in August 1947. Afghanistan's sole vote against Pakistan's admission to the United Nations in 1947, due to Afghan discontent with the permanency of the Durand Line. With the Indian threat looming from the East, Afghanistan's hostile attitude has added further in the fragile security environment challenging the very existence of Pakistan. With the sole exception of the four years of Taliban rule (1997-2001) over Afghanistan, successive governments in Kabul have displayed varying degrees of disaffection towards Islamabad. Issues of Pakhtoonistan and Durand line, are at the heart of such hostile/ unfriendly attitude and antagonistic relations, resulted from Afghanistan's ambitions over certain areas in the North West of Pakistan that, for a brief period, remained part of territories conquered by Ahmad Shah Abdali. Afghanistan always has been the graveyard of great emperors' since her independence. In late 2001, the US and its close allies invaded Afghanistan and toppled the Taliban government. The invasion's aims were to dismantle Al-Qaeda, which had executed the September 11 attacks, and to deny it a safe base of operations in Afghanistan by removing the Taliban government from power. After 20 years of long War between US forces and Taliban, on Aug 30 2021 President Biden says the United States should learn from its mistakes and that the withdrawal marks the end of "an era of major military operations to remake other countries." The study recommends that Pakistan and Afghanistan needs a balanced and pragmatic approach in managing its relations with each other and counter terrorism for better future.

Introduction

Turbulence and Resiliency are two words that come to mind when thinking of Pakistan. Pakistan's history is littered with upheaval, wars, natural disasters, and, to top it all off, dismemberment. There has always been a nagging doubt about the country's viability. 'Prophecies of doom and gloom are periodically issued they had been voiced even before Pakistan was created,' writes Cristopher Jafferlot. Pakistan has reached the age of 71, having lived through so much turmoil. Every other day, Pakistan appeared to be at a fork in its history. While the country's enemies were ecstatic and eager to see it drown, the country itself exuded

confidence, self-assurance, and maturity at every crossroad. On the one hand, pessimists questioned the country's viability; on the other hand, optimists were impressed by its resilience.

Pakistan's establishment can only be described as a miracle. It is no less of a miracle that the idea of Pakistan germinated simultaneously in the minds of two founding fathers in the year 1902. Without divine assistance, Pakistan could not have been established on the holiest day of the Muslim week, Friday, in the holiest month of the Islamic calendar, Ramadan, and on the holiest night of Ramadan, the 27th night. Its survival against all odds, despite the near-immediate deaths of its founding fathers and a slew of natural disasters, is a miracle in and of itself.

Apart from occasional calamities and disasters, the country was attacked by India again only eighteen years later (1965 War). Its distant Eastern wing, which was naturally prone to floods and cyclones, remained a nightmare to manage. After the war of 1965, the country was still reeling from a series of setbacks when the enemy struck again in 1971 (at the age of 24 and only 6 years after the previous war), this time with a heinous plan of dismemberment. Due to what Robert D. Kaplan refers to as "Revenge of Geography," the enemy was successful, and the country was forced to endure the worst disasters of its history. The disintegration was a political, military, ideological, and geographic disaster all rolled into one. The misery did not end there; the Bear reappeared in the backyard eight years after the dismemberment. Pakistan was threatened with extinction, which she hoped to combat with the help of the other superpower, the United States. Pakistan was a front-line state in a ten-year war and played a key role in the Cold War victory for the United States. The Bear's calamitous entry into the backyard had long-term negative consequences for the country, which we are still dealing with today. In such a difficult environment, achieving nuclear capability within forty years of her birth was no small feat. Nuclear capability was a divine support in fending off the state's enemies who were so eager to undo the subcontinent's partition. In Afghanistan, victory over the Soviet Union was followed by chaos and instability in the country. When the US decided to abandon the region in a state of chaos, the seeds for 9/11 were sown right there and then. Pakistan was left to her own devices to sort out the mess with her limited resources. While nuclear weapons kept the arch enemy at bay, chaos in the backyard spawned a new type of conflict.

Following the 9/11 attacks on US soil, the second superpower (now the sole superpower) moved into Pakistan's backyard. Pakistan was forced to choose between supporting the Taliban or the United States. Pakistan took up the role of a front-line state once more, fighting a 15-year war on terror. In this war, Pakistan's achievements and sacrifices have been unparalleled, unprecedented, and unmatched. The average time it takes to win such a war around the world is 22 years. While Sri Lanka is an island nation, it took 27 years to put an end to this threat. Despite its military might and vast resources, the United States could not get success in Afghanistan. Pakistan, on the other hand, as a continental state with a perennial enemy on the east and a porous border on the west, has done so in one and a half decades against all odds.

In a nutshell, Pakistan has spent the better part of her life fighting wars, either its own or others'. Political unrest, catastrophic floods, devastating earthquakes, and other natural

disasters characterized the remaining half. In the midst of these turbulent times, Pakistan has not only survived, but also maintained its integrity and strengthened its defenses by acquiring nuclear weapons. All of Pakistan's critics and adversaries were proven wrong.

Sanctions/ Embargos

Economic sanctions are a well-known and largely acknowledged strategy used by states and international organizations to sway the policies of other countries. Since the end of the Cold War, it has gained popularity. This weapon is used to prevent military conflicts while also forcing hostile powers to behave in a specific manner. Economic sanctions have a long history, dating back to when states utilized them to achieve their goals. The United States, together with other countries, formed a new economic system at the close of World War II by establishing international trade rules and norms and liberalizing the economy. They built international financial institutions such as the IMF, the World Bank, and the World Trade Organization. The United States was able to expand its political influence across the Atlantic and other neighboring locations because to this new international economic system. It established worldwide commercial and economic regulations and conventions with its partners.

The United States wanted to combat growing regionalization and dependency amongst states. By sponsoring those financial institutions, it felt obligated as the only superpower to disseminate Western democratic ideas and capitalism. It began imposing sanctions and economic embargoes on states and entities who refused to adhere to US-designed standards for weapon manufacturing, nuclear technology, and resolving international disputes. Since 1965, Pakistan has been subjected to US sanctions for a variety of reasons, including its pursuit of nuclear technology, backing for terrorist organizations, and use of US-supplied munitions against India. When the US recognized Pakistan to be a frontline state in attaining US goals, the sanctions were withdrawn. The effectiveness of these sanctions in the context of Pakistan is questionable. None of the measures could prevent Pakistan from obtaining a nuclear weapon.. During the sanction period, Pakistan received assistance from its closest friend, China, which helped Pakistan develop its nuclear capability.

The US unilateral sanctions were found to be ineffective, and it was claimed that they did not achieve their goals but had a severe influence on Pakistan's economy. It also tarnished the United States' reputation as a global force, sparking debate among experts about the US's role in global geopolitics. Sanctions imposed by the United States were misjudged and ineffective. Pakistan was a prospective, friendly ally for the US in South Asia at first. During the Cold War and the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, it was a frontline state. The US backed Pakistan militarily and financially, but when it learned of its nuclear ambitions, it became irritated and tried to exert pressure through military and economic sanctions. In 1998, Pakistan successfully conducted six nuclear tests, demonstrating that the US sanctions campaign was a complete failure. The United States unwittingly provided Pakistan with an opportunity to enhance its strategic cooperation with China and find ways to live and prosper without relying on the United States.

Sanctions during 1965 & 1971 Wars

During the 1965 and 1971 wars, Pakistan was sanctioned for utilizing US military weapons against India and for alleged human rights violations. There will be no military help to Pakistan as a result of Pakistan's use of American military supplies against India during the 1965 Indo-Pak War. It is a violation of the rules of US military aid by Pakistan, according to the US, because equipment is being used against India. Despite being a member of SEATO and CENTO, Pakistan was unable to get US support in the conflict and came to regard the US as an untrustworthy friend.

Sanctions in 1970 – Nuclear Programme

Similarly, India's much-publicized surgical strike could spark a war. At least forty soldiers were killed in an ambush on a convoy of Indian paramilitary forces in Indian-controlled Kashmir in February 2019. It was Kashmir's bloodiest attack in three decades. India claimed two weeks later that it had carried out air strikes on a terrorist training camp inside Pakistani territory. Pakistan reacted with air attacks in Indian-controlled Kashmir the next day. The conflict evolved into an aerial battle, during which Pakistan shot down two Indian military planes and kidnapped one Indian pilot, who was released two days later. As a result, the issue continues to heat up and worsen US intelligence stated that Pakistan was procuring material used in the construction of a gas centrifuge for the manufacturing of enriched uranium through subcontracting companies in Europe, thus the US withheld \$40 million in help. A gang of renegade students burned down the US Embassy in Islamabad in November 1979, riding high on rising anti-US fervor in Pakistan. The episode exacerbated the existing trust gap and mutual suspicion between the United States and Pakistan.

Sanctions in 1990 – Nuclear Programme

Economic and military sanctions were established in 1990. If an annual presidential judgment that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear weapon was not given, the 1985 Pressler Amendment enabled the suspension of most US military and economic support to Pakistan. Furthermore, the US President was required to declare that any US aid to Pakistan would greatly lessen the chance of Pakistan acquiring a nuclear weapon. President George W. Bush was unable to provide the required certificate about Pakistan's nuclear programme, and thus US economic and military aid worth \$564 million for fiscal year 1991 was immediately halted. Pakistan called the measures "unfair, anti-Islamic, and discriminatory," pointing out that India had not faced similar restrictions for testing a nuclear device. With the end of the Cold War in December 1989 and the removal of the Soviet Union from Afghanistan, the United States no longer required Pakistan as an ally and was free to impose sanctions on it. Military equipment deliveries to Pakistan have been halted, as has the sale of more than 38 F-16 fighter jets. Joint military exercises between the US and Pakistan were discontinued, as were Pakistani military leaders' mid-career training programmes in the US.

Sanctions in 1998 – Nuclear Programme

Economic and military sanctions were imposed once more in 1998 for conducting nuclear tests at Chagai, Pakistan. It included the suspension of foreign aid, the sale of any military items, the

termination of other military assistance, and a prohibition on US banks' lending to the foreign government in question. The Glenn Amendment states that if a non-nuclear weapons state detonates an explosive nuclear device, a comprehensive set of sanctions must be imposed. The Symington Amendment forbids the United States from providing economic or military assistance to any country that delivers or receives nuclear enrichment equipment, materials, or technology without adhering to International Atomic Energy Agency safeguards. Pakistan's economy began to deteriorate, with a \$30 billion foreign debt and only \$600 million in foreign exchange reserves. US Navy warships launched cruise missiles on Taliban-ISI training camps in Afghanistan in August 1998. Pakistan condemned the offensive as a "infringement of Pakistani sovereignty," further deteriorating US-Pakistan relations.

Sanctions in 1999 – Over Throw of democracy

Section 508 of the Act forbids the United States from providing most forms of economic and military assistance to countries where the duly elected head of government has been deposed by a military coup or decree. The US administration condemned the army's overthrow of democracy in Pakistan and called for the immediate restoration of a civilian, democratically elected government and the rule of law. The United States prohibited the sale of military equipment and services to Pakistan and refused to reinstate Pakistan's eligibility for international military education and training. The Foreign Operations, Export Financing, and Related Agencies Appropriations Act of 2001, on the other hand, made an exception for Pakistan to receive US foreign assistance funding for basic education programs.

Sanctions in 2018 – Terrorist funding

Most US military and economic aid to Pakistan is prohibited under these sanctions unless the Secretary of State certifies the following to the Appropriations Committees, among other assurances.

1. Pakistan is collaborating with the United States in counterterrorism efforts against the Haqqani Network, Quetta Shura Taliban, al-Qaeda, and other domestic and foreign terror organizations.
2. Pakistan has not supported Taliban-run schools, and Pakistani intelligence services have not intervened extra judicially in Pakistan's governance.
3. Pakistan is working to prevent the spread of nuclear-related material and expertise. After suspending all aid to Pakistan in January, the Trump administration added seven Pakistani companies allegedly involved in nuclear trade to a list of "foreign entities" that could pose a risk to US national security and strategic interests in March 2018.

The sanctions mentioned above may stymie Pakistan's bid to join the Nuclear Suppliers' Group (NSG), which aims to reduce nuclear arms proliferation by controlling the nuclear materials transfer regime. The United States withheld \$255 million in military aid to Pakistan as of 2018. The \$350 million earmarked for Pakistan in the Defense Appropriations Bill for fiscal year 2018 is also being withheld until the US certifies that Pakistan has made concerted efforts to combat terrorist organizations in the region.

Present Situation

Sanctions not only effect economy of the target nation but also lessens their credibility in international community. Pakistan when being severely sanctioned by US and allies showed inclination towards China and even Russia. CEPEC, Chinese construction companies working in Pakistan, loans from ADB. Defense purchases from china and recent visit of Pakistani prime minister to Russia followed by denying vote against Russian invasion of Ukarine are few indicators. This initiative of Pakistan was harshly responded by USA and allies. Pakistan still on grey list of FATF even after almost fulfilling its obligations, sanctions of 2018 & unflinching support to India in Kashmir and multiple violations are few examples. It is pertinent here to mention that in March 2022 a bill has been floated in US congress which could take Pakistan into its clutches. The bill sought to "designate the Islamic Republic of Pakistan as a state sponsor of terrorism, among other things." The bill has now been referred to the US House Foreign Affairs Committee. Foreign assistance restrictions, a ban on defense exports and sales, controls on the export of dual-use items, and various financial and other restrictions are among the proposed sanctions. Others advocate for punishing individuals and countries that conduct business with a state designated as a terrorist sponsor. So far, only four countries have been designated as terrorist sponsors: Cuba, North Korea, Iran, and Syria. On March 9, three lawmakers, Scott Perry, Gregory Steube, and Mary E. Miller, wrote to US Attorney General Merrick Garland to express their concern about Ambassador Masood Khan's close relationship with "domestic actors linked to the Pakistani regime." Masood Khan, Pakistan's new ambassador to the United States, is a senior diplomat who previously served as Islamabad's permanent representative to the United Nations in New York. He was also the president of Azad Kashmir until August of last year three US lawmakers have demanded an investigation into allegations that Mr Khan, who has already been confirmed as Pakistan's Ambassador to the US, has ties to US Muslim groups and organizations. As a result, Pakistan will be added to the list of terrorist financiers and will be penalized or blackmailed in order to achieve the goals of Western powers.

FATF to Achieve Political Goals

Pakistan was placed on the FATF's grey list in June 2018 and urged to strengthen anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing efforts. The decision of the Watchdog to keep Pakistan on the grey list despite the implementation of 26 out of 27 points raises concerns. It was necessary to investigate whether FATF is a technical or political forum, and whether the forum was being used for political purposes. Pakistan's Foreign Minister, Shah Mahmood Qureshi, recently raised the same question. RSIL (one of Pakistan's largest legal think tanks) published a detailed report on Pakistan's FATF-related progress in June 2021. When compared to countries that have left the grey list, such as Iceland, Bangladesh, and Bhutan, the report found that "FATF's scrutiny on the status of Pakistan's TF/ML investigation and prosecution was nowhere near as stringent for the other countries." Pakistan's 27-point action plan "may be the FATF's most ambitious plan handed to any country," but in response, Pakistan implemented

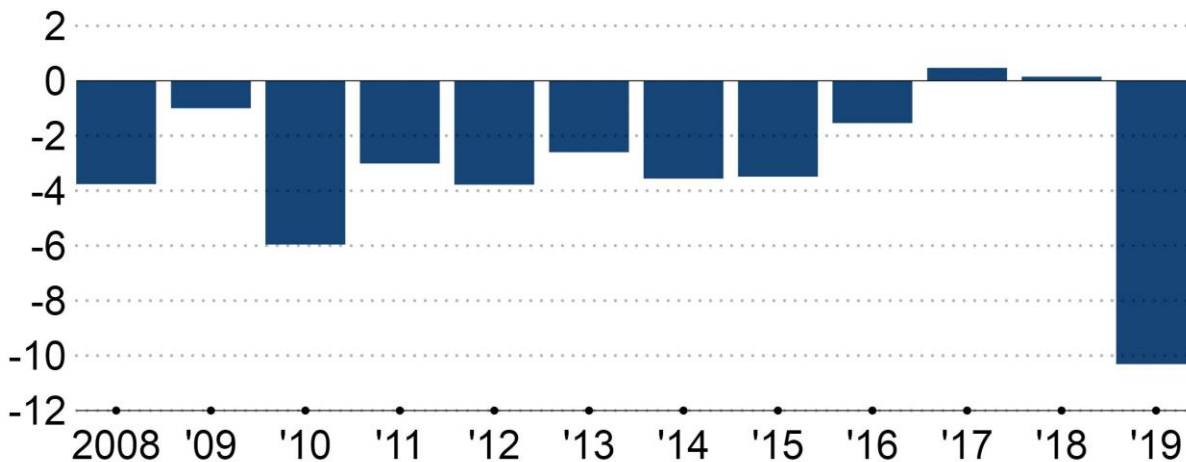
massive structural reforms to improve compliance with global standards. That, in and of itself, is a "success story for a country facing steep risks and challenges."

Tabadlab, an independent think-tank, reported in a 2021 research paper that grey-listing from 2008 to 2019 may have resulted in \$38 billion in GDP losses.

¹. Here it is pertinent to mention that individuals involved in money laundering are sitting in UK. They are being sheltered and protected from Pakistan's law enforcement agencies and legal

Impact of FATF on Pakistan GDP

(In billions of dollars)



process. However, no IO or country has asked UK to return them. Similarly corrupt politicians accumulated most of their plundered wealth in European countries but those countries are not being subjugated to any sort of pressure. Hence it is perceived that even in years to come Pakistan shall be kept in grey list or worse may be shifted to black list which would stop foreign investors to come to Pakistan. Hence a very serious approach is required to deal with this non - military but very effective threat.

Threats to Fencing

Every border strategy is built around two concerns: security failures and economic crises. The Durand Line and its unethical monitoring remained the most contentious bilateral issue between Pakistan and Afghanistan. Despite Pakistan Army's full-scale kinetic operations in tribal areas, a series of deadly terror attacks across Pakistan shattered the nation's resilience and forced her armed forces to install security fences as a "Need" rather than a "Option." The population's constant sense of insecurity, combined with economic insecurity, compelled nuclear-armed Pakistan to permanently protect her 2430-kilometer western border from illegal / sponsored movement of hardcore terrorists, smugglers, and drug cartels. At the moment, the

¹ Adnan A. (2021). "Terror-financing grey listing costs Pakistan billions annually"

Available at <https://asia.nikkei.com/Politics/International-relations/Terror-financing-grey-listing-costs-Pakistan-billions-annually> Accessed on : 6 Apr 22

installation of a security fence and the maintenance of an effective border management system along the Durand Line are significantly contributing to improving internal security and economic disparities, which will systematically enhance friendly diplomatic relations, security collaboration, and economic cooperation with Afghanistan in the near future, while also playing a significant role in dealing with anti-Pakistan propaganda / security and economic proximity. General Pervaiz Musharraf began erecting a security fence along the Durand Line in 2006, but Afghanistan was vehemently opposed.

Pakistan needs to fence its western border because of following reasons:

- 1) To ensure one's own safety and security against external threats.
- 2) Second, to halt illegal immigration, drug trafficking, and the smuggling of prohibited goods.
- 3) To facilitate transit trade agreements and legal migration.

US has interests in this ungoverned territory which shares border with following countries²:-

- 1) Pakistan (only Muslim Nuclear State with strongest Army and main partner of OBOR Initiative – CPEC).
- 2) Iran (Developing Nuclear Weapons and against Saudi's monarchy, monitoring Strait of Hormuz and Persian Gulf).
- 3) Landlocked Central Asian Republics (Rich in Natural Gas)

Hence to achieve these goals she collaborated with arch rival of Pakistan, now the two have converging interests in region. Multiple and conflicting interests of predominant states especially U.S, India and

Russia is constantly instilling insecurity, insecurity, and economic crisis in this volatile region, creating space for militant groups to establish footholds along the Pakistan-Afghan tribal border areas, which were operating freely inside Pakistan on orders from hostile intelligence agencies to achieve the following goals:

- 1) Use a sub-nationalist agenda to disintegrate Balochistan.
- 2) Incite Pashtun tribes living along the Pakistan-Afghan border to launch the "Pashtun Tahafuz Movement" in order to revolt against the Pakistan Army and the rule of law.
- 3) Destabilize Pakistan politically and economically through sub nationalist people, smuggling, drug and human trafficking
- 4) Destabilizing Pakistan and targeting CEPEC with terrorism and disinformation campaigns.

Internal strife in Afghanistan and Indian proxies in Gilgit-Baltistan, KPK, and Balochistan will continue to pose a security challenge for Pakistan, with direct implications for CPEC. Furthermore, India is funding development projects in both Afghanistan and Iran, including the opening of Chabahar Port for transit trade between India, Iran, and Afghanistan via the Gulf of Oman. Chabahar port is only seven and a half kilometers from Pakistan's Gawadar Port, which was built with India's financial assistance to sabotage CPEC and also meet China's OBOR initiative on US directive. Despite Pakistan's efforts, the likelihood is that terrorist organizations

² Ghani, O. A., Alam, M., Gul, A. A., & Shah, A. (2013). Regional GeoStrategic Challenges and Opportunities for China–Pakistan Cooperation. China-Pakistan Joint Think Tank, 12. 13-14

controlled by hostile intelligence agencies will use Pashtun-populated tribal areas of Afghanistan as proxies. Furthermore, due to the conflicting interests of world powers in South Asia, handlers of these terror outfits / drug cartels / smuggler gangs will continue to fund anti-Pakistan elements and exploit the Pak-Afghan border to carry out their malicious activities; thus, the unfenced Durand Line will remain an active threat to sabotage Pakistan's security and economic stability.

The Politics of Corruption and Its Impact on Democracy

Pakistan and its institutions have become less acquainted with democracy as a result of its 70-year history of half military and half, so-called, democratic rule. Politicians' obsession with power has reverted the state apparatus to malfeasance and corruption. The threat of corruption, favoritism, abuse of public office, retaliatory politics, and supporting party loyalists, among other things, could not materialize the concept of progress in its true sense. It is worth noting that favoritism, horse-trading, bribery, illegal obligations, and other forms of corruption are all very common among our politicians. During her first term, Benazir Bhutto was accused of bribery, abuse of state power, and illegally supporting party workers and other relatives. There was also a strong allegation levelled against her that she persuaded Assembly members, particularly those from the opposition bloc, not to support the 'Islami Jamhoori Ittehad' (IJI) no confidence motion tabled on November 1, 1989. She lavishly distributed public funds among them for this purpose (Rathnam, 1991). Similarly, Mian Nawaz Sharif's government faced serious allegations of money laundering, misappropriation of public funds, and corruption. During the decade from 1988 to 1999, Nawaz Sharif's government was not free of the abuse of public office for personal gain and corruption.

The ML leadership left no stone unturned in its efforts to benefit itself and weaken the PPP position. . Prior to the 1990 general elections, the pro-Nawaz Sharif Punjab caretaker government gave large sums to candidates running on his party's platform to sponsor their election campaigns against PPP candidates. He made large-scale transfers in Punjab and used his own men to manipulate elections in his favour. Apart from that, public transportation was used to support IJI election campaigns. An attempt was also made to alter the territorial configuration of constituencies in order to disperse the PPP vote bank. In exchange for votes, cash was distributed to voters, and road, bridge, and street construction was completed over night. Furthermore, PPP supporters were persuaded and restricted from voting, forcing them to either not vote or vote for independent candidates in order to weaken the PPP's position in the elections.

Irshad Ahmad Arif and Fawad Chaudhry, in their TV talk shows "On The Other Side" and "To The Point," respectively, criticized Nawaz Sharif for starting the Motor Way project, in which he took a large commission that was then laundered out of the country. The amount of this commission in the motorway project was approximately eight hundred crore, and cases against Nawaz Sharif in the import of urea fertilizer from China are also pending, in which he received a large sum of money as a commission.

Now these politicians shift corruption money to foreign countries. Who systematically provide them protection from Pakistani law enforcement agencies and political system? For example had Nawaz Sharif been handed back to Pakistan over corruption charges or had he not been protected and given refuge while he was unable to provide money trail to Pakistani courts, he could have been brought to justice easily in Pakistan. Similarly Sirray palace of Benazir Bhutto or overseas properties and off shore bank accounts of these politicians were never brought under question by any country. Even after revelations of Wiki Leaks, these politicians could not be brought to justice. This way these politicians become dependent upon host country for custody of their money, future of their kids living abroad and these countries also provide as shelter in heaven when they escape from Pakistan. These countries then control Pakistan through these corrupt politicians as they get blackmailed. Hence this way west rules on us and get decisions of their choice. Besides these corrupt politicians keep fueling their economy by looted wealth of third world countries like Pakistan. This corrupt political system shall continue to be a threat for Pakistan. As although USA has left the region but wealth and properties of these politicians still lie in west. Secondly being corrupt till core they can be bought by money via money laundering and horse trading. If Pakistan wants to be independent, its policy makers will have to device ways and means to alter this system of dynastic oligarchy or so called democracy.

Regime Change

The United States has a long history of deposing non-cooperative leaders. The United States has a long history of regime change. Let's take a look at a few and then assess our own situation.

Iran 1952 – 1953

Iran has been a constitutional monarchy ruled by Shah Mohammad Reza Pahlavi since 1944. Since the discovery of oil in Iran in the late nineteenth century, major powers have used the Iranian government's weakness to obtain concessions that many believe do not give Iran a fair share of the profits. In 1952, elections were scheduled in Iran. In the 1952 Iranian legislative election, which Mosaddegh suspended after urban deputies loyal to him were elected, the CIA began supporting 18 of their preferred candidates. The new parliament granted Mosaddegh emergency powers, reducing the Shah's power, and there was a constitutional dispute over the roles of the Shah and Prime Minister. The United Kingdom strongly supported the Shah, while the United States remained neutral. However, with the election of Eisenhower as President of the United States in late 1952, America's position shifted. The CIA launched Operation Ajax, led by Kermit Roosevelt Jr., with the goal of convincing the Shah to replace Mosaddegh through diplomacy and bribery. The 1953 Iranian coup d'état (known in Iran as the "28 Mordad coup") was orchestrated by the intelligence agencies of the United Kingdom (under the code name "Operation Boot") and the United States (under the codename "TPAJAX Project"), who replaced Mosaddegh with the CIA's choice, General Fazlollah Zahedi, via decrees dictated by the CIA's Donald Wilber. The coup marked Pahlavi's transformation from a constitutional monarch to an authoritarian who relied heavily on US government support. The CIA did not admit responsibility until the coup's 60th anniversary in August 2013.

Iraq

The United States has long sought to depose Saddam Hussain. The CIA launched DBACHILLES, a coup d'état operation against the Iraqi government, and included Ayad Allawi, the leader of the Iraqi National Accord, a network of Iraqis opposed to Saddam Hussein's government, in the operation. The network included Iraqi military and intelligence officers, but it was penetrated by Iraqi government supporters. Between 1992 and 1995, the CIA directed a government sabotage and bombing campaign in Baghdad, also using Ayad Allawi and his network. In 1996, Allawi attempted a coup against Saddam Hussein. The coup failed, but Ayad Allawi was later installed as Prime Minister of Iraq by the Iraq Interim Governing Council, which was formed by the US-led coalition following the invasion and occupation of Iraq in March 2003. Later, direct military action was launched based on false information about nuclear weapons, which turned out to be false, and thus the Saddam regime was brought to an end.

2012–2017: Syria

Bashar al Asad was not acceptable to the United States because of his anti-Saudi and pro-Russian stance. In August 2011, the United States called on Assad to "step aside" and imposed an oil embargo on Syria. Beginning in 2013, the US provided training, weapons, and cash to vetted moderate rebels in Syria in order to destabilize Asad's regime. Another example of US intervention to destabilize a non-cooperative government.

Present Situation

Similarly Pakistani Prime minister Imran Khan was also not in good books of west in general and USA in particular. His inclination towards Russia³ & China added fuel to fire. Moreover, his stance to not give military basis to CIA and USA in Pakistan made US policy makers to realize that such leader might create more troubles in days to come. It is also worth mentioning that under his leadership national action plan was followed in true letter and spirit, Pakistan achieved 26 out of 27 targets given by FATEF, union of Islamic countries in shape of OIC and setting stage for their cooperation with Russia china block and raising voice against Islamophobia that goes against basic narrative of USA who portrays Muslims as terrorists and Islam as its route, were some of his actions which could not be openly opposed by west but definitely raised alarms for US and allies. Keeping above examples in view, removal of IK might be linked to US involvement using corrupt politicians, Judiciary and corrupt elements of state machinery. This was also confirmed by Russia in their official statement.⁴ Hence regime change of unwanted politicians by west shall remain a continuous threat to Pakistan and any politicians giving decisions against will of US shall have to undergo strict opposition not only from outside but also by black sheep hiding inside Pakistan.

³ The Print (2022). "US asked Pakistan not to proceed with Prime Minister Imran Khan's visit to Russia: Qureshi" Available at : <https://theprint.in/world/us-asked-pakistan-not-to-proceed-with-prime-minister-imran-khans-visit-to-russia-qureshi/909821/> Accessed on : 9 Apr 22

⁴ Dawn News (2022). " US sought to Punish Disobedient Imran khan" Available at : <https://www.dawn.com/news/1683565> Accessed On : Apr 22

Propaganda Campaign

Importance of large scale wars cannot be denied. However, the advent of 21st century has brought new dimensions to the art of warfare. Recent developments in war machinery, massive increase in fire power assets and development of nuclear bomb indicate that conventional wars might prove very costly both economically as well as in terms of human lives. Secondly in case of clashes between state and non-state actors or between two states where one is too weak, the conventional war fighting techniques might not be very effective. Therefore, in the age of IW, brains matter more than brawn. The target can be a population, such as the national will or a specific religious, political, or ethnic group, a state, its institutions, a person, a project or even ideological basis of a country. Prime role of IOs like UN was to avert war and promote human rights in the world. But sadly that's not happening anymore.

The West has recently targeted Pakistan with IW in close collaboration with India. Sovereignty, territorial integrity, cultural identity, ideological and ethnic cohesion, and, most importantly, the economy are among the areas targeted. Pakistan's nuclear programme, Western border fencing, CEPEC, and armed forces, including intelligence agencies, have also been designated as special targets. During 2008/2009, when operation "Rah-e-Rast" was launched in general area of Swat and surroundings, it was my personal experience that disinformation cells of Western media created a perception that Islamabad was probably falling into the Taliban's lapse. During this IW campaign, the Taliban's strengths and capabilities were exaggerated. After failing to achieve the desired results in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), the international media, aided by insiders, shifted its focus to Balochistan province. .

Despite the fact that militants in Balochistan were actively involved in causing law and order situations, the international media portrayed them as freedom fighters, people loving innocents who had raised arms for their basic rights, and thus provided a platform for an independent Balochistan that may suit the interests of the international stakeholders. After failing in both the KPK and Balochistan insurgencies, hostile intelligence agencies (HIAs) concentrated on sowing seeds of discontent and hatred against institutions within Pakistan. While outside the country, they went on a rampage to smear Pakistan's image, branding it a terrorist state, a failed state, and an oppressor of minorities and Pashtuns / Balochs. In this regard, the role of Indian media was critical. However, Indian mainstream media could not support fake propaganda because it was unfounded, and secondly, Indian mainstream media does not have many followers around the world, particularly in European countries. As a result, they (HIAs) resorted to the formation of phoney media cells that collaborated with mainstream media to target her adversaries, including Pakistan.

In 2019, the EU DisinfoLab discovered a massive network of 265 fake local media outlets in 116+ countries serving Indian interests, as well as numerous fake think tanks and NGOs. This network was active in Brussels and Geneva, generating and disseminating information aimed primarily at undermining Pakistan.

Genesis/ Modus Oprendai – EU Chronicles

15 years back in 2005 Srivastava Group an Indian business group allegedly started creating fake websites, fake NGOs, fake IDs of journalists, provided fake addresses and even theft IDs of inactive NGOs and notable Human Rights activists. Sometimes they used to resort to wrong identification of an orator. They lobbied with members of EU parliament. They further used to amplify a small event into a global level activity against Pakistan. Sole purpose was to tarnish image of adversaries and to fulfill hidden agendas of Indian government. Fake NGOs and even collaboration of 10 UN certified NGOs was used to spread propaganda against adversaries:-

1. Use of orators in side events of United Nations on behalf of one or more of these NGOs.
2. The resurrection of inactive but prestigious organizations (NGOs) and dead personalities (Louis B. Sohn).
3. Fake addresses whenever an address needed for verification by UN
4. The misleading representation of the views of members of European Union parliament as official position from the European Union.

The maximization of negative content about Pakistan online, by employing a network of fake local media across the world.

Summary of The 15-Years Influence Operation

The propaganda campaign led by the Srivastava Group and further amplified by ANI began in 2005 and is still going on.

The operation's mission was to target and discredit nations in conflict with India particularly Pakistan but also China to a lesser extent. Its long-term objective is:-

- a) To reinforce pro-Indian and anti-Pakistan (and anti-Chinese) feelings in India.
- b) Over shadow Kashmir cause and minority rights violations in India.
- c) Internationally, improve the image of India, to damage the reputation of rival countries and ultimately achieve more support of international institutions such as the EU and the UN.
- d) Using of Members of the European Parliament to create a mirage of institutional support from the European institutions against Pakistan and China.
- e) Showing active and continuous presence in Geneva and the United Nations' Human Rights Council by:-
- f) Organizing side-events and demonstrations against Pakistan and in support of minority rights.
- g) Influencing UN accredited NGOs or using the speaking slots of various NGOs against Pakistan and in favored of China.

The creation of fake media in Brussels, Geneva and across the world and / or the repackaging and dissemination via ANI and obscure local media networks – at least in 97 countries - to multiply the repetition of online negative content about countries in conflict with India, in particular Pakistan⁵

⁵ Gary M & Et al.(2020) “India Chronicles” *EU Disinformation Lab* pg.6-8 at https://www.disinfo.eu/wp-content/uploads/2020/12/Indian-chronicles_FULLREPORT.pdf accessed on 21 Dec 20

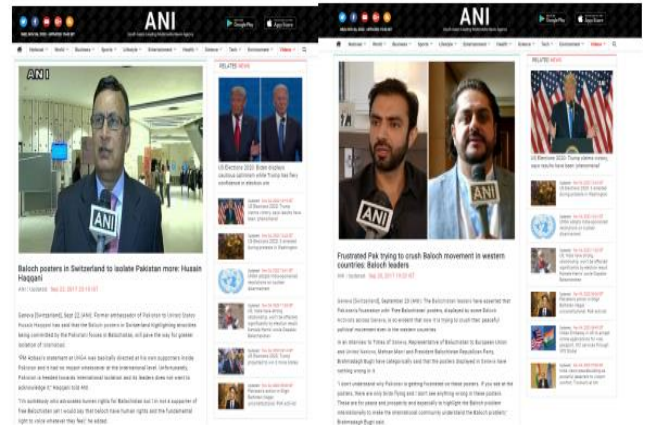
Spreading Propaganda Against Pakistan By Providing Platform to Anti Pakistan Organizations

A platform was provided to anti Pakistan groups and organizations. A large number of organizations (NGOs, think-tanks, political parties) were given the floor via these NGOs Jammu Kashmir Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), Peace and Development Institute, Baloch Voice Association, the World Sindh Congress, European Foundation for South Asian Studies (EFSAS), the United Kashmir People's National Party (UKPNP), Jammu Kashmir National Awami Party, World Baloch Women's Forum, Gilgit Baltistan Studies, Baloch People's Congress, Baloch Human Rights Council (BHRC), Baloch Students Organisation, Baloch People's Congress, Baloch Republican Party, Baloch Voice Foundation. Being real/ actually on ground present, the propoganda by these organizations added a lot of legitimacy and influenced target audience both at national and international level.

Effects of Propaganda Campaign

Strength of Savista network was in unity of interlinked effort. All these websites, news channels, media coverage, fake journalist were inter linked. Their aims were same and their goals were set by same forces. Hence, their every effort was in the same direction. Together they propagated the fake news, amplified them and disillusioned the target audience both at home as well as international audience. Second tier was the anti-Pakistan forces getting help of this network and spreading lies and hate against Pakistan. Parties like PTM, PKMAP, JISQM as well as absconders like Hussain Haqqani and terrorists/ criminals like Iltaf Hussain all were provided a platform by this network. The news were copy pasted, amplified and twisted to malign Pakistan and make perceptions. Sheer lack of knowledge of international audience because of no contradictory media available by Pakistan further adverse the effects. In spite of fact that India was oppressor in Kashmir, Pakistan was made responsible for destabilization and freedom movement was portrayed as a terrorist movement. Yet another example is manipulation of Pakistani viewers.

A myth was created that defense budget of Pakistan is 80 percent. Today even educated masses if asked would answer the same. Truth is Pakistan's defense budget is 18 percent not 80 percent. How this was achieved? How an average Pakistani citizen was compelled to believe false statistics? Answer is **Unity of Interlinked Effort**. Minds of target audience were hammered so many times from different sources to believe a lie. Ultimately a perception was developed that Pakistan Army is getting 80 percent of total budget. Hence lies were told so often that they over shadowed the truth. In the meanwhile India doubled its defense budget from 35



Screenshots: On the left, ANI's article about an interview of the former Pakistani Ambassador to the US Hussain Haqqani made by Times of Geneva¹⁹⁶. On the right, ANI's article about an interview of two Baloch leaders made by the Times of Geneva¹⁹⁷.

billion to 67 billion USD. But there is no news about it anywhere. Still another example is the post 28 feb incident and its coverage. Initially Savastra group and ANI news channel aired a news in which “EU had backed Indian surgical strikes in Pakistan”. There was no such news on any other media/ news except those linked to India Chronicles. Furthermore on 28 feb 2020, Indian MIG was shoot down by Pakistan Air Force during a Dog Fight, initially Indian media denied this fact. However, when Pakistan released the captive pilot, same news channels started propagating it as an act of cowardice by Pakistan. However, these news could not make much influence at international level because of overarching act of bravery and courage by Pakistani armed forces. After release of pilot ANI network coupled with Indian media started propagating a false news of F-16, shot down by Indian Air force. All such false news were well linked and supported by different news channels and websites of Savista Group.

It is pertinent to mention that during 15 years western media and intelligence agencies could not trace this fake network while at same time they were successfully unearthing and finding funding's to terrorist networks. Even after this report being published and available publically, IOs as well as major western powers and all such forums went quite over this issue. It's a fact that image of Pakistan was badly damaged as well as many sanctions including getting into grey list of FATF were imposed, Pakistan was accused of terrorist funding and support. All this was being propagated by this network. But international community has gone silent over this issue. This seems more like part of a greater game to undermine Pakistan and to give lead to India in the region against China. FATF remained criminally silent over Kalboshan Yadav case. FATF even didn't ask India and England to stop supporting and hiding terrorists like Iltaf Hussain in UK. Name of JuA a very effective terrorist network was excluded from terrorist agencies list by USA. TTP was never targeted inside Afghanistan by USA or collation forces.

It is pertinent to mention that linguistic/ ethnic divide was carried out in Pakistan during last two decades and this division became visible in shape of rise of PTM & PKMAP type parties on political horizon. These parties were given coverage by Savastia group channels. Their ideology was spread all along the Pakistan by social media and all across the globe using ANI and other such news networks besides news on social media. Not only this the terrorists who are absconders from Pakistan and are involved in spreading terrorist activities inside Pakistan were given full media coverage by these news channels/ websites. Infact they were shown as Human Rights activists and oppressed lot fighting for freedom of their people. One such example is Dr. Allah Nazar Baloch, was involved in killing of security personals as well as innocent civilians and also claimed the responsibility of those attacks. However, he has been portrayed as a freedom fighter on websites linked to India chronicles. Not only this, they also made an NGO named Balochistan House being run by Tariq Fateh. The sole purpose of that NGO is to spread misleading propaganda about Pakistan as being oppressor. Websites linked to India Chronicles keep giving coverage to various events organised by this NGO. Pakistan Army was shown as an oppressor raping and killing innocent Balochi women and youth respectively. As a result the world especially European countries started believing this and Pakistan's image got tarnished as an oppressor.

One of the main aims of this propaganda campaign was to influence the matters of National Interest. Construction of dams is one such example. Although Pakistan is genuinely facing scarcity of water as well as energy shortfall and construction of dams is the need of time. Still construction of Kalabagh Dam was made a stigma, a taboo and a bone of contention. In this game sub nationalist parties helped Indian media. They raised nationwide protests and openly challenged the construction of dams. While on the end Savastra Network channels kept spreading lies and disinformation against construction of dams by Pakistan. They also gave coverage to same sub nationalist leaders speeches in which construction of dams was challenged. As a result Pakistan could not build any worthwhile dam. However, at the same time India constructed dams and caused water shortage in Pakistan. Moreover, now being late in dam's construction international organizations are also supporting Indian stance as they have built the dams. UN remained silent over construction of dams by India which is criminal. World Bank was the broker of Indus Water Treaty but still they remained silent over construction of Baghlahar Dam on Chenab River, whose water was allocated to Pakistan.

Still another example is Pakistan's fencing attempt facing backlash. Pakistan was facing dilemma of terrorism. This terrorism was Indian funded. When Pak army successfully up lifted the terrorist organizations, the same organizations got sheltered in Afghanistan by RAW and NDS. They were reshaped and re tasked to target Pakistan. But due to lack of support bases they were helpless. Moreover, Pakistan Army started fencing western border. This further reduced their reach inside Pakistan. At this time PTM up rise began and the challenged the erection of fence. Their slogan was **Lar o Bar Afghan** which means we are afghans on both sides hence we will not accept any fence in-between. The main agenda was to help terrorists crossing border. But this split the nation into two. Removal of check posts was another such demand by sub nationalist parties. The terrorists lacked requisite documents were always in danger of being stopped by security forces. Hence PTM raised this issue in assemblies. It is worth mentioning that same PTM was given coverage by ANI and linked news channels. UN and amnesty international can see the human rights violations in FATA but can't see same in Palestine and Kashmir.

Entire purpose of this campaign was to tarnish image of Pakistan. For this purpose a number of smaller campaigns were launched. One out of such campaigns was Friends of Gilgit Baltistan. It was an NGO linked to savastra group. This NGO was neither registered with UN nor provided any back link to be traced back e.g. this NGO had no address. This NGO used to propagate negative propaganda against Pak army. Moreover an Anti-Dam campaign was also being run by this NGO. Fake journalists used to interview and record comments of fake human rights activists wanting Pakistan to quit building dams on their rivers. We all know that Gilgit Baltistan is the most peaceful area of Pakistan but it was propagated as an occupied territory whose people are demanding freedom. As a result the world got convinced and Pakistan was taken as an aggressor. In return India got the moral support of international community for construction of dams while same was denied to Pakistan.

It is also an irony that for 15 years India kept perusing her hegemonic designs and agendas using lies and propaganda, while Pakistan could not do much about it. Its primary reason seems lack of knowledge about presence of such gigantic infrastructure and well-articulated disinfo campaign. Hence Dis information campaign was and shall remain a strong threat to geographical as well as conceptual boundaries of Pakistan.

Conclusion

Although Post US withdrawal scenario has left Pakistan with Pandora box of troubles like terrorism, refugees and sanctions/ denial. However, by unity of effort, efficient policy and effective implementation we can always get out of this threat scenario. Need of time is devotion, dedication and being honest to the cause. As Quaid e Azam said “No power on earth can undo Pakistan”