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EDITORIAL

Pakistan and the USA

Pakistan is being subjected to bullying, coercion and intimidation. Its sovereignty is endangered through a well orchestrated plan by its own benefactor and strategic partner, the United States of America. It is being governed (rather misgoverned) by the most corrupt and incompetent government in power that was brought to power by NRO (National Reconciliation Order) drafted and crafted in total sync with the US and British establishment. It is a puppet and a pliable regime that would do America's bidding without fear or shame. So what is the future of people of Pakistan? Who shall they turn to since 99% of Pakistani politicians are corrupt to the core? What are the effects of Pakistan's destabilization in the entire region of not only South Asia but the rest of the world? This Issue 20 of Journal from the London Institute of South Asia (LISA) is thus dedicated to the Pakistan.

The unthinkable is happening. The United States is confronting the Pakistani military leadership of General Parvez Kayani. An extremely dangerous course to destabilise Pakistan is commencing. Can the outcome be any different than in Iran in 1979? But then, the Americans are naive; they never learn from their mistakes. Americans in their arrogance have never bothered about human life as long as it is not American or Israeli. Lives of hapless Iraqis, Afghanis, Pakistanis, Libyans, Lebanese, Palestinians, Africans or Arabs are bunch of Muslim extremists who must be exterminated and the War on Terror must continue to keep the US overwhelmingly strong and forever powerful.

Ambassador M K Bhadrakumar a career diplomat in the Indian Foreign Service had distinguished career assignments in many countries including Pakistan. He believes that the United States is instigating mutiny in the Pakistani army. He writes;- *"Quite obviously, the birds are coming to roost. Pakistani military is paying the price for the big access it provided to the US to interact with its officer corps within the framework of their so-called "strategic partnership". The Americans are now literally holding the Pakistani army by its jugular veins. This should serve as a big warning for all militaries of developing countries like India (which is also developing intensive "mil-to-mil" ties with the*

US). In our country at least, it is even terribly unfashionable to speak anymore of CIA activities. The NYT story flags in no uncertain terms that although Cold War is over, history has not ended.” His article ‘Instigating mutiny in the Pakistani Army’ is published in this issue and makes interesting analysis and pertinent observations.

Bruce Riedel, the former CIA officer who led the policy review for President Obama on Pakistan and Afghanistan in 2009, wrote in the “New York Times” last Friday, “America needs a new policy dealing with Pakistan. First, we must recognize that the two countries strategic interest are in conflict, not harmony, and will remain that way as long as Pakistan’s Army controls Pakistan’s strategic policies. We must contain the Pakistan Army’s ambitions until real civilian rule returns and Pakistanis set a new direction in their foreign policy”. The article’s lead line gave out the “Final Solution” about a new Pakistan Policy, “Containment”. Ikram Sehgal a senior journalist says, “Bruce having systematically reduced the country over the last decade into the horrible state we are in today, come “clean” and spell out the real aim, the “Balkanization of Pakistan”!

The US and Pakistan have major differences in policy objectives that make it impossible to ever have a strategic alliance. US does not need such alliance since they have subservient rulers in Pakistan. Not only that they are the most atrocious leadership that excels in nepotism and corruption of the worst kind.

The overwhelming public perception is that the US aim is to denuclearize Pakistan or at least have a say over the “command control” set-up and having failed to achieve its objectives in Afghanistan, the US is publicly attacking ISI for its contacts with Haqqani, and are accusing them of complicity in attacks on US troops. The majority in Pakistan see the Army and the ISI as Pakistan’s front line of defence and do not approve of the US thus tarring and feathering them. Mr Sehgal says that propping up corrupt leaders in Pakistan allows the US to pursue its core national interest even if it is detrimental Pakistan’s, e.g. impose Indian hegemony on us and finally the US sees the Pakistan Army and the ISI as roadblocks in pursuing their own core national interests. Bob Woodward’s book quoted US Vice President Biden articulating US policy in the region as aiming to (1) eliminate Al-Qaeda and (2) securing Pakistan’s nuclear

arsenal. Never contradicted by Biden, or for that matter any senior US official, US policy objectives remain the same while moving from engagement to containment.

US policy has horrendous ramifications. An unstable Pakistan, combined with the forces of insurgencies in India by the Naxalites, the rise of Dalits, the aspirations of Sikhs for a separate homeland (Khalistan) and the struggle of Kashmiris will be a total disaster for South Asia, and even the world beyond.

Every country's core national interests differ from each other. Strategic alliances can only happen when these interest are common or coincide. The core national interests of the US and Pakistan are different, what we actually have today is tactical alliance of convenience in as far as fighting and eliminating terrorists is concerned. There can never be a strategic alliance between unequal partners with differing national security imperatives; nevertheless it is vitally important for the US-Pakistan relationship to continue.

Afghanistan and the USA

“Ten years ago the U.S. and NATO invaded my country under the fake banners of women's rights, human rights, and democracy. But after a decade, Afghanistan still remains the most uncivil, most corrupt, and most war-torn country in the world. The consequences of the so-called war on terror has only been more bloodshed, crimes, barbarism, human rights and women's rights violations, which has doubled the miseries and sorrows of our people” (Monthly Review, October 7).

But reality on the ground tells a different story. The Taliban is in control of the vast majority of the country's provinces (according to Al Jazeera, October 7). Their near-complete control of the east and south, and constant encroachment elsewhere are only cemented by the regular news of their highly coordinated targeting of Afghanistan officials and foreign forces, even in the heart of Kabul. The Taliban's behaviour hardly suggests that it's a militant movement on the retreat, but rather a shadow government in waiting. In fact, 'shadow governors' is the term being used to refer to Taliban officials administering much of the country.

“Recent events strongly suggest that the US and its NATO allies are losing the war in Afghanistan to the Taliban: top collaborator officials are knocked off at the drop of a Taliban turban,” wrote US professor James Petras.

Afghanistan – India Strategic Partners

The strategic partnership agreement signed by Afghan President Hamid Karzai and Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh in New Delhi last week made front-page news across the region and beyond. The attention it attracted is hardly surprising: The agreement, the first of its kind for Afghanistan, includes the provision of training for Afghanistan's military and police, the establishment of social and cultural exchanges, and measures to enhance economic ties.

It also comes in the context of increasing tensions between Afghanistan and Pakistan. A day prior to the announcement, Karzai harshly criticized Islamabad for not supporting ongoing peace and stability operations in Afghanistan, accusing Pakistan's leaders of playing a "double game" when it came to the Taliban. Relations have been especially fraught since the killing in September of former Afghan President Burhanuddin Rabbani -- who headed Afghanistan's peace process -- allegedly by a group with close ties to Pakistani intelligence. From an economic perspective, India's move to develop the bilateral relationship with Afghanistan is smart business. From a geopolitical vantage point, it is also a wise play in its rivalry with China. *But the crucial question is whether India can tolerate the considerable risk, financial and otherwise, involved in building a relationship with a politically uncertain Afghanistan. Ironically, the success of India's natural resource relationship with Afghanistan will ultimately come down to the stability of Pakistan, the crucial land link between Afghanistan and India needed to transport raw materials efficiently from mine to refinery.*

Not much ingenuity is required to anticipate that India's interests will be severely damaged if ‘Pakistan’ is destabilised and ‘South Asia and Central Asia’ region becomes the arena of a “new cold war” stemming out the long-term NATO military presence in South and Central Asia. The Indian move to seek membership of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) promises to provide a much needed forum for New Delhi to partake

in regional processes where India gets to work with Russia, China and Pakistan.

Who Will Blink First: Islamabad or Washington?

Analysts view the verbal spats as both sides scrambling to have better leverage over the other. With Pakistan-US relations ebbing to a new low, Mr Rafiq offered a grim prognosis.

"The Obama administration's Pakistan policy is in total disarray," he said. "The US and Pakistan are engaged in a game of high-stakes brinkmanship as they battle to secure an Afghanistan endgame to their own favour," said Arif Rafiq, an analyst based in Washington.

"A real rupture is possible, especially if US forces enter Pakistani territory by helicopter or land and engage in hostilities with Pakistani forces." Omar R Quraishi, op-ed page editor of The Express Tribune, a Karachi-based English daily newspaper, agreed that the current standoff with the US "is the worst in living memory" and warned that it "does not augur well for Pakistan, not only in military terms but also in economic terms."

"The Americans have laid their cards out on the table and, at the very least, expect Pakistan to take measures to neutralise Haqqani network's ability to strike at American and NATO forces," Mr Quraishi said

Mr Rafiq said that "despite US pressure, the Pakistani military is unlikely to sever ties with the Haqqani network 10 years into a war that is close to its end". He added: "The recent Kabul attacks contribute to the Afghan insurgents' strategic advantage.

"Why wouldn't the Pakistani military continue to place its bets on the stronger horse?

"Washington is likely to be the first to blink as it can't afford sustained conflict with Islamabad." All-out hostility with Islamabad could result in greater militant attacks in Afghanistan and an upsurge in nationalist sentiment in Pakistan, emboldening military hardliners and perhaps even threatening the civilian politicians Washington hopes will eventually supplant the military

"Washington's options vis-à-vis Islamabad are limited." *Salman Masood*

U.S.-Pakistan Trust-Deficit Deepens

Richard Weitz

The recent U.S. claims that Pakistan's intelligence service have aided attacks against U.S. troops in Afghanistan; the discovery that Osama bin Laden had been living for years in a safe house in central Pakistan; the U.S. special forces operation to attack his Pakistani compound without notifying Pakistani authorities; the disputes over U.S. drone strikes on Pakistani territory: These and other controversies are surface manifestations of a deeper "trust deficit" between the United States and Pakistan.

On Sept. 22, then-Chairman of the U.S. Joint Chiefs of Staff Adm. Mike Mullen made explosive comments about the nature of the relationship between Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence and the Haqqani terrorist network, whose members -- thought to number some 10,000 to 15,000 fighters -- operate in Afghanistan from bases in Pakistan. Although Mullen and other U.S. officials had previously denounced the ISI's continuing links to the group, in his testimony before Congress, Mullen explicitly claimed that the ISI had directed and supported Haqqani attacks on U.S. targets in Afghanistan in recent weeks.

The Haqqani network supports some of the most brutally effective insurgents in Afghanistan and has links with al-Qaida. Its main base of operations is located in North Waziristan on the Afghan-Pakistan border, an area that remains outside the control of the Pakistani military. Observers differ on whether the Pakistani armed forces have the capacity to suppress the network if they wanted to, with many suspecting that Pakistani commanders either support its activities or fear that attempting to suppress the group would lead it to strike back at Pakistani targets. For its part, the ISI acknowledges having supported the Haqqani and other terrorist groups during the 1990s, but claims to have severed all ties with them since the Sept. 11 terrorist attacks.

Official Pakistani reaction to Mullen's remarks was swift and universally hostile. Nevertheless, the timing was right to air these differences in public. At the time of his remarks, Mullen was scheduled to retire in a few weeks, so he could afford to make more controversial statements than in the past. In addition, U.S. and NATO troop levels in Afghanistan are now falling from their peak levels. Pakistanis have undoubtedly begun to consider a post-NATO Afghanistan and the potential value of relying on their insurgent proxies to exercise influence there; Mullen's remarks could be considered a shot across the bow to influence those calculations.

The dispute takes place in the context of a relationship between the U.S. and Pakistani intelligence agencies that has been tense and complex for years. Though they distrust one another, the services continue to work together to identify and arrest suspected terrorists and to identify targets for U.S. drone strikes on Pakistani territory. But the bin Laden raid demonstrated that CIA agents also conduct independent covert operations in Pakistan on their own.

The CIA's drone strikes in Pakistan are also deeply unpopular there. Predator unmanned aerial vehicles armed with Hellfire missiles have reportedly killed hundreds of people in northwest Pakistan. These air strikes have both intensified and extended deeper into Pakistani territory since Barack Obama became president, as the Obama administration has sought to complement the increase in U.S. combat troops inside Afghanistan with intensified operations targeting Taliban sanctuaries in neighbouring Pakistan.

In public, Pakistani authorities have repeatedly called for an end to these attacks. The U.S. government and other sources insist that they cannot allow Afghan insurgents and international terrorists to enjoy the unimpeded use of safe havens on Pakistani soil to support operations in Afghanistan and elsewhere. There is considerable evidence that, in the past, the Pakistani authorities supported the drone operations, including by allowing the UAVs to operate from bases in Pakistani territory and by suggesting targets for attack.

Pakistani public opinion is clearly hostile to the United States in general and U.S. military operations within their country in particular. Pakistanis widely blame the U.S. war against the Taliban and other Muslim militants for bringing terrorism to Pakistan, which has suffered from suicide bombings and other civil strife in recent years. Pakistanis attribute the rise of suicide terrorism within Pakistan to Islamabad's support for U.S. counterterrorism policies, including the decision to deploy the Pakistani army to fight Islamists in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas. They note that the Pakistani armed forces have suffered more casualties fighting Islamist militants than have U.S. and coalition forces on the other side of the Afghan-Pakistan border. They see the increased U.S. drone and cross-border attacks in recent years as a form of coercive pressure to force the Pakistani government to crack down on the Taliban militants based in the tribal areas, which would further increase Pakistani military casualties and terrorist victims.

Furthermore, Pakistanis calculate that they have incurred enormous financial losses and other costs in terms of the elevated terrorist violence

that Pakistan has experienced since Islamabad's decision to support the U.S.-led Operation Enduring Freedom after Sept. 11. They note that U.S. aid covers only a small percentage of those costs, and that even now the U.S. Congress is cutting back on earlier aid pledges, many of which remain unimplemented.

Americans resent the fact that the U.S. remains deeply unpopular in Pakistan, despite the billions of dollars in aid they provide. They ascribe the rising violence in Pakistan to the country's deep socioeconomic problems, but also to the ISI's mistaken belief that they can promote "good" terrorists without suffering "bad" terrorism. Some extremist groups originally sponsored by Pakistan's security services as proxy forces against India -- such as Lashkar-e-Taiba and Jaish-e-Mohammed -- have later acted independently of their ISI handlers, including by conducting operations against Pakistani targets.

Furthermore, U.S. officials believe that the Pakistani military could easily crack down on the Afghan Taliban insurgents in the tribal areas if it really made an effort to do so, rather than pursuing a hedging strategy designed to keep its options open, even in the face of Pakistani-linked terrorism. Pakistanis criticize Washington for allegedly favouring New Delhi, noting for example Washington's refusal to negotiate a civil nuclear energy cooperation agreement with Pakistan similar to the one signed between the United States and India in 2008.

These differences are likely to deepen in coming years as both sides begin considering the end game in Afghanistan: The United States must above all establish a stable environment as it withdraws its troops, while Pakistan will seek to establish a dominant position to replace the departing Americans.

Unfortunately, there is no easy way to reconcile these differing priorities. Rebuilding trust between the two nations will require many years, and possibly multiple generations, to achieve. In the meantime, the current status quo of wary cooperation and mutual mistrust is likely to continue.

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Are we at War with Pakistan?

Justin Raimondo

In the days before the Empire, generals – particularly Chairmen of the Joint Chiefs – kept their mouths shut. The *Founders'* justified fears of military intrusion into the political realm were still present in the American consciousness, and the idea that an American general might try to influence policy directly, by making public statements on controversial political topics, was considered outside the norm. Today, however, no one is shocked by Admiral Mullen's *testimony* before the Senate Armed Services Committee that *we are, for all intents and purposes, already at war with Pakistan:*

“Extremist organizations serving as proxies of the government of Pakistan are attacking Afghan troops and civilians as well as U.S. soldiers. For example, we believe the Haqqani Network – which has long enjoyed the support and protection of the Pakistani government and is, in many ways, a strategic arm of Pakistan's Inter-Services Intelligence Agency – is responsible for the September 13th attacks against the U.S. Embassy in Kabul.

“There is ample evidence confirming that the Haqqanis were behind the June 28th attack against the Inter-Continental Hotel in Kabul and the September 10th truck bomb attack that killed five Afghans and injured another 96 individuals, 77 of whom were U.S. soldiers. History teaches us that it is difficult to defeat an insurgency when fighters enjoy a sanctuary outside national boundaries, and we are seeing this again today. The Quetta Shura and the Haqqani Network are hampering efforts to improve security in Afghanistan, spoiling possibilities for broader reconciliation, and frustrating U.S.-Pakistan relations. The actions by the Pakistani government to support them – actively and passively – represent a growing problem that is undermining U.S. interests and may violate international norms, potentially warranting sanction. In supporting these groups, the government of Pakistan, particularly the Pakistani Army, continues to jeopardize Pakistan's opportunity to be a respected and prosperous nation with genuine regional and international influence.”

If the evidence is so “ample,” why didn't Mullen reveal any of it during the course of his testimony? It's “classified,” which means we *ordinary mortals* aren't entitled to see it: we just have to take their word for it. In this context, however, their word isn't worth a hill of beans.

The earlier part of Mullen's *testimony* was a paean to the "success" of US/NATO efforts in Afghanistan: except for a few *minor glitches*, he strongly implied, everything's coming up roses. How, then, to explain the brazen attacks on the *Inter-Continental Hotel* in Kabul, and the *Taliban strike* at the US embassy, which penetrated to the very core of the American presence in the country – the Afghan equivalent of Iraq's "*Green Zone*"? It must be the ISI, Pakistan's intelligence agency – yeah, *that's the ticket!*

Facing questions about his competence, and that of his generals, Mullen struck back with a *conspiracy theory* that explains away – or, at least, explains – the severity of these attacks, which fatally undermine his Pollyanna-ish narrative. The Obama administration has been *laying the groundwork* for this particular conspiracy theory for quite some time, peppering the Pakistanis with accusations of complicity in Taliban attacks on US forces – albeit without producing any public evidence. *You'll recall that the President himself*, during the 2008 campaign, *explicitly threatened to strike at Pakistan – and even John McCain was horrified.*

The Justice Department is playing a key role in the anti-Pakistan offensive, utilizing the infamous *David Headley* – a DEA snitch and "former" terrorist operative – to fill in the details of Pakistan's alleged perfidy. Headley claims he was trained by the ISI at one of several terrorist training camps run by a Kashmiri separatist group, the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), and that Pakistan was the real source of the terror in Mumbai. *Go here* for the suspiciously murky details of his convoluted story, but suffice to say that I'd sooner trust the word of a used car dealer who's down to his last dime. While in the pay of the DEA, Headley travelled around the world committing and planning terrorist acts – but you're a "conspiracy theorist" if you think this throws a shadow of suspicion on his character, his motives, or his "testimony."

With military ties *tightening* between the US and India – Pakistan's ancient enemy – one thing is clear: Washington is tilting toward New Delhi. This shift began in 2006, when India and the US agreed to cooperate on the development of "civil" nuclear power. However, as the Council on Foreign Relations *reports*, under the terms of the agreement "India would be eligible to buy U.S. dual-use nuclear technology, including materials and equipment that could be used to enrich uranium or reprocess plutonium, potentially creating the material for nuclear bombs."

Pakistan and India have come close to a nuclear exchange on several *occasions* over the years. With the *Hindu ultra-nationalists* who wield increasing political clout frothing at the mouth for war, the introduction of

such technology poses a deadly danger to the entire region. *A nuclear sword of Damocles, forged by the US government, is hanging over the heads of Pakistanis – and we wonder why they hate us.*

The Americans are playing a very dangerous game with Pakistan, doing everything in their power to *undermine* the elected government, while at the same time decrying the threat of “extremism” in that nation. But they can’t have it both ways: *if they fear destabilization, then why are they doing their utmost to provoke it?* You’d almost have to be a “conspiracy theorist” to make sense out of it.

We are fighting an *unwinnable war* in the region, one that doesn’t serve our interests, either *geopolitical* or *economic*, and we’ve tasked our military with solving an *insoluble problem*: how to win over a people whose land we’ve occupied. Our military leaders, in response, are forced to invent plausible reasons explaining why they’ve been unable to accomplish the impossible. The *blame Pakistan narrative* serves that purpose admirably.

The ass-covering isn’t limited to the Afghan war, however, as Mullen’s remarks made all too clear. In warning against letting the alleged problem with Pakistan fester, unacknowledged, Mullen told the Senators:

“History teaches us that it is difficult to defeat an insurgency when fighters enjoy a sanctuary outside national boundaries, and we are seeing this again today.”

A revealing comment if ever there was one: the US military is still burning with resentment over *their defeat* in the Vietnam war, and they blame the politicians for not letting them “win” by bombing the entire region into submission. Mullen is signalling to Congress and the civilian leadership that the military isn’t going to stand by, this time, and let itself be railroaded into taking the blame for another humiliating defeat. Mullen’s message to Congress, and the White House, is clear: let us go after the Pakistanis – or else....

The Obama administration, already intimidated by all things military, is going along with the program. What the anti-Pakistan campaign we’ve been subjected to in recent months amounts to is that the Obama administration is angling for the equivalent of Richard Nixon’s *invasion of Cambodia* – an act that ended in disaster for all concerned, including the US. Who knows what *monsters* will rise in the wake of our invasion of Pakistan

Mapping U.S. Pakistan Relations: Present and Future

C. Christine Fair

Officials and voters in the United States often cite a "*trust deficit*" to explain the perennially tumultuous, frequently tortured, and always tenuous relationship between the United States and Pakistan over the last ten years. Many are *wont to point* out how the United States "failed Pakistan" throughout its history beginning in 1962 when it armed Pakistan's nemesis India during the latter's war with China. This narrative of Washington routinely disappointing Pakistan moves through its failure to support Pakistan in its wars with India in 1965 and 1971, and crescendos with the final straw of perceived perfidy: the American decision to invoke the *Pressler Amendment* sanctions in 1990 as a result of Pakistani efforts to develop nuclear weapons. This move notoriously deprived Pakistan of a fleet of F-16s for which they had already paid. However, this *history* is at best misleading, often wrong, and does little to forge a better understanding of Pakistan and the limits of engaging the country's political and military leadership.

While it is true that the United States supported India in 1962 and did little to support Pakistan in its 1965 or 1971 wars with India despite being allied to Pakistan through the *Central Treaty Organization* and the *Southeast Asia Treaty Organization*. Do treaty partners have an obligation to assist a member state which commences hostilities? Second, despite being a treaty partner of the United States, Pakistan did not go to Vietnam or Korea. In fact, the Pakistanis demurred from declaring China to be an aggressor in the former conflict. And with respect to the F-16 canard, *Pakistan helped forge the Pressler Amendment*, because this instrument allowed the United States to arm Pakistan during the anti-Soviet *jihad* while Pakistan continued developing nuclear weapons.

Few U.S. policymakers or analysts seem remotely aware that Washington first sanctioned Pakistan in *April of 1979*, under the Symington amendments to the Foreign Assistance Act of 1961, or that Pakistan viewed the passage of the Pressler Amendment as an *important victory for Pakistan's Ministry of Foreign Affairs*, because the legislation provided a simple way to manage two competing interests: Pakistan's desire to continue developing nuclear weapons on the one hand, and American requirements to provide security assistance to known proliferators in

contravention of U.S. law on the other. From April of 1979 until the 1985 passage of Pressler, military assistance to Pakistan was enabled by a presidential waiver by which the American president attested that providing security assistance to Pakistan is in U.S. national interest *even though* Pakistan remained noncompliant with U.S. requirements for such assistance. The *Pressler Amendment* essentially moved the red lines of sanctionable nuclear proliferation under the Foreign Assistance Act to a simple certification by the U.S. president that Pakistan did not possess a nuclear bomb.

In the end, Pakistan made a strategic calculation, and chose nuclear capabilities over F-16s. Pakistan knew full well that the time would come when Pakistan would no longer remain indispensable to U.S. interests and that the president would refuse to certify Pakistan as nuclear weapons-free, and thus bring into force the sanctions that resembled the sanctions that were imposed more than decade before in 1979.

Thus, what bedevils U.S.-Pakistan relations is not a pervasive distrust of the other; rather, the two states want fundamentally different things for South Asia, and their strategic interests have only minor -- and quickly vanishing -- overlap. The *two countries' intelligence agencies operate against each other* as much if not more than they cooperate with each other. Pakistan fights its Islamist militant foes while helping those that target U.S. troops even while America redoubles its resolve to kill Islamabad's proxies. All of this activity plays out *across a backdrop of some \$20 billion dollars*, paid overtly to Pakistan, ostensibly to support the war on terrorism rather than undermine the same.

Pakistan's strategic elite are right to opine that the Americans were astonishingly ignorant of the region and have a simplistic view of Pakistan's security perceptions vis-à-vis Afghanistan and India. In quick succession, Washington broke three critical promises made to President Pervez Musharraf in September 2001, and likely did not understand the importance of these early missteps.

First, Washington promised that the Northern Alliance would not take Kabul. By December 2001 the Northern Alliance did precisely that. Washington failed to understand that the *Northern Alliance had been nurtured and aided by India*. From Rawalpindi's perspective, the United States had handed the keys of Kabul to the Indians. To compound matters, the interim Afghan government was dominated by the Northern Alliance. *It took the 2005 elections to alter this significantly -- but not completely.*

Second, the *United States assured President Musharraf* that it would take a more active role in resolving the conflict over the disputed province of Kashmir. While such promises were likely absurd in the first instance, the United States quickly drew back from that commitment as well. Over the years, the United States has taken little public interest in India's *continued mishandling of Kashmiri Muslims' grievances* or of the *vast challenges its Muslim populations face*.

Third, the United States assured Pakistan that its "strategic assets" (its nuclear program) would remain intact. While technically this pledge was honoured, it was eviscerated by *the 2005 U.S.-India civilian nuclear deal* and concomitant guarantee that the *United States would help India become a global power*. The nuclear deal was all the more problematic because-despite its name-it was *designed to assist India's development of nuclear weapons directly and indirectly* as a part of U.S. grand strategy to manage China's regional influence with a growing Indian counterweight. American declarations of such support to India no doubt rankled Pakistan. By 2005,

Pakistan's substantial facilitation of the U.S. war in Afghanistan had galvanized a *sanguineous insurgency that spread from the tribal areas throughout Pakistan*. Admittedly, though, this insurgency was fuelled by *erstwhile proxies* who turned their guns against the state, exposing the fragility of *Pakistan's continued reliance on militants as part of its strategy to secure its interests in India as well as Afghanistan*.

While Pakistan was doing a U-turn on its U-turn against the Taliban and while the Afghan Taliban were gearing up for a reinvigorated insurgent campaign, the United States and NATO blithely assumed that major combat operations were complete in Afghanistan. *Historians will decide*, however, if Pakistan had ever made a genuine change with regards to the Taliban in the first instance, and whether that ostensible shift was intended to be permanent.

The United States, meanwhile, remained insouciant about the developments in Pakistan. Even as it became increasingly clear that Pakistan continued supporting the Afghan Taliban and the notorious Haqqani network, the United States depended ever more upon Pakistan for its logistical support through ground and air lines of communication to supply the war. Moreover, Washington needed Pakistan to help it *continue to capture al-Qaeda operatives*. Washington simply did not want to badger Pakistan about the Taliban. And Washington did not admonish Pakistan for supporting groups like Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), *which were killing*

Americans in Afghanistan since 2004. It took the 2008 Mumbai carnage to convince Washington that such groups are not simply "India's problem."

As the Americans grasped the problem of the Taliban, it shifted its focus from al-Qaeda -- long vanquished from Afghanistan -- and made the Afghan Taliban its enemy to defeat in Afghanistan. However, *despite efforts to bolster a northern distribution route through Central Asia*, the surge that the United States inserted into Afghanistan in 2009 *only increased Washington's dependence upon Pakistan* even while Pakistan was becoming ever more acutely the *source* of the Taliban's strength.

As this farce unfolded, Pakistan concluded that the current situation in Afghanistan was deeply dystopian. For one thing, not only had the Americans embraced Pakistan's enemy as its key South Asian ally, India had taken advantage of the American security umbrella to re-establish its presence in Afghanistan, to Pakistan's deepest vexation. While Pakistan had concluded that America's allies were its enemies (e.g. India), America's enemies were increasingly becoming those very groups that Pakistan embraced as its own allies -- the Taliban, the Haqqani Network, and savage terrorist groups like LeT.

Washington was slow to understand the changing currents. *President Bush remained enamoured of President Musharraf* and his purported commitment to turning back the tide of Islamist extremism, even while his government was busy forging peace deals with a variety of murderous militants in Pakistan's tribal areas and reinvigorating ties with the Afghan Taliban. The United States remained committed to the belief that through military and financial allurements Pakistan's fundamental strategic calculus could be changed: that it could become a partner for peace in Afghanistan and that it could reconcile its vast differences with India and accept India's obvious and inevitable hegemony over the region. The United States and its officials simply could not grasp that to do so would be tantamount to defeat for Pakistan generally and the army in particular, which above all else seeks to retard India's rise and its presumed desire to render Pakistan little more than a nuclear-armed Bangladesh. Worse, by patronizing Pakistan's military, Pakistan's citizenry and political systems became ever more disempowered.

After a full decade of the global war on terror, the *United States has finally concluded what the Pakistanis had long known: our interests and allies are incompatible.* As the American endgame in Afghanistan looms, the American government and polity alike are increasingly unwilling to

tolerate Pakistan 's support of the very organizations killing American troops and attacking its embassy.

Pakistan, for its part, is tired of participating in a war effort with the United States -- albeit on highly selective terms -- that is fomenting increased domestic tension, while the United States seems deaf or indifferent to its security concerns including those centered on India's defence modernization and the U.S. role facilitating it; the impact of the U.S.-India civilian nuclear deal for Pakistan's own nuclear program; the nature of India's presence in Afghanistan and Pakistani beliefs that India is supporting subversive elements in Pakistan from Afghanistan, among other related issues

The next decade of U.S.-Pakistan relations

While Pakistan's leaders issue statements full of bravado that it no longer needs the United States because China will *step into the breach*, astute Pakistanis know that this is manna peeled to appease a wary population burdened with economic hardship, an uncertain future, and ceaseless violence -- all of which are deferred or ignored by an indifferent political class. China never helped Pakistan during any war with India (1947, 1965, 1971, and 1999) and shares international concerns about terrorist groups *operating from or on Pakistani soil*. In contrast to American grant-based aid, China's assistance is generally loan-based. Moreover, while Pakistan has correctly assessed that it does not need American aid, it is loathe to concede that it still needs *America's support at the International Monetary Fund (IMF)*, which is perennially allowing Pakistan to abscond from its own commitments to fiscal reform-including expanding its tax net. Pakistan has correctly concluded that the world sees Pakistan as too dangerous to fail and will not encourage the IMF or other multilateral institutions to cut off Pakistan's economic life support. However, these policies have miserably failed Pakistanis, the vast majority of whom are hard-working, *reject violence*, and deserve a better future. *Pakistan's recent brinkmanship with the IMF* will no doubt be leveraged for even greater concessions, because of Pakistan's confidence that the world will not let Pakistan fail. Apparently limping along in a financially comatose state satisfies Pakistan's leaders, who are insulated from the fiscal woes of ordinary Pakistan.

But Washington also still needs Pakistan. While in principle Pakistan could offer opportunities as partner for peace and stability in the region, such naive optimism cannot be justified amidst the accumulating evidence to the contrary. However, the most pressing U.S. national security interests

are resident in Pakistan -- not Afghanistan or in Iran: nuclear weapons, a raft of terrorist and insurgent groups with varying degrees of official support, the spectre of terrorists acquiring nuclear weapons, and evolving fears about Islamist militants *infiltrating the ranks and officer corps of Pakistan's armed forces*.

The United States and Pakistan need to forge a more sustainable relationship based upon a cold assessment of reality. Washington's khaki addiction has undermined U.S. interests, and has *undermined prospects for Pakistani ownership of its own war on terror, as the army is seen as a collaborator with the United States -- if not a rental army*. This perception has no doubt arisen in part because of the way in which the army handled its internal operations. *President Musharraf was famous in the early years of the war for saying that Pakistan was fighting America's war on America's behest*. The only way forward is to think smaller, and focus on outcomes of democratization and human development rather than strategic shifts. A lower profile is critical, as the United States could hardly be more despised in Pakistan. The Soviet Union may offer a model of engagement: contain the threat, invest in opportunities for change, while preparing for the worst at home and abroad.

The worst outcome is a Pakistan that has no investment in the West and consequently nothing to lose. Such a Pakistan -- backed into a corner -- may be much more dangerous than it is now. The United States must work with its allies and Pakistan's allies to ensure that Pakistan does not become a North Korea that is increasingly dangerous, unpredictable and opaque to all. This will require fortitude in Washington. The U.S. Congress will have to resist its strongest impulse to simply *cut off Pakistan*. There is simply too much to lose by choosing any path other than engagement, however difficult and maddening such a path may be.

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Instigating Mutiny in the Pakistani Army

M K Bhadrakumar

The unthinkable is happening. The United States is confronting the Pakistani military leadership of General Parvez Kayani. An extremely dangerous course to destabilise Pakistan is commencing. Can the outcome be any different than in Iran in 1979? But then, the Americans are like Bourbons; they never learn from their mistakes.

The NYT report today is unprecedented. The report quotes US officials not less than 7 times, which is extraordinary, including “an American military official involved with Pakistan for many years”; “a senior American official”, etc. The dispatch is cleverly drafted to convey the impression that a number of Pakistanis have been spoken to, but reading between the lines, conceivably, these could also probably have been indirect attribution by the American sources. A careful reading, in fact, suggests that the dispatch is almost entirely based on deep briefing by some top US intelligence official with great access to records relating to the most highly sensitive US interactions with the Pak army leadership and who was briefing on the basis of instructions from the highest level of the US intelligence apparatus.

The report no doubt underscores that the US intelligence penetration of the Pak defence forces goes very deep. It is no joke to get a Pakistani officer taking part in an exclusive briefing by Kayani at the National Defence University to share his notes with the US interlocutors – unless he is their “mole”. This is like a morality play for we Indians, too, where the US intelligence penetration is ever broadening and deepening.

Quite obviously, the birds are coming to roost. Pakistani military is paying the price for the big access it provided to the US to interact with its officer corps within the framework of their so-called “strategic partnership”. The Americans are now literally holding the Pakistani army by its jugular veins. This should serve as a big warning for all militaries of developing countries like India (which is also developing intensive “mil-to-mil” ties with the US). In our country at least, it is even terribly unfashionable to speak anymore of CIA activities. The NYT story flags in no uncertain terms that although Cold War is over, history has not ended.

What are the objectives behind the NYT story? In sum, any whichever way we look at it, they all are highly diabolic. One, US is rubbishing army chief Parvez Kayani and ISI head Shuja Pasha who at one time were its own blue-eyed boys and whose successful careers and post-retirement extensions in service the Americans carefully choreographed fostered with a pliant civilian leadership in Islamabad, but now when the crunch time comes, the folks are not “delivering”. In American culture, as they say, there is nothing like free lunch. The Americans are livid that their hefty “investment” has turned out to be a waste in every sense. And, it was a very painstakingly arranged investment, too. In short, the Americans finally realise that they might have made a miscalculation about Kayani when they promoted his career.

Two, US intelligence estimation is that things can only go from bad to worse in US-Pakistan relations from now onward. All that is possible to salvage the relationship has been attempted. John Kerry, Hillary Clinton, Mike Mullen – the so-called “friends of Pakistan” in the Barack Obama administration – have all come to Islamabad and turned on the charm offensive. But nothing worked. Then came CIA boss Leon Panetta with a deal that like Marlon Brando said in the movie *Godfather*, Americans thought the Pakistanis cannot afford to say ‘No’ to, but to their utter dismay, Kayani showed him the door.

The Americans realise that Kayani is fighting for his own survival – and so is Pasha – and that makes him jettison his “pro-American” mindset and harmonise quickly with the overwhelming opinion within the army, which is that the Americans pose a danger to Pakistan’s national security and it is about time that the military leadership draws a red line. Put simply, Pakistan fears that the Americans are out to grab independent course in terms of the country’s perceived legitimate interests.

Three, there is a US attempt to exploit the growing indiscipline within the Pak army and, if possible, to trigger a mutiny, which will bog down the army leadership in a serious “domestic” crisis that leaves no time for them for the foreseeable future to play any forceful role in Afghanistan. In turn, it leaves the Americans a free hand to pursue their own agenda. Time is of the essence of the matter and the US desperately wants direct access to the Taliban leadership so as to strike a deal with them without the ISI or Hamid Karzai coming in between.

The prime US objective is that Taliban should somehow come to a compromise with them on the single most crucial issue of permanent US

military bases in Afghanistan. The negotiations over the strategic partnership agreement with Karzai's government are at a critical point. The Taliban leadership of Mullah Omar robustly opposes the US proposal to set up American and NATO bases on their country. The Americans are willing to take the Taliban off the UN's sanctions list and allow them to be part of mainstream Afghan political life, including in the top echelons of leadership, provided Mullah Omar and the Quetta Shura agree to play ball.

The US tried its utmost to get Kayani to bring the Taliban to the reconciliation path. When these attempts failed, they tried to establish direct contact with the Taliban leadership. But ISI has been constantly frustrating the US intelligence activities in this direction and reminding the US to stick to earlier pledges that Pakistan would have a key role in the negotiations with the Taliban. The CIA and Pentagon have concluded that so long as the Pakistani military leadership remains stubborn, they cannot advance their agenda in Afghanistan.

Now, how do you get Kayani and the ISI to back off? The US knows the style of functioning of the Pakistani military. The army chief essentially works within a collegium of the 9 corps commanders. Thus, US has concluded that it also has to tackle the collegium. The only way is to set the army's house on fire so that the generals get distracted by the fire-dousing and the massive repair work and housecleaning that they will be called upon to undertake as top priority for months if not years to come. To rebuild a national institution like the armed forces takes years and decades.

Four, the US won't mind if Kayani is forced to step aside from his position and the Pakistani military leadership breaks up in disarray, as it opens up windows of opportunities to have Kayani and Pasha replaced by more "dependable" people – Uncle Sam's own men. There is every possibility that the US has been grooming its favourites within the Pak army corps for all contingencies. Pakistan is too important as a "key non-NATO ally". The CIA is greatly experienced in masterminding coup d'état, including "in-house" coup d'état.

Almost all the best and the brightest Pak army officers have passed through the US military academies at one time or another. Given the sub-continent's middle class mindset and post-modern cultural ethos, elites in civil or military life take it for granted that US backing is a useful asset for furthering career. The officers easily succumb to US intelligence entrapment. Many such "sleepers" should be existing there within the Pak army officer corps. The big question remains: has someone in Washington thought through the game plan to tame the Pakistani military? The heart of

the matter is that there is virulent “anti-Americanism” within the Pak armed forces. Very often it overlaps with Islamist sympathies. Old-style left wing “anti-Americanism” is almost non-existent in the Pakistani armed forces – as in Ayaz Amir’s time. These tendencies in the military are almost completely in sync with the overwhelming public opinion in the country as well.

Over the past 3 decades at least, Pakistani army officers have come to be recruited almost entirely from the lower middle class – as in our country – and not from the landed aristocracy as in the earlier decades up to the 1970s. These social strata are quintessentially right wing in their ideology, nationalistic, and steeped in religiosity that often becomes indistinguishable from militant religious faith.

Given the overall economic crisis in Pakistan and the utterly discredited Pakistani political class (as a whole) and countless other social inequities and tensions building up in an overall climate of cascading violence and great uncertainties about the future gnawing the mind of the average Pakistani today, a lurch toward extreme right wing Islamist path is quite possible. The ingredients in Pakistan are almost nearing those prevailing in Iran in the Shah’s era.

The major difference so far has been that Pakistani armed forces are “rooted in the soil” as a national institution, which the public respected to the point of revering it, which on its part, sincerely or not, also claimed to be the Praetorian Guards of the Pakistani state. Now, in life, destroying comes very easy. Unless the Americans have some very bright ideas about how to go about nation-building in Pakistan, going by their track record in neighbouring Afghanistan, their present course to discredit the military and incite its disintegration or weakening at the present crisis point, is fraught with immense dangers. The instability in the region may suit the US’ geo-strategy for consolidating its (and NATO’s) military presence in the region but it will be a highly self-centred, almost cynical, perspective to take on the problem, which has dangerous, almost explosive, potential for regional security. Also, who it is that is in charge of the Pakistan policy in Washington today, we do not know. To my mind, Obama administration doesn’t have a clue since Richard Holbrooke passed away as to how to handle Pakistan.

The disturbing news in recent weeks has been that all the old “Pakistan hands” in the USG have left the Obama administration. It seems there has been a steady exodus of officials who knew and understood how Pakistan works, and the depletion is almost one hundred percent. That leaves an open field for the CIA to set the policies. The CIA boss Leon Panetta (who

is tipped as defence secretary) is an experienced and ambitious politico who knows how to pull the wires in the Washington jungle – and, to boot it, he has an Italian name. He is unlikely to forgive and forget the humiliation he suffered in Rawalpindi last Friday. The NYT story suggests that it is not in his blood if he doesn't settle scores with the Rawalpindi crowd. If Marlon Brando were around, he would agree.

Ambassador M K Bhadrakumar was a career diplomat in the Indian Foreign Service. His assignments included the Soviet Union, South Korea, Sri Lanka, Germany, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Uzbekistan, Kuwait and Turkey.

The Haqqanis

The Haqqanis are based in North Waziristan, the north-west Pakistani tribal region straddling the border with Afghanistan. But their influence extends to the Paktia, Paktika and Khost provinces of Afghanistan. Estimated to have 10,000 to 15,000 fighters, the Haqqani network is described by the US as its most potent foe in the region

Pakistanis say that they have little operational control over the Haqqanis, who have allegiance to Mullah Muhammed Omar, the Taliban leader. Pakistan has consistently balked at US demands to launch a military operation in North Waziristan, fearing a fierce blowback inside the country. But the Haqqani network is also seen as a counterweight available to Pakistanis to any future Indian influence in Afghanistan once US troops leave the region. Pakistani officials and analysts say that as the US efforts against the Taliban have faltered in Afghanistan, it has started to use Pakistan as a scapegoat for its own failures.

"You cannot afford to alienate Pakistan," Hina Rabbani Khar, the Pakistani foreign minister, said in New York last week on the sidelines of the UN General Assembly session. "If they are choosing to do so, it will be at their own cost," Ms Khar said, adding that "anything which is said about an ally, about a partner, publicly to recriminate it, to humiliate it, is not acceptable"

Darkness behind Deceptive Screen of India Shining

Asif Haroon Raja

On one hand India claiming to be champions of democracy, secularism and human rights propagates that India is shining, on the other it suffers from highest rate of poverty, illiteracy, infant mortality, inequalities in society. There is unbounded poverty, mass illiteracy and entrenched social divides. Social system of India is founded on inequality, intolerance, religious extremism. It is perhaps the most unequal country on the planet, with a tiny elite engorged on best education, biggest landholdings, and largest incomes. Those born on bottom rungs of social hierarchy suffer a legacy of caste bigotry, rural servitude and class discrimination. Half of Indian nation sleep on roads while 65% of India's rural population defecate in the open causing health problems. 2.1 million children under five die in India due to poor sanitation conditions, while 1.5 million children are at risk of becoming malnourished because of rising food prices. Malnutrition counts for 50% of child deaths. 230 million Indians living in rural areas are undernourished. This is highest figure for any country in the world. National Commission for Enterprises in Unorganized Section (NCEUS) has established that 77% Indian population live on less than Rupees 20/ per day. 88% of Dalits and 84% Muslims are living in abject poverty. Only 5% lead life of luxury and ostentation.

Female genocide is another curse in India which afflicts all Hindu castes including the educated elite class. Ratio of girls and boys has dropped sharply to 3:10. A research conducted by EPCAT in India highlighted upsurge in child sex tourism in India. Trafficking of minor girls as little as 7-8 years old has increased by 30%. Child sex is rampant in Mumbai, Kerala, Kolkata because of poverty. Daily cases of rapes in New Delhi are among the highest in world capital cities. 2000 police stations out of 14000 in India are not in control of police.

Out of 759 million illiterate adults in the world, India has the highest number. While numbers of poor people have dropped in China by 70% since 1990, in India the numbers have increased by 5%. Interestingly, India lags behind China and Pakistan in social indicators of hunger and poverty. In World Poverty-Hunger Index of 88 countries, India ranks 62 while Pakistan is at 45 and China at 31. Some states in India have much higher level of hunger and malnutrition than Haiti. While there is widespread abject poverty, hunger and malnutrition and very low levels of

human development in India, it is resorting to massive arms build and competing with China and trying to overawe Pakistan with its military might.

Unfortunately India chooses to spend more on military than on fighting hunger, poverty and disease. Ruling Hindu Brahmans in their quest to become world power are indulging in arms race and letting millions die of hunger each year. Yet India, the world's largest democracy is not prepared to admit its fault lines and grave social issues and keep humming the tune of India shining.

In 2009 when Indian leaders were crowing the loudest that India is shining and its economy booming and has become an economic power house, 175 Indians died of starvation and thirst. According to Tata Institute of Social Sciences, in the last one decade, 200,000 Indian farmers committed suicide since they had come under huge debt due to heavy interest rate and were unable to repay.

India is an ethnic museum where over hundred nationalities speaking different languages and dialects having different religions, cultures, customs and traditions, dress code and living styles and psychological makeup reside. It is owing to such extreme diversities in identities and historical backgrounds of every nationality that India till today has been unable to weld into a single nation. People of Uttar Pradesh, Madhya Pradesh, Haryana, Rajasthan, Bihar, Manipur, Bihar, Assam, Maghalaya, Mizoram, Chhatisgarh, Jharkand, Nagaland, Bodo, Tamil Nadu, Gujarat and East Punjab are deprived of basic human rights and are virtually treated as slaves. These nations are consistently struggling for the attainment of their democratic rights since 1947. It is an artificial state which is bound to fragment. Austria-Hungary, USSR, Czechoslovakia and Yugoslavia are examples. CIA predicted in 2009 that India will not exist by 2015.

The rulers have all along used brutal force to suppress the voice of the disenfranchised class and to forcibly keep it within Indian Union. When the patience of the deprived Indian states wore out they were forced to pick up arms against uncompromising and heartless central government which has always been in the hands of Brahmans. 37 insurgencies and separatist movements are raging in India out of which Maoists movement is the most dangerous. It reflects an acute sense of alienation and frustration of the people. They picked up arms when their genuine socio-politico-economic or religious grievances were not attended to by the state and state forces resorted to brutal force to choke their voices. While the Kashmiris, Sikhs and Assamese are struggling for their political rights and

self determination, seven states in the north east and Maoists/Naxalites are fighting for socio-economic justice.

Out of 1.7 billion population of which 83% are Hindus, over 39% of dispossessed Indians live below poverty line. They look towards Maoists to provide them succour. Maoists in India have gained influence over 20 states, affecting 220 districts, including sensitive Red Corridor in which 80% of nuclear and missile sites are located and where security forces are totally helpless against them. It accounts for 40% Indian Territory. Indian top leadership admits that Naxalites pose single largest threat to India's security. Since 2005, average incidence of violence by Naxals is 1500. Maoist movement is gaining momentum in both rural and urban areas and has also got associated with Maoists in neighboring Nepal. Affected areas include eastern belt, Bihar, West Bengal, Jharkand, Chhattisgarh, Andhra Pradesh, parts of Orissa, Kerala and Madhya Pradesh.

Diabolical caste system in India which is considered by Hindu Brahmins an integral part of Hinduism is among the biggest factors which has kept the Indians divided and a great majority disadvantaged. Besides perverse caste system, Hindutva championed by right wing radical parties like RSS, BJP, VHP, Overseas VHP, Shiv Sena, Bajrang Dal, Abhinav Bharat, Sanatan Sanashtha, Hindu Students Council, all under Sangh Pariwar is another social distortion which fuels extremism and social injustice in India. Adherents of Hindutva closely associated with Indian serving and retired Army officers view non-Hindus residing in India as impure and aliens and treat them as second rated citizens. Even Dalits belonging to lower caste of Hindus are despised and are cruelly treated. Those not subscribing to philosophy of Hindutva are dealt with savagely by extremist Hindu groups.

Muslims, Sikhs, Christians and Dalits are their biggest targets. Savagery of Hindu zealots was on full display on 06 December 1992 when they demolished Babri mosque in Ayodhya and massacred Muslims in thousands. 300,000 Christians have been murdered in Nagaland since 1948 and many have been forcibly converted to Hinduism. Over 100,000 Muslims have been slaughtered in IHK and 3000 in Ahmadabad in 2002 under state patronage. 250,000 Sikhs have been killed since 1984. 52,268 Sikhs are held as political prisoners without charge and trial to avenge murder of Indra Gandhi. Thousands of prisoners of minorities are rotting in jails.

Well over 1.5 million security forces are involved in combating insurgents and freedom fighters within India and in Indian Held Kashmir (IHK) and not a single movement have been defeated. With such a bleak domestic

security situation and with so many social fault lines, India should have diverted its full attention towards home front rather than getting involved in expensive clandestine operations and in military build up. India has failed to make best use of its high economic growth to reduce poverty and improve standard of living of the dispossessed. India might be an emerging economic power, but it is way behind Pakistan and Bangladesh in providing basic sanitation facilities to its people. India should compete with China and Pakistan in fighting poverty, hunger and disease rather than indulging in arms race or wasting resources in fighting terrorism. The best cure of terrorism is alleviation of sufferings of the poor masses.

**Would Obama try for a settlement
with Taliban before the election?**

George Friedman

Well, according to what's been said by the administration, they are attempting to negotiate with the Taliban right now. I think, either way you play it politically, it's equally troubling for President Obama if he doesn't have peace by the time the election, the charge can be made that he has an open-ended war, that he doubled-down on Bush's policy, and be criticized by both sides of the spectrum. If he does make an agreement, it will be charged that he capitulated to the enemy. He's going to have to live with it either way. The worst thing that could happen to him, is to be suffering a series of significant defeats with large and growing American casualties, Americans captured on the ground and things like that. That is the thing that he is going to have a great deal of difficulty with. Its not that he isn't going to have difficulty no matter what he does, but that's his worst-case scenario. He really, if there is a Taliban offensive under way, he really needs to shut it down fast for political reasons, as well as military.

We must not forget that Taliban would seek total control after Americans leave and Pakistan would demand a much broader Strategic Payoff if the talks have to be successful. Editor

The Unmarked Graves of Kashmir

Sheikh Saaliq

“For years, people whispered about the thousands of disappeared young men in Kashmir . But only now are the bones finally speaking”

Basharat Peer.

They say the dead will speak, but when that remains a mystery. Not in this case. Yelling their un-heard voices beneath, they are crying their heart out from years. Screaming for their identity to be revealed, screaming for their beloved ones and screaming to be taken home, where they used to cherish their daily routines. Being the native of some unknown piece of land from decades they are kept unheard and untraced. Somewhere buried in the lap of sky high mountains, or submerged in the deep waters, they are being eluded from their identity and tagged “Un-Known” with their 7 feet long abode entitled “Mass graves”.

Having a look from outside these small mounds of soil may only look like buried with mere human bodies with most of them torn by bullets or mortar shells, but in fact these small pieces of land carry a long story of pain and grief for decades to narrate. From hundreds of either small or big Mass graves to only two, numbers differ and so do the ideas. In fact places also differ. The so called biggest housing of the most number of Unidentified Mass graves of valley Uri, Kupwara and Baramulla, these graves also stretch up to Gurez, Bandipora, Tangmarg and other areas of Valley too. Mostly located in the best picturesque vicinity of the area these Graves which remained a mystery for years may give a look of a usual ancestral graveyard of the area but beneath these lay the untold hidden stories of torture, abductions and carnage. Apart from being located in the most scenic part of the area they do wear a barren look like every graveyard does but the screams of pain and the smell of dripped blood can be felt from a distance. A clear picture of brutal torture can be seen in front of the eyes. The route leading to these places as usually will definitely be pathetic as they felt nobody could reach here ever to see them lay here in silence, but time never do remain same. Among these places is a far flung cut off area from the modern and fashionable world outside which has seen almost 250 unknown burials with dripping blood and torn bodies laid in her lap. May it be an 8 year old girl or young and athletic twin brothers or as old as 60 “Bimbiyar” a small hamlet in Chahla Uri is among the biggest household of Unidentified Mass graves in the valley.

Situated in the lap of the lofty mountains with majestic Jhelum flowing down its feet Bimbiyar portrays an excellent scenic beauty as every Kashmiri village does. Passing through the narrow deteriorated roads of Bimbiyar one can feel that this vicinity holds something unveiled from years, a graveyard that has almost 250 unknown dead bodies under its earth. Stretched on almost 3 Kanals (nearly ½ acre) of land this graveyard used to be one of the ancestral graveyard of the inhabitants of this village, but during the making of L.J.H.P (Lower Jhelum Hydal Project,) just a half kilometre away from the graveyard which then was filled with the dugout remains of the project making a 10 feet new layer on the graveyard. With now wild thorns and a barbed fence adding to its suspense the graveyard looks full of mystery. Nobody found around the graveyard except a well-built building of a local hospital one has to found the closest attached to this graveyard. In a tiny mud-and-brick house, Raja Atta Mohammad, 70, the lone caretaker and the grave digger of these graves sits in the middle of the room which gives a close look of a house beholding something. Sitting on a torn piece of carpet with windows without glass panes widen open just to let the fresh air come in Atta Mohammad lays with an old wrinkled face with moist eyes ready to speak something in a gush. Atta is the lone caretaker of this graveyard and he is the only one who holds every related story with this graveyard in his inner self. He is the one who has buried almost 235 unidentified dead bodies in this graveyard of Bimbiyar. He does not remember any names but picture of their faces have stuck in his mind. Recalling the day when he first buried an unidentified body in the year 2003 which was brought by some police officials to him. “It was a late evening in the month of Ramadan during the ending months of year 2003. I had come from my daily work and was waiting for Iftaar when suddenly SOG personnel came to my house and asked to accompany him as SHO was asking for me. I accompanied him and found I had to dig a grave for an Afghani militant which I first refused to do but later did so after request by SHO. This was the first dead body which I buried in this graveyard but later it was found that he was not Afghani but a native of Jal Sheeri Baramulla namely Bashir Ahmad Dar” says Atta Mohammad while pointing his fingers to the first grave at the starting of the graveyard. According to Atta Mohammad after that night he has almost buried 235 unidentified bodies after which he refused to do so and then police and army themselves buried around 15 more bodies in the graveyard not before the graveyard could not accommodate more bodies. Atta Mohammad being the only eyewitness of the unidentified bodies being buried recalls every single moment when he buried a dead body.

“Local police and army would come to me day after another accompanied by unidentified dead bodies as they would say and I buried them with

proper Islamic rituals. I remember the day when they brought two dead bodies. It was horrible to see them as their whole body was torn and they were bruised fully. Their bones were visible too. I still remember their faces and the moment I saw them I knew that they were twin brothers. They hardly would have been in their twenties. I wept that time.” Says Atta Mohammad with his eyes stuck towards the graveyard. The agony and pain didn't only stop for the lone caretaker here only. Many people of his village tagged him an agent of police but he did his work with modesty performing his duty to bury the bodies with proper rituals.

Being father of 4 daughters and a son, Atta Mohammad has faced many problems. He had to stop his daily routine as he was mostly asked to dig the graves for unidentified bodies. According to him his health also deteriorated but he continued. “No one in the village had guts to even see the dead bodies. Every time they brought one he had a torn or ripped body. The blood oozing from his body and his face burnt with nothing to identify. We only hear the tales of what I have faced but only me and my Allah knows what I have seen” Atta Mohammad adds in a low tone. Burying hundreds of bodies in the graveyard Atta Mohammad never knew that he would also face something same as he is witnessing from years. His nephew Mohammad Saleem who was a daily wager was also killed and then tagged as an unidentified militant from across the border and buried in the same graveyard. “That day Saleem came to my house. He had a cup of tea and left before dusk to never return back. Next day police had come up with nine bodies but unfortunately I was not at home. They buried 5 bodies during night themselves and next day when I returned they made me to dig 4 more graves for the bodies. I did same and buried the remaining 4 too. But next day one of the villagers came to me and said that among the first 5 bodies one was of Saleem. I was shocked but recovered myself. ” Atta Mohammad narrates. After getting to know where his nephew's grave was he still did not exhume his body as he calls it against religion. “I left his body there. He is “fit and faat” (in a good condition) there” Atta adds.

As the graveyard holds 250 bodies only few of the bodies have been identified by their family members and have been exhumed. The witness of that is the grave stones laid on some of the graves in Bimbiyar. Atta Mohammad recollects the data and points out some graves which are being exuded after proper identification. “Some among them were from Hygam Sopore, Pattan, Pulwama, Srinagar and Tangmarg. They were identified properly.” Atta Mohammad says. "The family members of the missing come to the graveyard to relieve themselves from pain and agony. They cry on the graves before leaving," he recounts. The people who came searching often had numerous questions for him. Answers to the questions

would be taken back home, instead of the bodies of missing family member. "Some people used to ask me how the buried persons looked. Where they were hit? If they had any signs of torture on their bodies? "

The love and affection form Atta Mohammad towards these graves can be witnessed when he screams of anger when you slightly misplace your feet while walking in the graveyard on a single grave. He calls them "Shaheed" (Martyr) and says he can do anything for them. "They died for a cause and I am honoured to witness and practice their last rites." Says Atta Mohammad while his eyes remain stuck to graves. Atta, has many a times also buried more than 1 dead body in a single grave due to the unavailability of land. When this grave had no space left they buried the bodies in the neighbouring graveyards of Kitchama, Mayaan, Lachipora, Limber and Boniyar.

With the issue of mass graves is on rise these days many reporters and journalist visit his home to gather any possible information but this makes him disappointed and irritated. When asked why he feels disappointed to talk with media persons he has a strong reason to defend himself. "Now I don't like mostly to talk to people like you. I gave every possible information to everyone from years but tell me what has been done till now. Not a single body laying may it be in this graveyard or anywhere else has been identified. Only false promises are being made. I only want these bodies which are waiting for their dear ones should be identified who they are and where from they are."He says many prominent activists, journalists and separatists visited him and this graveyard and he kept giving same information to them but not more than 5-7 bodies were identified which he calls a shame.

Taking a look at numbers, The International People's Tribunal on Human Rights and Justice in Indian-Administered Kashmir (IPTK), a group of human rights activists led by a local rights group, published a report called "Buried Evidence" that established and conclusively documented the presence of 2,900 unmarked graves of unidentified people in three northern districts of the Kashmir Valley, close to the Line of Control, but now the numbers seem to be increasing as more and more mass graves came into light. Atta Mohammad says if the 2005 earthquake would not have occurred these mass graves would have never been found. "During the 2005 earthquake I met Khurram Sahib and during talks I told him about these graves and after that by his efforts the unmarked and mass graves came in front of the world" (Khurram Parvez, is an activist with Jammu and Kashmir Coalition of Civil Society, the main group within.

Failure of India's Anti-Maoist Wars

Sajjad Shaukat

Although under the mask of democracy and secularism, Indian subsequent regimes dominated by politicians from the Hindi heartland—Hindutva (Hindu nationalism) have been using brutal force ruthlessly in suppressing the wars of liberation in more than six states, yet failure of India's anti-Maoist war needs special attention.

In this regard, Indian Home Minister P. Chidambaram, while contending the parliamentary consultative committee, said that the chief ministers of the four states worst hit by Maoist violence—Chhattisgarh, Orissa, West Bengal and Jharkhand, and they have agreed on July 14, 2011 to set up a unified command centre for joint operations.

The centre would help strengthen the police infrastructure and provide helicopters. He further claimed, "The government is confident that the problem of left-wing extremism will be overcome very soon."

An Indian annual report of 2010 had exaggerated, "the overall counter-action by the affected states in terms of left-wing extremists killed, arrested and surrendered has shown much better results." While this time, the annual report has held out no similar words of reassurance. Even though Chidambaram's anti-Maoist war has disappeared off our television screens, the evidence shows that it has run into big trouble, showing his wishful thinking.

On the other side, last year, India's Maoist insurgency became progressively more lethal—1003 people were killed in 2010, 908 in 2009 and 721 in 2008. Particularly in 2010, new operations of the Indian security forces have exposed the failure of India's anti-Maoist war. Faced with frustration, on May 18 last year, Home Minister P. Chidambaram said that the Indian government "welcomes peace talks with Maoist rebels." On the other hand, Ramanna, a Maoist leader in Chhattisgarh state rejected the offer, saying that the government should first withdraw thousands of paramilitary soldiers, and create peaceful conditions for talks.

However, peace talks were offered by the New Delhi after the Maoist insurgents ambushed a bus on May 17, 2010 that killed 45 police officers and civilians who were returning after an operation, killing two Maoists. The event highlighted the Maoists' strength despite a government offensive aimed at ending one of Asia's longest militancy. Besides, on

May 26, Maoist militants sabotaged a high-speed train in eastern India, killing at least 65 people.

In fact, Maoist uprising which has taken the form of armed struggle is indigenous. It has become an unending insurgency due to the injustices and state terrorism perpetrated by the rich Hindus and Indian security forces.

Maoist movement initially started by its leader, Mupala Luxman Rao in 1969 in the form of peasant uprising in West Bengal, protesting against big Hindu landlords who left no stone unturned in molesting the poor people through their mal-treatment such as forced labour, minimum wages, maximum work, unlawful torture and even killings—the evils one could note prior to the French Revolution of 1789 when feudal lords had practised similar injustices on the farmers. But, instead of redressing the grievances of the peasants and workers, Indian security forces in connivance with the rich-dominated society used the forces of state terrorism in crushing the Maoist movement. The Maoists had no choice, but to launch an armed struggle for their genuine rights.

The Naxalite-Maoists, as they call themselves, are the liberators, representing landless farmers and the downtrodden masses who have been entangled into vicious circle of poverty, misery and deprivation. The Indian indiscriminate social order treats them resentfully, setting aside human dignity. Owing to these inequalities, Maoists have appealed to the sentiments of the helpless poor, who found their future dark under the subsequent regimes led by so-called democratic forces of India. According to a report, “Out of total 1.17 billion populations, over 39% of dispossessed Indians, living below poverty line are hopeful that Maoists would bring a change in their wretched lives.”

Ideologically, the Naxalites believe that Indians have yet need freedom from hunger and deprivation, and from the exploitation of the poor by the rich classes of landlords, industrialists and traders who control the means of production. Due to these reasons, Maoists target all representatives of the state like politicians, the police and other officials. At local level, they target village functionaries and landlords.

Having its voice unheard, Maoist movement which had been raging in West Bengal, Bihar, Orissa, Jharkand, Chattisgarh, Madhya Pradesh, Uttar Pradesh and Andhra Pradesh, has expanded to Maharashtra, Tamil Nadu and Kerala. In the recent months, Maoist insurgency has intensified

enveloping new areas. Now, it is a popular movement which has massive support of people for its ideology.

Notably, Maoist movement has become a violent struggle because of the use of undue force by the Indian security forces. In this regard, on October 31, 2009, The New York Times wrote, “India’s Maoist rebels are now present in 20 states and have evolved into a potent insurgency. In the last four years, the Maoists have killed more than 900 Indian security officers...violence erupts almost daily.” The Times explained, “Indian leaders are now preparing to deploy nearly 70,000 paramilitary officers for a prolonged counterinsurgency campaign to hunt down the guerrillas in some of the country’s most rugged terrain...India’s rapid economic growth has made it an emerging global power but also deepened stark inequalities in society. Maoists accuse the government of trying to push tribal groups off their land to gain access to raw materials and have sabotaged roads, bridges and even an energy pipeline.”

BBC had reported on October 12, 2009, “In response to the atrocities of the Indian police, Maoist rebels had blown up culverts and cut electricity to railways in various regions during two-day strike.”

Naxalite insurgency known as Red Corridor has become so popular that India is actively considering shifting 23 battalions of para-military forces from occupied Kashmir to the Maoist affected areas.

While on the one hand, Indian rulers realise the real causes of Maoist uprising, but still accuse China of backing the Maoist guerrilla warfare. Some Indian high officials misperceive that China supplies arms and ammunition to the Maoists. With the covert support of Indian secret agency, RAW, Indians also propagate that there are secret training camps in China, which teach tactics of guerrilla warfare to the Maoists, and then they are being despatched to India.

It is mentionable that Maoist guerrilla commanders have been providing basic military training to local youths in West Bengal. They use weapons which they have snatched from the installations of Indian security forces. Since their struggle, they have kidnapped a number of personnel of the armed forces. Some poor persons, serving in the Indian forces have also provided them with arms and ammunition.

It is noteworthy that in the autumn of 2009, Chidambaram had initiated a sweeping offensive against Maoists when many security forces were mobilized to displace the insurgents from their strongholds. Former Home Secretary GK Pillai had announced that “within 30 days of the security

forces moving in, we should be able to restore civil administration.” But that claim also proved fruitless.

Surprisingly, on September 21, 2009, Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh had admitted, saying, Maoist “insurgency is the single biggest threat to India’s security...his country is losing the battle against Maoist rebels...violence is increasing...affects a third of all districts” and “Maoists have growing appeal among a large section of Indian society including tribal communities, the rural poor and the intelligentsia.”

Nevertheless, every hope to win the battle against Maoist uprising has shattered. Finding themselves lacking the combat skills and intelligence needed to outmanoeuvre insurgent units in the forests—a lesson hammered home that Indian central forces have been doing little more than protecting their camps.

Experts predicts unsuccessful outcome of this conflict. In this respect, the former Director-General of Punjab Police KPS Gill warned that New Delhi was chasing a chimera. There was, he noted, a pattern: “months of State denial, appeasement and progressive error; paralysis in the face of rising Maoist violence.”

Nonetheless, every claim of successful counter-insurgency has resulted in failure of India’s anti-Maoist war.

Sajjad Shaukat writes on international affairs and is author of the book: US vs Islamic Militants, Invisible Balance of Power: Dangerous Shift in International

Issue that must be Resolved

Today, hundreds of thousands of Pakistani and Indian troops confront one another in Kashmir, backed by growing numbers of nuclear weapons that are on a three-minute hair-trigger alert. Kashmir is the world’s most dangerous border. *Eric S. Margolis*

Eric S Margolis is an award-winning, internationally syndicated columnist

Pakistan and "The Haqqani Network" The Latest Orchestrated Threat to America

Paul Craig Roberts

The very next day after US threat to Pakistan, the armed forces moved into their battle locations on the Pak-Afghan borders. The Pakistan Air Force was put on high alert. The political leadership also rose to the occasion, mobilizing the public against the impending threat and called an 'All Party Conference' which reached a consensus on a 'response'. Fear and despondency gave way to confidence in Pakistan while the spokesmen of US Government started backtracking on accusation of Pakistan being complicit in attack on US Embassy in Kabul. The American strategist Henry Kissinger and the Taliban commander Sirajuddin Haqqani warned the hawks in Pentagon against adventurism in Pakistan. They said, 'the conflict would expand beyond control'. Like in the case of Iran, when invasion plans were cancelled when it became clear that Iran had the will and the capability to close the shipping lane through the Gulf of Hormuz, the plan to strike Pakistan have been put on hold because of the ground realities in Afghanistan. But that does not mean that the USA would start 'playing friend'. Pakistan would have to come up with a robust long term response internally and a realistic exterior move at the international front. (editors)

Have you ever before heard of the Haqqanis? I didn't think so. Like Al Qaeda, about which no one had ever heard prior to 9/11, the "Haqqani Network" has popped up in time of need to justify America's next war--Pakistan.

President Obama's claim that he had Al Qaeda leader Osama bin Laden exterminated deflated the threat from that long-serving bogymen. A terror organization that left its leader, unarmed and undefended, a sitting duck for assassination no longer seemed formidable. Time for a new, more threatening, bogymen, the pursuit of which will keep the "war on terror" going.

Now America's "worst enemy" is the Haqqanis. Moreover, unlike Al Qaeda, which was never tied to a country, the Haqqani Network,

according to Admiral Mike Mullen, chairman of the US Joint Chiefs of Staff, is a “veritable arm” of the Pakistani government’s intelligence service, ISI. Washington claims that the ISI ordered its Haggani Network to attack the US Embassy in Kabul, Afghanistan, on September 13 along with the US military base in Wadak province.

Senator Lindsey Graham, a member of the Armed Services committee and one of the main Republican warmongers, declared that “all options are on the table” and gave the Pentagon his assurance that in Congress there was broad bipartisan support for a US military attack on Pakistan.

As Washington has been killing large numbers of Pakistani civilians with drones and has forced the Pakistani army to hunt for Al Qaeda throughout most of Pakistan, producing tens of thousands or more of dislocated Pakistanis in the process, Sen. Graham must have something larger in mind.

The Pakistani government thinks so, too. The Pakistani Prime Minister, Yousuf Raza Gilani, called his foreign minister home from talks in Washington and ordered an emergency meeting of the government to assess the prospect of an American invasion.

Meanwhile, Washington is rounding up additional reasons to add to the new threat from the Haqqanis to justify making war on Pakistan: Pakistan has nuclear weapons and is unstable and the nukes could fall into the wrong hands; the US can’t win in Afghanistan until it has eliminated sanctuaries in Pakistan; blah-blah.

Washington has been trying to bully Pakistan into launching a military operation against its own people in North Waziristan. Pakistan has good reasons for resisting this demand. Washington’s use of the new “Haqqani threat” as an invasion excuse could be Washington’s way of overcoming Pakistan’s resistance to attacking its North Waziristan province, or it could be, as some Pakistani political leaders say, and the Pakistani government fears, a “drama” created by Washington to justify a military assault on yet another Muslim country.

Over the years of its servitude as an American puppet, the Pakistan government has brought this on itself. Pakistanis let the US purchase the Pakistan government, train and equip its military, and establish CIA interface with Pakistani intelligence. A government so dependent on Washington could say little when Washington began violating its sovereignty, sending in drones and special forces teams to kill alleged Al Qaeda, but usually women, children, and farmers. Unable to subdue after a

decade a small number of Taliban fighters in Afghanistan, Washington has placed the blame for its military failure on Pakistan, just as Washington blamed the long drawn-out war on the Iraqi people on Iran's alleged support for the Iraqi resistance to American occupation.

Some knowledgeable analysts' about whom you will never hear in the "mainstream media," say that the US military/security complex and their neoconservative whores are orchestrating World War III before Russia and China can get prepared. As a result of the communist oppression, a significant percentage of the Russian population is in the American orbit. These Russians trust Washington more than they trust Putin. The Chinese are too occupied dealing with the perils of rapid economic growth to prepare for war and are far behind the threat.

War, however, is the lifeblood of the profits of the military/security complex, and war is the chosen method of the neoconservatives for achieving their goal of American hegemony.

Pakistan borders China and former constituent parts of the Soviet Union in which the US now has military bases on Russia's borders. US war upon and occupation of Pakistan is likely to awaken the somnolent Russians and Chinese. As both possess nuclear ICBMs, the outcome of the military/security complex's greed for profits and the neoconservatives' greed for empire could be the extinction of life on earth.

The patriots and super-patriots who fall in with the agendas of the military-security complex and the flag-waving neoconservatives are furthering the "end-times" outcome so fervently desired by the rapture evangelicals, who will waft up to heaven while the rest of us die on earth.

This is not President Reagan's hoped for outcome from ending the cold war.

Afghanistan

The military operations, night raids and drone attacks may not bring stability in this war-ravaged country. These operations would further fuel the anti-Americanism and number of militants would keep multiplying. Political solution indeed, is the only way forward in Afghanistan. Such an option would enable U.S and its NATO allies to have an honourable exit from Afghan war zone. There is no other way. (*Lisa*)

Next Stop Pakistan

Wayne Madsen

Paraphrasing the old anti-Vietnam War song,

*"And it's one, two, three"
What are we fighting for ?
Don't ask me, I don't give a damn,
Next stop is Pakistan*

It does appear that for some Pentagon brass, including Defence Secretary Leon Panetta; the CIA under former U.S. Central Command and Afghanistan commander General David Petraeus; and top Republican and Democratic politicians that, indeed, Pakistanis next on the target list of nations that will soon be feeling the military muscle of the United States. Unlike other Muslim nations that have been subjected to U.S. military intervention, including Afghanistan, Iraq, Somalia, Yemen, and Libya, Pakistan's ultimate prize for the West is its nuclear weapons arsenal...

" A number of observers, including former senior figures with the Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) agency, have made no secret of western contingency plans, which appear to be going active, to secure Pakistan's nuclear weapons in order to eliminate the nation as a nuclear weapons power. The plans have been coordinated between the CIA, India's Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) intelligence service, and Israel's Mossad.

President Obama appears to have decided to ratchet up tensions with Pakistan after Pakistan's President Asif Ali Zardari was apparently urged by Obama to attend the White House's much-hyped Nuclear Security Summit in Washington in April 2010. Obama sent a personal letter to Zardari that was delivered to the Pakistani president's office in Islamabad on February 16, 2010, along with a cover letter from U.S. ambassador to Pakistan Anne Patterson. The letter to Zardari was the subject of a leaked U.S. State Department "sensitive" cable dated February 17, 2010 from the U.S. embassy in Islamabad to the State Department. The cable references a previous February 10, 2010 cable from the White House to the embassy in Islamabad. The cable from Islamabad was copied to the CIA; the Joint Chiefs of Staff at the Pentagon; the U.S. Central Command (CENTCOM) in Tampa, Florida; U.S. consulates in Lahore, Peshawar, and Karachi – the

sites of CIA stations in Pakistan – and the U.S. embassies in London and Kabul.

The cable from Islamabad to Washington stated:

(SBU) Post delivered the POTUS letter on the Nuclear Security Summit to the Office of President Asif Ali ZARDARI on February 16, with cover letter from Ambassador Anne Patterson. The Pakistanis have not yet confirmed to us whether ZARDARI will attend. PATTERSON

Zardari passed on attending the nuclear summit, opting to send Prime Minister Yusuf Raza Gilani in his place. Soon after, Washington began expressing alarm about links between Pakistan and Taliban elements in the nation's North West Frontier Province, as well as in Afghanistan.

It is noteworthy that Israel, which officially denies it possesses nuclear weapons, although it is estimated to have some 400 warheads, sent Dan Meridor, the deputy prime minister with oversight over Mossad, and India sent its Prime Minister, Manmohan Singh. Saudi Arabia, which has been used by Washington as an interlocutor with the Taliban in Afghanistan, sent the head of its General Intelligence Service, Prince Muqrin bin Abdul Aziz.

A week after Zardari received his invitation to the Washington summit, a Secret NOFORN (not releasable to foreign nationals) cable, dated February 23, was sent from Islamabad to the State Department with copies to the CIA; the Joint Chiefs; CENTCOM; the U.S. embassies in London and New Delhi; the U.S. Consulates in Lahore, Peshawar, and Karachi; the Energy Department (an indicator that nuclear security issues were at stake), and the sanctions-wielding Departments of Treasury and Commerce. The cable discusses a February 17 meeting between the U.S. special envoy to Afghanistan and Pakistan, the late Richard Holbrooke, and Zardari, the day after Zardari received Obama's invitation to the nuclear summit.

In his meeting, Holbrooke thanked Zardari for Pakistan's help in fighting Taliban militants, particularly help in capturing Afghan Taliban military leader Mullah Beradar. But Holbrooke was not satisfied. The U.S. envoy threw cold water on reconciliation efforts between Afghan President Karzai and the UN Secretary General's Special Representative to Afghanistan Kai Eide's on one side and senior Taliban leaders on the other. According to the Secret cable, Holbrooke told Zardari "the United States and Pakistan had weakened the Taliban leadership but noted that

this was only the first stage, as success depended on turning local populations against the Taliban.” Holbrooke stressed, “the popular perception of the U.S. reintegration and reconciliation efforts with the Taliban mistakenly overemphasized the possibility for reconciliation, explaining that reconciliation with Taliban leaders was less likely than reintegrating low-level Taliban who had given up the fight.” Zardari confided to Holbrooke that the Saudi intelligence chief, Prince Muqrin, had discussed possible talks between Karzai and senior Taliban officials in Saudi Arabia but with no “guarantees” such a summit would take place. The remaining sections of the cable, sections two and three, are strangely missing from what was allegedly leaked to WikiLeaks.

In April, Muqrin, Meridor, Singh and his intelligence advisers, Obama, British Foreign Secretary David Miliband, French President Nicolas Sarkozy, German Chancellor Angela Merkel, Georgian President Mikheil Saakashvili, and Canadian Prime Minister Stephen Harper, essentially, those who would be counted on the support the seizure of Pakistan’s nuclear weapons to prevent them from falling into “radical Islamist” hands, were all gathered in Washington to discuss nuclear proliferation and security. Having been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for his nuclear counter-proliferation efforts, Obama was the perfect front man for a secret coalition of the willing to carry out the de-nuclearization of Pakistan. The only obstacle remaining was to create an environment acceptable to world public opinion that would justify a multinational intervention in Pakistan.

The Pakistani media and officials like retired Pakistani Army chief of staff General Mirza Aslam Beg and former ISI chief General Hamid Gul, began reporting on U.S. private military contractors conducting unofficial activities throughout Pakistan, especially in Peshawar, Lahore, Karachi, and Islamabad, including U.S. involvement with “false flag” terrorist attacks that were later blamed on local Islamist worthies. In February 2011, the reported acting head of the CIA in Pakistan, Raymond Davis, was arrested by Pakistani police after he shot to death two Pakistani men he claimed were trying to rob him. However, it soon turned out that Davis was not telling the whole truth. Davis was found with espionage equipment and weapons and his telephone records indicated he had been in contact with Pakistani Taliban, also known as Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan, and Lashkar-e-Jhangvi militants in South Waziristan and other regions. Davis was released by Pakistan after heavy diplomatic pressure was exerted by Washington.

With tensions already frayed between the United States and Pakistan, on May 2, 2011, a U.S. Navy special operations team conducted a raid on the

heavily-garrisoned Pakistani town of Abbotabad, in which Osama Bin Laden was allegedly killed. Operation Neptune Spear was clouded in mystery. Bin Laden's body was quickly buried at sea without any independent authentication that Bin Laden had actually been killed while living under the very noses of a number of active and retired Pakistani military and ISI officers who lived in Abbotabad, near the Pakistani Military Academy. Indian and American military and intelligence officials suggested there were links between the Pakistani military and Bin Laden. Fifteen members of the Gold Squadron of the U.S. Navy's Special Warfare Development Group (DEVGRU), formerly known as SEAL Team 6, all of whom participated in the alleged killing of Bin Laden in Abbotabad, were killed when their Chinook helicopter was shot down by a rocket-propelled grenade in Afghanistan. The Pentagon denied any of the dead SEAL team members were involved in the Bin Laden raid, but other SEAL Team members disputed the Pentagon denials on deep background.

Holbrooke, who died after a sudden heart attack on December 13, 2010, was, as is his successor, Marc Grossman, noted for their involvement in U.S. covert diplomatic adventures, as well as their pro-Israeli stances. After Petraeus took over as CIA chief, Joint Chiefs of Staff chairman Michael Mullen and Defense Secretary Leon Panetta, Petraeus's predecessor at the CIA, both charged Pakistan with aiding Afghan Islamist guerrilla groups. Mullen charged that Pakistan's ISI provided support to the Afghan Haqqani network in carrying out attacks on the U.S. embassy in Kabul and U.S. troops on the ground in Afghanistan. The Pakistani Taliban was earlier blamed for a terrorist attack on a CIA operating base in Khost, Afghanistan. The ground was being set for a more aggressive U.S. policy toward Pakistan, although some Pentagon officials claimed that Mullen overstated the case against Pakistan. Senator Lindsey Graham, a member of the Senate Armed Services Committee, floated the idea of U.S. military intervention in Pakistan. The covert U.S. activity in Pakistan, including operations by the notorious mercenaries of the ex-Blackwater, now Xe Services, was emerging into more overt operations. The prize now, as it has been for the last few years, is Pakistan's nuclear arsenal. Next stop is Pakistan.

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Bangladesh-Myanmar Maritime Border Fix Puts Bay of Bengal in Play

Jared Bissinger

After almost 40 years of intermittent and fruitless talks, Bangladesh and Myanmar appear close to a final settlement of their maritime boundary dispute in the Bay of Bengal. Frustrated with stalled negotiations, Bangladesh submitted the case to the International Tribunal for the Law of the Sea (ITLOS) in 2009. After a series of oral hearings in September, which included numerous technical arguments, the court recently adjourned and plans to deliver a ruling in March 2012.

The speed with which the case has progressed is in stark contrast to other maritime boundary disputes in Asia, but that is not surprising: There are no islands in the Bay of Bengal whose sovereignty is disputed, and both sides are anxious to develop the bay's oil and gas reserves. There remain some questions about what to expect from the pending ITLOS decision; as this is the tribunal's first boundary case, there is no direct precedent for its ruling. But while the outcome should provide the certainty both countries need to develop offshore energy resources, it could also create new sources of competition and complicate relations between South Asia's dominant power, India, and an increasingly Indian Ocean-oriented China.

For Bangladesh, a maritime boundary is almost a necessity -- it needs new sources of natural gas, and the undefined boundary is blocking offshore exploration for them. Growing domestic demand for natural gas has led to frequent blackouts and other disruptions, such as cuts in fertilizer production, to which natural gas is a key input. Declining output from a number of its more mature natural gas fields will only make shortages worse over time.

Unlike Bangladesh, Myanmar isn't suffering from gas shortages, but it is similarly keen to develop new resources. In fact, it was the exploration in disputed waters by Daewoo, under license from Myanmar's government that reignited the border dispute back in 2008. Myanmar *is already a net exporter of natural gas*, mostly to Thailand, and in 2013 will begin exporting gas from the Shwe fields -- which are mere miles from Bangladesh's proposed boundary line -- via pipeline to China. Most of Myanmar's newfound gas reserves would likely be destined for export.

Both Bangladesh and Myanmar have already received bids from companies eager to explore in the disputed waters -- ConocoPhillips on the Bangladeshi side and Daewoo, Chinese state-owned China National Petroleum Corp. and India's state-owned Oil and Natural Gas Corp. on the Myanmar side. Clearly, Bangladesh and Myanmar aren't the only countries with their eye on new energy resources from the Bay of Bengal.

Indeed, India has already discovered numerous natural gas fields there, including the country's largest, just off the coast of Andhra Pradesh. Yet New Delhi *has had little luck in securing gas exports* from either Bangladesh or Myanmar. Bangladesh has refused to export any supplies until it has accumulated a 50-year reserve, and lacks the physical infrastructure needed to export even if it wished to. Myanmar and India *discussed gas exports* from the Shwe fields in the past, however, India failed to gain a transit agreement for gas pipelines across Bangladesh. The delay led Myanmar to sell the gas to its other resource-hungry neighbour, China, which is looking to the Bay of Bengal as a promising source of additional gas imports.

China is already developing a new port and industrial estate in Kyaukphyu on Myanmar's northwest coast and is connecting it to Yunnan with a railroad and two pipelines, one for oil and the other for gas. This will undoubtedly lower the cost of additional imports, increasing China's already formidable bargaining power. That combined with the slim prospects for gas imports from Bangladesh, means that China may prefer a tribunal decision that favours Myanmar, at least from an energy security perspective.

An ITLOS decision in Bangladesh's favour could also complicate China's ambitions to project military and economic power into the Indian Ocean region. Both India and Bangladesh have various restrictions on vessels traversing their continental shelves and exclusive economic zones (EEZ). Bangladesh, for example, forbids military exercises and manoeuvres in both its EEZ and continental shelf without prior consent. India demands the same, and also adds a provision requiring advanced notice of 24 hours for vessels that want to traverse its EEZ transporting oil and other dangerous goods. With India's long coastline on the west and its Andaman Islands on the east of the Bay of Bengal, its maritime territorial claims stretch almost all the way from Chennai to Port Blair.

Both countries' requirements, of course, are not without their detractors. The U.S., for example, does not recognize these and other claims and conducts so-called operational assertions in protest. India may not be as tolerant of similar actions by the Chinese navy and could choose to strictly

enforce the 24-hour notification for oil tankers and warships passing through its EEZ. Alternatively, the Chinese may take issue with India and Bangladesh's prohibition on naval exercises, which would require them to sail almost 700 miles from Kyaukphyu to reach unclaimed waters where they could conduct manoeuvres.

Lastly, China should be concerned about the impact of this case on its own maritime disputes, especially if it establishes or reinforces legal precedents that relate to the South or East China Sea. A key issue here is how islands influence the drawing of maritime boundaries, which would have clear implications for the Spratlys and the Paracels in the South China Sea, once the respective sovereignty claims over those islands are settled.

While the pending decision by the ITLOS could provide Bangladesh and Myanmar with the certainty needed to exploit new offshore resources, it also *creates potential points of tension*, including competition over resources and power projection in the Bay of Bengal. Unfortunately the problems that may arise from the newly fixed boundaries may prove more resistant to the kinds of technical solutions used to derive them.

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Mass Graves in Kashmir

The state human rights commission of the Indian-ruled portion of Kashmir reported its investigators had found 2,156 bodies buried in unmarked graves in 38 locations. Most were young men. Many bore bullets wounds.

Grisly and horrifying as this discovery was, there was hardly a peep from India's allies, notably the United States and Britain, who have raised such a hue and cry over civilian deaths in Libya, Iran and Syria. India shrugged off the report. The wanton slaughter of Muslims in Jammu and Kashmir – a state with 95 % border with Pakistan and China – as revealed by the discovery of mass graves – cannot be ignored either by Pakistan or by China indefinitely. (*LISA*)

Killing, Denial and Manipulation

Gladson Dungdung

30 year-old Mangri Honhanga along with her 4 month-old son Dula Honhanga and other family-members had desperately come to Ranchi the capital city of Jharkhand after travelling for more than 6 hours right from Saranda forest in West Singhbhum district of Jharkhand last week with the hope of getting justice. Both the mother and child have been suffering from illness – Dula is grade-3 malnourished patient and Mangri has been suffering from anaemia but they have no choice rather than facing all kinds of sufferings. The life was little better for them before 2 bullets of COBRA Jawans end the life of 38 year-old Mangal Honhanga the father of Dula and Mangri's husband. Therefore, they had come to share their pains, sufferings and agony with the Chief Minister, the Top cops and of course, with the Media. Mangri Honhanga only knows that her husband was picked-up by the police from her house, taken to the forest and finally dead body was handed over to her.

Suniya Honhanga (27) and Ronde Honhanga (25) both the younger brothers of Lt. Mangal Honhanga are eyewitnesses of the brutal killing of their elder brother Mangal Honhanga narrated and exposed that what had happened with them in the forests at the end of June. Though the monsoon was on its pick-hour but the sky was clear and the morning was sunny on June 28, 2011. It was 10 O'clock in the morning when Suniya Honhanga and Mangal Honhanga were having mangoes in the courtyard of their house, they had just returned after ploughing the paddy field. Suddenly, they noticed the arrival of more than 300 security personals in their village called 'Baliba', situated at Chhotanagra police station in Saranda forest, which is indeed the heaven of the corporate sharks and also the abode of the Maoists.

The Superintendent of Police (West Singhbhum) Arun Kumar and CRPF commandant Lalchand Yadav were leading the operation. The forces caught Suniya Honhanga and Mangal Honhanga and took them to "Chabutra" (public sitting place in the middle of village) and asked all the villagers to reach to the spot. Once the villagers gathered, the forces tied all of them (men, women and children) with ropes collected from the village itself. The SP, CRPF Commandant and Jawans abused and threatened the villagers to face dire consequences if they don't stop feeding, sheltering and supporting the Maoists. The villagers were kept whole the night in tied position. On the next day, 6 villagers were put in a

chopper of Indian Air Force and transported to undisclosed location and another 16 villagers including Mangal Honhanga and Ronde Honhanga were asked to go with the paramilitary forces to the forest. But luckily, Suniya Honhanga escaped.

Ronde Honhanga narrates the further developments in the forests. All the 16 villagers were asked to carry the luggage of the paramilitary forces whole day without food and water. In the night they were asked to sleep in the forest itself. On 30, June, the security forces asked them to move towards Chhotanagra police station. Hence, they started travelling at 3 O'clock in the morning. Meanwhile, Mangal Honhanga and another villager Tasu Sidu stop for a while and Mangal Honhanga took side for toilet. The COBRA Jawans assumed that Mangal Honhanga is running away. Therefore, they fired three times – one bullet in sky and two bullets on Mangal Honhanga. Consequently, he fell on the ground and died there. Tasu Sidu witnessed it. Immediately, the Jawans wrapped the dead body and didn't show the villagers unless they reached to Chhotanagra police station. The dead body was transported to Chaibasa for post-mortem and finally, the police handed over the dead body and sent all the 15 villagers to Baliba village.

The SP Arun Kumar organized a press conference in Chaibasa and told the media persons about their grand success in anti-naxal operations. However, he accepted that Mangal Honhanga was innocent villager and a bullet of the security forces hit him while there was crossfire between the security forces and the Maoists. However, the villagers unearthed the truth, according to them there was no exchange of any fire; it was a clear case of brutal killing by the security forces. Since, the villagers knew the truth therefore, the top cops asked the officer-in-charge of Chhotanagra police station to offer compensation package to the family members of the deceased. Rs. 3 lakh and a job were offered to the family members. Ironically, the death certificate does not state the cause of death. This is one of the classic examples of killing, denial and manipulation by the police and security forces while carrying on the so-called anti-naxal joint operations.

In another similar case, the police killed a villager and coined it as the result of crossfire. On 18 August, 2011 the security forces arrive to Baliba village again. They caught 6 villagers including Ladura Barjo, Mangal Barjo, Sanika Barjo, Dubiya Barjo, Mangra Guria and Soma Guria. These people were taken to “Chabutra” of the village and, kicked and severely beaten with stick, tiles and butt of the guns. Consequently, Soma Guria fell down and became unconscious. On the next day, the security forces took them to the forest. Soma Guria was not able to walk but he was dragged

towards the forest. According to the eyewitness, when he died due to injuries in the forest, the security forces fired two bullets in his chest. On 20 August, the villagers were handed over the dead body of Soma Guria and told that he was killed in crossfire.

In fact, the security forces land to any village, rob the houses, catch the innocent villagers, torture them, exploit women and shoot the man, and finally, they hand over the dead bodies to the family members after couple of day and tell that their man was killed in the crossfire. Thus, the endless inhuman acts of the security forces continue in the Saranda forest. The villagers are tired of sharing their pains, sufferings and agony. But do they have any choice? The security forces captured the house containing a ration shop of Patur Gagrai of Tiril Polshi village on August 3. He is also the president of village education committee. The police blame that he supplies ration to the Maoists. In another case, the security forces raped 3 women in Karampada village on August 1 and 15 people were picked up from Hatnaburu village on August 24 alleging them as members of the CPI-Maoists without any proof. The fact is, whenever, the security forces go for the anti-naxal operation, and they victimize the innocent villagers. The billion dollar question is, can the security forces rape women and kill the men in cold-blooded murder even if they are member of the CPI-Maoists?

The story does not end here. When the Jharkhand Human Rights Movement (JHRM) intervened and exposed the killings of Mangal Honhanga and Somu Guria by the security forces, the top cops started branding the JHRM as Maoist's organization. The Kolhan DIG Naveen Kumar said, "The allegations by the family are Maoist sponsored. It is just to harass and disrupt police operations." He also said that Mangal Honhanga was a rebel. Similarly, the IG and spokesperson of Jharkhand Police R.K. Mullick said that Mangal Honhanga had some explosive with him. What a brilliant idea of the top cops of Jharkhand for coining an innocent Adivasi as Maoist to bury their inhuman acts. However, when there was ample pressure, the Inspector General of Police did inquiry and found that both Mangal Honhanga and Soma Guria were innocent Adivasi and the security forces shot them when they declined to follow their instructions. The irony is still, the Home Secretary and the Director General of Police are tirelessly attempting to coin both the killings as results of the crossfire.

The most important point is, speaking about rights has become crime in the largest democratic country on the earth especially, when the rights are for the under privilege communities. However, if you speak for the middle class or upper middle class, you'll become the hero. Perhaps, second

Gandhi, second Nehru or Second Patel. For instance, when the teachers of thousand of public and private schools asked their children (students) to take part in Anna Hazare's movement after deserting their studies, it was glamorized by the 24x7 news channel instead of questioning and taking action against the teachers. In another similar case, when the poor children took part in a movement against POSCO project in the state of Odisha, the state government threatened the organizers for taking action against them in the name of violating the child rights. What kind of democracy is this?

Indeed, it's very clear that if you stand against the police atrocities and reluctant to be alienated from the natural resources (land, forest and mineral), you'll be coined as the extremists. Precisely, because both – questioning against police atrocities and displacement ultimately expose the corporate nexus with the government's anti naxal-operations for mineral interest. Obviously, the Indian state bothers about the 'threat to the investment climate' rather than protecting its citizen's rights and the constitution. Though the Jharkhand police have accepted the killing of Mangal Honhanga and Soma Guria but my assumption is, the family members would be shut up with the compensation packages and the cops will enjoy impunity as usual.

When I completed this piece, a report appeared in the news paper, which states that the Adivasis of Tholkabad village in Saranda Forest have vacated their village and went to elsewhere in fear of the police torture. Since, right from the beginning, when I started writing on so-called anti-Naxal operations, I have been mentioning that the 'Operation Green Hunt' was launched with the clear intention to create fear, insecurity and livelihood crisis in the villages so that the villages would leave the vicinity. Consequently, the government can hand over the Adivasis land to the corporate shark comfortable. The Jharkhand government has allotted iron-ore to 19 steel companies including Mittal, Jindal, Tata, Atrio-Steel and Torian in Saranda Forest. Therefore, of course, they want to clear the land.

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Kashmir

Sinking Into Oblivion, Rising From The Ashes

Maryam Sakeenah

The jarring report on over 2000 unmarked mass graves in Indian Held Kashmir [1] that came to light last month failed to elicit a response from the United Nations. When pressed for comments, Secretary General Ban Ki Moon apologized that he had 'no comments for now.' [2] This is not just the UN lacking teeth; it is the UN being reduced to virtual dysfunction_ that is, irrelevance to global context altogether. With emboldened contraventions of its Charter by the most powerful states of the world as well as the much larger role and unrestrained power enjoyed by regional strategic organizations like NATO, the UN, like its predecessor, grows pathetically feeble and ineffectual.

Nobody lost a lot of sleep over the contents of the report, and no uncomfortable questions were asked of anyone either. The failure of naked human rights abuse in the world's conflict zones and occupied regions to rouse significant concern shows how violence in the world's conflict zones has become routinized in our collective consciousness. The world's collective conscience is sensitized to human rights violations in places that routinely experience them. This silence implies a tacit sanction of occupation and its accompanying practices and doles out licenses to kill for trigger-happy men in uniform that help to maintain an arbitrary hold on suffering populations. We accept the brutality that is the work of human hands and the expression of men's lust for control, dominance, power as an indelible destiny that some of the unfortunate ones among mankind have to live with. And life goes on.

Mirza Waheed, a Kashmiri journalist and author of the novel 'The Collaborator' writes: *"Brutalized people are made to behave normally as an acquiescent citizenry... The Indian State wants the world to believe that Kashmir is an integral part of India, and hence speaks often in the language of conquest. Dehumanized conflict management impinges upon the lives of ordinary people. This is a system that allows the executor to live in comfortable moral ambiguity, and wants the victim to renounce all claims to asserting his identity. This is what violence, torture, brutality are meant to do_ to reduce a person, a mind, a collection of minds to a*

spiritless body; the complete destruction of the will of the victim, which ensures a people are kept in submission and slavery..."

While it is possible to understand and even perhaps empathize with victims whose interminable suffering kills their hope and gradually renders them numb and insensate to the blatant injustice that happens around them, this is not so easily condonable in the case of those who are distanced from conflict and watch it as third persons on television screens. The 60-odd years of the reign of terror in the Occupied Valley, the hundreds of thousands of lives lost, the illegal detentions, disappearances and the Draconian laws to justify these and give cover to perpetrators; and most importantly the state's refusal to bring violators to book are a damning sentence on Indian state policy on Kashmir. This is important particularly, given Indian aspirations to regional dominance and permanent membership to the United Nations Security Council. These blood-drenched statistics signify an irredeemable loss of India's 'high moral ground' as an aspirant to global power and prestige.

It all adds up to a grotesque illustration of and a powerful indictment on the state of the world's collective conscience and our failure to apply ethics to international affairs. The Kashmiri is doomed to suffer as long as 'War on Terror' realpolitik holds hostage universal ethics, human rights, justice and common decency. In the post-9/11 global dynamics, India has closely allied its Kashmir policy with the larger anti terror narrative of the U.S by selling Kashmir as a classic case of 'Islamic militancy' and 'cross border terrorism' against a Secular-Democracy, garnering the world's sympathy and deflecting attention from its own dirty tactics. A world dumbed down by a media governed by corporate interests and powerful lobbies readily swallows the narrative, and Kashmir sinks deeper into oblivion.

The U.S's has chosen to bury its head in the sand regarding Kashmir. This exposes the meaninglessness of its rhetoric of democracy, self-determination, freedom, human rights etc, and the sheer hypocrisy of its claim to higher moral ground. The global recession that has hit the U.S economy hard accentuates the importance of the Indian market for the U.S, underscoring the need for stronger bilateral ties. Keeping mum on Kashmir serves everyone's interests_ or, the interests of everyone that matters.

Pakistan on the other hand, caught miserably as it is between a rock and a very hard place, has very noticeably loosened its hold onto Kashmir, with its focus shifted to its Western border and the bloody, nationwide fallout of its blundering into the northwestern tribal areas. The War on Terror has concentrated itself in Pakistani territory, with Pakistan desperately trying to play up to its 'most allied ally' status while an increasingly suspicious,

imperious United States threatens to 'go it alone' as the trust deficit gapes wider.

Kashmir is the tragic casualty in the new alignment and dynamics in the subcontinent. Amnesia is imposed on Kashmir by India with tacit approval from the U.S, and pathetic, inaudible whimpers of discontent from a hapless Pakistan.

However, in a way, this new state of affairs comes with opportunity. Kashmir has previously been caught between a ceaseless tug of war between India and Pakistan with a terrible national egotism and ideologically loaded stances defining the narrative. With Pakistan loosening its grasp [3], the indigenous, homegrown Kashmiri narrative acquires greater authenticity. Kashmir emerges as an indigenous, independent struggle for freedom and self-determination springing out of its saffron fields_ regardless of Indian intransigence, Pakistani ambivalence and American caprice. Allegations by India of the Kashmir struggle being sustained by Pakistan have defined the Indian position on Kashmir and have been used to justify its highhandedness and its relentless militarism in the region. The theory loses ground as Kashmir emerges boldly as an independent movement of its own and on its own, in the face of Pakistan's diminishing influence and national distraction.

It is this new, emergent trend that the occupier is frightened of and tries to eradicate through desperate measures: mass arrests, custodial murders, cover ups of evidence of diabolical deliberation behind all these. As India aspires to regional dominance and a permanent UNSC seat, it naturally has to be conscious of keeping up an image befitting of the world's largest secular democracy that it goes about as. This requires gagging the voices from Kashmir and hushing up the noise made by human rights groups; it involves burying corpses in unmarked mass graves in the thick of the night, and whitewashing the blood stains.

India's desperate strategy to crush the bolder, genuine Kashmiri counternarrative is to create victims or potential victims out of all, using constant fear of the arbitrary occupier that creates a sense of helplessness destroying aspirations, hopes, courage; killing the resisting spirit and the will to act in defence. This impels the cycle of violence to continue endlessly and indefinitely, with little moral qualms given India's powerful media and its global influence.

However, this false, dishonest, morally bankrupt narrative must be defeated by the Kashmiris through their stronger, deeper, genuine counter narrative that goes beyond Indo-Pakistan conventional wrangling, beyond

shifty and capricious interests of Someone Else, beyond cosmetic face-lifts by oppressor nations aspiring to global power, beyond spineless leaders and dysfunctional organizations: “For me, what gives hope is the rise of more and more young people articulating their own narrative, their own experiences, their own policies...” (Mirza Waheed)

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Views of a Veteran

The Indo-Zionist lobbies have long campaigned that the USA replicates the First Gulf War in Pakistan before it withdraws from Afghanistan. With President Obama having mouthed words of demonization of Pakistan himself, there is fear that the USA may submit to the wishes of Indo-Zionists. But he may be dissuaded from striking Pakistan if the cost is too high. Pakistan’s nuclear doctrine is based on ‘first strike on India; whatever the source and direction of a threat. Pakistan has the will and ability to stop the flow of oil through the Straits of Hormuz, The air and land L of C of all foreign troops in Afghanistan would be irreversibly severed upon invasion of Pakistan. Is America prepared for such results only to please the Indo-Zionist? Christine Fair says that for the US the present situation of ‘trust deficit’ is natural and bearable but not for Pakistan. She is right. Pakistanis fear the worst but are prepared for it. They have little hope in the USA whose Congress gives standing ovation to fascist demagogue – Benjamin Netanyahu – 19 times but refuses to increase taxes on the rich to reduce the budget deficit. These are symptoms of a failed state. Pakistanis are afraid of their state becoming a failed state. But when they compare the failure resulting from the rule by American puppets with clandestine operations or air strikes, they prefer the latter.

Usman Khalid

Pakistan in disarray: The Indictment

Raof Hasan

There is widespread disappointment that the Supreme Court (SC) judgement on slaughter in Karachi stopped short of 'action' to remedy the situation. But the SC has not washed its hands off and has given responsibility to Sindh High Court to monitor progress and submit regular reports to the SC. The SC can act on these reports decisively if the civil society developed a consensus on what 'action' is needed. Rifah Party endorses the view expressed below that the entire political class has failed. The SC would need to dismiss the present cabinet and appoint an all parties government to act under the direction of the SC until order is restored in Pakistan and essential structural reforms are carried out.

It is a combination of perceptible predictability and an eerie unpredictability that characterise the political and security environment prevailing in the country. The predictability factor relates to the manner in which the political mafias have indulged in wanton loot of the country's riches, deprived the people of their inherent right to security and rendered the system corrupt and completely untenable. But the grave challenges this multi-faceted rampage is likely to throw up for the country's sovereign existence remain predominantly a matter of conjecture.

The Supreme Court judgement in the suo motu notice of the security situation in Karachi is a powerful indictment of the sitting governments at the centre and in Sindh. The vast repertoire of observations, the stated and implied centres of blame, the manner in which the governance responsibilities have been abdicated at the altar of personal survival resulting in a surge of crime and loot, and the invocation to initiate remedial steps are all based on the premise that the government stands indicted. In its comprehensive judgement, the apex court observed: "...overwhelming material is available on record to persuade us to form an opinion that bloodshed, arson, kidnapping/abduction for ransom, widespread violence, illegal collection of money (bhatta) from traders, etc. were being committed within the knowledge of the State through Provincial Government /Executive, but it remained a silent spectator and, prima facie, failed to take appropriate action, may be for some political reasons. But, the Constitution does not allow the Executive to compromise its position at the cost of innocent citizens who lost their lives, property,

liberty and dignity because of the expediency of the Provincial and Federal Governments". This is as incisive as any indictment can be. The court has held the Federal and the Provincial Governments directly responsible for the destruction that Karachi has witnessed in the recent and not so recent past and has also highlighted their inability and lack of willingness to take remedial measures because of 'political considerations'.

The judgement is also an indictment of the political parties that are accused of patronising criminals and nurturing militant cadres within their ranks.

Holding the governments responsible for the mayhem, the court, as remedial measures, has recommended that police force should be de-politicised and strengthened, political parties should denounce their affiliation with criminals, boundaries of administrative units like police stations and revenue estates should be altered so that members of different communities may live together in peace and harmony, Karachi should be cleansed of all kinds of weapons by adhering to laws available on the subject and, if need be, by promulgating new legislation, a comprehensive new law should be promulgated to eliminate and punish land grabbers and encroachers, 'no go' areas in Karachi should be eliminated, an independent and a de-politicised agency should be deputed to conduct investigation of cases fairly, honestly and without being influenced in any manner and DG NADRA and IGP should set up a special joint cell with specialised officials and experts to identify illegal foreigners so that they could be dealt with in accordance with the provisions of law. The judgement further stated that the IGP will present a report to the court about the disappearance or elimination of police or other officials who took part in the Karachi operations of 1992 and 1996 and the Federal Government should move under Article 17 of the Constitution against any party for actions that are, directly or indirectly, prejudicial to the sovereignty and integrity of Pakistan. A committee will be constituted, headed by the Chief Justice of the Sindh High Court, to supervise and ensure that law-enforcement agencies take action indiscriminately across the board against the perpetrators involved in causing disturbances in Karachi.

If one tries to evaluate this prescription against the hasty embrace that brought the two estranged partners of the coalition government in Sindh and Centre together just a day before the judgement was announced, one would easily gauge the manner in which these recommendations would be rubbished just like all previous adjudications of the apex court have been. There is no way a criminal would beget a criminal and when bands of criminals are operating together, they would only strengthen the

operational mechanism to evade detection. The ailment may have been correctly diagnosed and the medicines prescribed, but who will administer the treatment? Do we expect the government that has been found complicit in the crime, or a police force that stands politicised or a bunch of political parties that have been found patronising militant elements to do as recommended?

We are up against a creek and even the basics have not been sifted to undertake a journey that is long and arduous. *The Supreme Court judgement may have shown us the path to ultimate salvation in Karachi and elsewhere in the country, but it has washed its hands off the responsibility of administering the bitter medicine. It may have hinted at the need for banning the MQM and other such outfits, but walks clear of doing so itself and has left it to the Zardaris, Sharifs, Gilanis, Chaudhrys, Altafs and the ilk to undertake administering the painful procedure that would result in their own demise. That is as grave as any predicament can be.* The system has been politicised to damnation, political parties are found patronising criminal elements, political leaders hold their assets and their allegiances abroad and governance has been abdicated to criminal mafias that are operating with gay abandon in destroying whatever little may have been left of the national fabric and character. There is no hope in hell that, as long as these criminals and their attendant ailments are not eliminated, the country could even begin its long and painful treatment to recovery.

US Puppets

James Patras

Hamid Karzai was chosen as the puppet ruler in Afghanistan, based merely on his family ties with drug traffickers and compatibility with warlords and elders on the imperial payroll. His isolation was apparent as the presidential guard was made up of US Marines. In Iraq, US colonial officials chose Nouri al Maliki as the “Prime Minister” based on his zealous “hands on” engagement in torturing resistance fighters suspected of attacking US occupation forces.

In Pakistan the US backed a convicted felon, Asif Ali Zardari as President. He repeatedly demonstrated his accommodating spirit by approving large scale, long term US aerial and ground operations on the Pakistan side of the Afghan border. Zardari emptied the Pakistani treasury and mobilized millions of soldiers to assault and displace frontier population centres sympathetic to the Afghan resistance

U.S. and Pakistan: Afghan Strategies

George Friedman

It is becoming apparent that the United States is exploring ways to accelerate the drawdown of its forces in the country. It is also clear that U.S. relations with Pakistan are deteriorating to a point where cooperation — whatever level there was — is breaking down. These are two intimately related issues. Any withdrawal from Afghanistan, particularly an accelerated one, will leave a power vacuum in Afghanistan that the Kabul government will not be able to fill. Afghanistan is Pakistan's back door, and its evolution is a matter of fundamental interest to Pakistan. A U.S. withdrawal means an Afghanistan intertwined with and influenced by Pakistan. Therefore, the current dynamic with Pakistan challenges any withdrawal plan.

There may be some in the U.S. military who believe that the United States might prevail in Afghanistan, but they are few in number. The champion of this view, Gen. David Petraeus, has been relieved of his command of forces in Afghanistan and promoted (or kicked upstairs) to become director of the CIA. The conventional definition of victory has been the creation of a strong government in Kabul controlling an army and police force able to protect the regime and ultimately impose its will throughout Afghanistan. With President Hamid Karzai increasingly uncooperative with the United States, the likelihood of this outcome is evaporating. Karzai realizes his American protection will be withdrawn and understands that the Americans will blame him for any negative outcomes of the withdrawal.

Defining Success in Afghanistan

There is a prior definition of success that shaped the Bush administration's approach to Afghanistan in its early phases. The goal here was the disruption of al Qaeda's operations in Afghanistan and the prevention of further attacks on the United States from Afghanistan. This definition did not envisage the emergence of a stable and democratic Afghanistan free of corruption and able to control its territory. It was more modest and, in many ways, it was achieved in 2001-2002. Its defect, of course, was that the disruption of al Qaeda in Afghanistan, while useful, did not address the evolution of al Qaeda in other countries.

The mission creep from denying Afghan bases to al Qaeda to the transformation of Afghan society had many roots and was well under way during the Bush administration, but the immediate origin of the current strategy was the attempt to transfer the lessons of Iraq to Afghanistan. The surge in Iraq, and the important political settlement with Sunni insurgents that brought them into the American fold, reduced the insurgency. It remains to be seen whether it will produce a stable Iraq not hostile to American interests. The ultimate Iraq strategy was a political settlement framed by an increase in forces, and its long-term success was never clear. The Obama administration was prepared to repeat the attempt in Afghanistan, at least by using Iraq as a template if not applying exactly the same tactics.

However, the United States found that the Taliban were less inclined to negotiate with the United States, and certainly not on the favourable terms of the Iraqi insurgents, simply because they believed they would win in the long run and did not face the dangers that the Sunni insurgents did. The military operations that framed the search for a political solution turned out to be a frame without a painting. In Iraq, it is not clear that the Petraeus strategy actually achieved a satisfactory political outcome, and its application to Afghanistan does not seem, as yet, to have drawn the Taliban into the political process in the way that incorporating the Sunnis made Iraq appear at least minimally successful.

As we pointed out after the death of Osama bin Laden, his demise, coupled with the transfer of Petraeus out of Afghanistan, offered two opportunities. The first was a return to the prior definition of success in Afghanistan, in which the goal was the disruption of al Qaeda. Second, the departure of Petraeus and his staff also removed the ideology of counterinsurgency, in which social transformation was seen as the means toward a practical and radical transformation of Afghanistan. These two events opened the door to the redefinition of the U.S. goal and the ability to claim mission accomplished for the earlier, more modest end, thereby building the basis for terminating the war.

The central battle was in the United States military, divided between conventional war fighters and counter-insurgents. Counterinsurgency draws its roots from theories of social development in emerging countries going back to the 1950s. It argues that victory in these sorts of wars depends on social and political mobilization and that the purpose of the military battle is to create a space to build a state and nation capable of defending itself.

The conventional understanding of war is that its purpose is to defeat the enemy military. It presents a more limited and focused view of military power. This faction, bitterly opposed to Petraeus' view of what was happening in Afghanistan saw the war in terms of defeating the Taliban as a military force. In the view of this faction, defeating the Taliban was impossible with the force available and unlikely even with a more substantial force. There were two reasons for this. First, the Taliban comprised a light infantry force with a superior intelligence capability and the ability to withdraw from untenable operations (such as the battle for Helmand province) and re-engage on more favourable terms elsewhere. Second, sanctuaries in Pakistan allowed the Taliban to withdraw to safety and reconstitute themselves thereby making their defeat in detail impossible. The option of invading Pakistan remained, but the idea of invading a country of 180 million people with some fraction of the nearly 150,000 U.S. and allied troops in Afghanistan was militarily unsupportable. Indeed, no force the United States could field would be in a position to compel Pakistan to conform to American wishes.

The alternative on the American side is a more conventional definition of war in which the primary purpose of the U.S. military in Afghanistan is to create a framework for special operations forces to disrupt al Qaeda in Afghanistan and potentially Pakistan, not to attempt to either defeat the Taliban strategically or transform Afghanistan politically and culturally. With the death of bin Laden, an argument can be made — at least for political purposes — that al Qaeda has been disrupted enough that the conventional military framework in Afghanistan is no longer needed. If al Qaeda revives in Afghanistan, then covert operations can be considered. The problem with al Qaeda is that it does not require any single country to regenerate. It is a global guerrilla force.

Asymmetry in U.S. and Pakistani Interests

The United States can choose to leave Afghanistan without suffering strategic disaster. Pakistan cannot leave Pakistan. It therefore cannot leave its border with Afghanistan nor can it evade the reality that Pakistani ethnic groups — particularly the Pashtun, who straddle the border and form the heart of the Taliban phenomenon — live on the Afghan side of the border as well. Therefore, while Afghanistan is a piece of American global strategy and not its whole, Afghanistan is central to Pakistan's national strategy. This asymmetry in U.S. and Pakistani interests is now the central issue.

When the Soviets invaded Afghanistan, Pakistan joined with the United States to defeat the Soviets. Saudi Arabia provided money and recruits, the Pakistanis provided training facilities and intelligence and the United States provided trainers and other support. For Pakistan, the Soviet invasion was a matter of fundamental national interest. Facing a hostile India supported by the Soviets and a Soviet presence in Afghanistan, Pakistan was threatened on two fronts. Therefore, deep involvement with the jihadists in Afghanistan was essential to Pakistan because the jihadists tied down the Soviets. This was also beneficial to the United States.

After the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan, the United States became indifferent to Afghanistan's future. Pakistan could not be indifferent. It remained deeply involved with the Islamist forces that had defeated the Soviets and would govern Afghanistan, and it helped facilitate the emergence of the Taliban as the dominant force in the country. The United States was quite content with this in the 1990s and accepted the fact that Pakistani intelligence had become intertwined not only with the forces that fought the Soviets but also with the Taliban, who, with Pakistani support, won the civil war that followed the Soviet defeat.

Intelligence organizations are as influenced by their clients as their clients are controlled by them. Consider anti-Castro Cubans in the 1960s and 1970s and their beginning as CIA assets and their end as major influencers of U.S. policy toward Cuba. The Pakistani Inter-Services Intelligence directorate (ISI) became entwined with its clients. As the influence of the Taliban and Islamist elements increased in Afghanistan, the sentiment spread to Pakistan, where a massive Islamist movement developed with influence in the government and intelligence services.

Sept. 11, 2001, posed a profound threat to Pakistan. On one side, Pakistan faced a United States in a state of crisis, demanding Pakistani support against both al Qaeda and the Taliban. On the other side Pakistan had a massive Islamist movement hostile to the United States and intelligence services that had, for a generation, been intimately linked to Afghan Islamists, first with whole-hearted U.S. support, then with its benign indifference. The American demands involved shredding close relationships in Afghanistan, supporting an American occupation in Afghanistan and therefore facing internal resistance and threats in both Afghanistan and Pakistan.

The Pakistani solution was the only one it could come up with to placate both the United States and the forces in Pakistan that did not want to cooperate with the United States. The Pakistanis lied. To be more precise

and fair, they did as much as they could for the United States without completely destabilizing Pakistan while making it appear that they were being far more cooperative with the Americans and far less cooperative with their public. As in any such strategy, the ISI and Islamabad found themselves engaged in a massive balancing act.

U.S. and Pakistani national interests widely diverged. The United States wanted to disrupt al Qaeda regardless of the cost. The Pakistanis wanted to avoid the collapse of their regime at any cost. These were not compatible goals. At the same time, the United States and Pakistan needed each other. The United States could not possibly operate in Afghanistan without some Pakistani support, ranging from the use of Karachi and the Karachi-Khyber and Karachi-Chaman lines of supply to at least some collaboration on intelligence sharing, at least on al Qaeda. The Pakistanis badly needed American support against India. If the United States simply became pro-Indian, the Pakistani position would be in severe jeopardy.

The United States was always aware of the limits of Pakistani assistance. The United States accepted this publicly because it made Pakistan appear to be an ally at a time when the United States was under attack for unilateralism. It accepted it privately as well because it did not want to see Pakistan destabilize. The Pakistanis were aware of the limits of American tolerance, so a game was played out.

The Endgame in Afghanistan

That game is now breaking down, not because the United States raided Pakistan and killed bin Laden but because it is becoming apparent to Pakistan that the United States will, sooner or later, be dramatically drawing down its forces in Afghanistan. This drawdown creates three facts. First, Pakistan will be facing the future on its western border with Afghanistan without an American force to support it. Pakistan does not want to alienate the Taliban, and not just for ideological reasons. It also expects the Taliban to govern Afghanistan in due course. India aside, Pakistan needs to maintain its ties to the Taliban in order to maintain its influence in Afghanistan and guard its western flank. Being cooperative with the United States is less important. Second, Pakistan is aware that as the United States draws down, it will need Pakistan to cover its withdrawal strategically. Afghanistan is not Iraq, and as the U.S. force draws down, it will be in greater danger. The U.S. needs Pakistani influence. Finally, there will be a negotiation with the Taliban, and elements of Pakistan, particularly the ISI, will be the intermediary.

The Pakistanis are preparing for the American drawdown. Publicly, it is important for them to appear as independent and even hostile to the Americans as possible in order to maintain their domestic credibility. Up to now, they have appeared to various factions in Pakistan as American lackeys. If the United States is leaving, the Pakistanis can't afford to appear that way anymore. There are genuine issues separating the two countries, but in the end, the show is as important as the issues. U.S. accusations that the government has not cooperated with the United States in fighting Islamists are exactly what the Pakistani establishment needs in order to move to the next phase. Publicly arresting CIA sources who aided the United States in capturing bin Laden also enhances this new image.

From the American point of view, the war in Afghanistan — and elsewhere — has not been a failure. There have been no more attacks on the United States on the order of 9/11, and that has not been for al Qaeda's lack of trying. U.S. intelligence and security services, fumbling in the early days, achieved a remarkable success, and that was aided by the massive disruption of al Qaeda by U.S. military operations. The measure of military success is simple. If the enemy was unable to strike, the military effort was a success. Obviously, there is no guarantee that al Qaeda will not regenerate or that another group will not emerge, but a continued presence in Afghanistan at this point doesn't affect that. This is particularly true as franchise operations like the Yemen-based al Qaeda in the Arabian Peninsula begin to overtake the old apex leadership in terms of both operational innovation in transnational efforts and the ideological underpinnings of those attacks.

In the end, the United States will leave Afghanistan (with the possible exception of some residual special operations forces). Pakistan will draw Afghanistan back into its sphere of influence. Pakistan will need American support against India (since China does not have the force needed to support Pakistan over the Himalayas nor the navy to protect Pakistan's coast). The United States will need Pakistan to do the basic work of preventing an intercontinental al Qaeda from forming again. Reflecting on the past 10 years, Pakistan will see that as being in its national interest. The United States will use Pakistan to balance India while retaining close ties to India.

A play will be acted out like the New Zealand Haka, with both sides making terrible sounds and frightening gestures at each other. But now that the counterinsurgency concept is being discarded, from all indications, and a fresh military analysis is under way, the script is being rewritten and we can begin to see the end shaping up. The United States is furious at

Pakistan for its willingness to protect American enemies. Pakistan is furious at the United States for conducting attacks on its sovereign territory. In the end it doesn't matter. They need each other. In the affairs of nations, like and dislike are not meaningful categories, and bullying and treachery are not blocks to cooperation. The two countries need each other more than they need to punish each other. Great friendships among nations are built on less.

Dr. Friedman is the Chief Executive Officer and founder of STRATFOR. Friedman has driven the strategic vision guiding STRATFOR to global prominence in private geopolitical intelligence and forecasting.

India on Notice

Court of Arbitration in The Hague has accepted Pakistan's application - despite it being out of the time limit - and has moved to prevent India from building a major dam project on the Kishanganga/Neelum River at Gurez. The project is likely to inhibit the restoration of the flow of the river into its natural channel and interfere with Pakistan's own rights to the water. *The case until recently did not appear to be going well for us and the court had been critical of the team representing Pakistan.* But it did see merit in Pakistan's case and ruled accordingly.

Good news for peace but the high stake water issues between India and Pakistan are highly technical and political. Major problem, however, is that the Pakistani authorities have often exhibited carelessness and muddled approach that characterises much of the decision-making in the country.

The decision by the International Court of Arbitration to accept Pakistan's appeal for `interim measures` against the Kishanganga Hydroelectric Project is a moral victory for Pakistani authorities. After having bungled the prosecution of its case in large parts so far, finally there has been a more positive response to Pakistan's pleadings in the long-running controversy.

As the lower riparian, Pakistan has some responsibility to ensure that water is used efficiently and with due regard for limited resources. But from an extremely leaky irrigation system to the inefficient use of water for growing crops to allowing millions of valuable cusecs of water to flow into the Arabian Sea, Pakistan allows much of its precious water resources to go to waste.

Water:

Asia's New Battleground

India is cruising for a bruising!

Dr. Amarjit Singh

According to a book recently written by senior Indian journalist, Professor Brahma Chellaney, titled, "WATER: Asia's New Battleground," (recently published by Harper Collins) the world's future battles will take place on the issue of water as it used to be, and still happen over underground Oil. It seems things are slowly heating up as India has recently dared to intrude into China's backyard – the South China Sea. A confrontation is surfacing in the South China Sea over, an oil exploration deal between India and Vietnam. China has reacted angrily and made its intentions clear to the Indian rulers and everyone else, that Beijing will protect its interests by force as is evident from a recent article in the Beijing-based Global Times, which essay did not mince any words, when it was headlined, "Time to teach those around South China Sea a lesson".

According to Brahma Chellaney nowhere else does this frightening prospect, of war over 'water' is possible as it is between China and India over the river waters flowing down from Chinese Tibet into the South Asian subcontinent. China as an upper riparian state may do to India what India as an upper riparian has been doing to Sikh Punjab, Bangladesh and Pakistan. And play the 'water' card with the waters of the Brahmaputra River and the Sutlej River which flow into the South Asian subcontinent from Chinese Tibet. No wonder the ill advised, nay stupid, provocative move by India to sign an oil exploration deal with Vietnam in the South China Sea (on which the 'Middle Kingdom' has a prior claim) has provoked China to publicly react last week in anger with an article in the Beijing-based, state-owned, Global Times headlined, "Time to teach those around South China Sea a lesson".

Brahma Chellaney is a Professor of Strategic Studies at the New Delhi-based Centre for Policy Research, an 'independent' Indian think-tank; he is a Member of the Board of Governors of the National Book Trust of India; and is also an Affiliate with the International Centre for the Study of Radicalization at King's College London. Until recently, he was also a Member of the Policy Advisory Group headed by the External Affairs

Minister of India. He is widely known as a commentator on regional and international issues in the field of strategic affairs, including larger Asian strategic issues and non-traditional subjects like water security, energy security and climate security. In his above mentioned book on water Prof. Chellaney has conveniently forgotten to mention the Sikh Homeland of Indian occupied Punjab which is being slowly destroyed (desertification) by trickery as a result of its river water resource being drained (stolen) by non-riparian Indian states of Rajasthan and Haryana, for over half a century. To his credit however, Brahma Chellaney, was the only Indian journalist, who reported fairly on the uncalled for June 1984 Indian Army assault on the holiest Sikh shrine of Darbar Sahib (known as the 'Golden Temple' in the West) located in Amritsar, in which bloody operation thousands of innocent Sikh pilgrims (men, women and children) were murdered during that horrible state-sponsored act of terrorism during which tanks and artillery was used on unarmed Sikh civilians.

Chellaney says that the rise of the middle class, along with relentless urbanization and global warming, is putting huge pressure on Asia's water supply, already under strain due to the rice-based agrarian system. Though the entire continent is likely to be engulfed in the water war, it's in South Asia that the real threat exists — and the blame for which, according to Brahma Chellaney, primarily lies with China's unquenchable thirst for water. He asserts that, "Battles in the past were fought over land. Today, they are being waged for energy. And, those in future will take place on the issue of water. Nowhere else does this prospect look more frighteningly real than in Asia. Although home to more than half the human population, the Asian landmass has less fresh water than any continent other than Antarctica, with its per capita freshwater availability being less than half the global average. Incidentally, Asia uses almost twice as much water per capita as Latin America, which has the highest potential water availability in the world. What explains the Chinese obsession with water?"

One obvious reason being the fact that China, currently 'the workshop for the world,' is becoming drier by the year. Severe droughts occurred in 2000, 2007 and 2009. According to a report, about 24,000 villages in north and west China were abandoned over the past 50 years because of desertification. Worse, the country's freshwater reserves declined 13 per cent between 2000 and 2009. In his book, *Water: Asia's New Battleground*, Brahma Chellaney says that the rise of the middle class, along with relentless urbanization and global warming, is putting huge pressure on Asia's water supply, already under strain due to the rice-based

agrarian system. Though the entire continent is likely to be engulfed in the water war, it's in South Asia that the real threat exists”.

In its bid to meet its ever-escalating water needs, now threatens the ecological viability of river systems tied to South and South-East Asia. No wonder, the idea of a Great South-North Water Transfer Project, diverting Tibetan waters to the desiccated north, has the backing of Chinese President Hu Jintao, a hydrologist himself. The first phase of this project calls for building 300 km of tunnels and channels to draw waters from the Jinsha, Yalong and Dadu rivers, on the eastern rim of the Tibetan plateau. In the second phase, the Brahmaputra waters may be re-routed northward; in what will be as good as a declaration of water war on India and Bangladesh. Probably after that could be the turn of the Sutlej River which also rises in Chinese Tibet and flows into Sikh-majority Indian occupied Punjab, Khalistan. During the annual rainy season – the summer Monsoons - sometimes some water is allowed to flow into Pakistan after manipulation by the engineers of the Bhakra Dam to create a flood situation in the lower riparian Sindh province of Pakistan as it did this year.

Following India's sneaky deal with Vietnam for exploring for oil in the South China Sea, on which China had a prior claim, the angry Chinese government tasked a strategic analyst of the China Energy Fund Committee to write an article for the English language Beijing-based GLOBAL TIMES newspaper, (a daily tabloid under the auspices of the official Chinese Communist Party newspaper, the People's Daily) focusing on international issues. The Global Times article, which did not mince any words, carried the following headline, “Time to teach those around South China Sea a lesson”.

The article said that, “China, concentrating on interior development and harmony, has been ultimately merciful in preventing such issue turning into a global affair so that regional peace and prosperity can be secured... Unfortunately, though hammered by China in the 1974 Xisha Island Battle and later the Sino-Vietnamese War in 1979, Vietnam's insults in the South China Sea remain unpunished until today. It has encouraged nearby countries to try their hands in the ‘disputed’ area and has attracted the attention of the US so that a regional conflict has gradually turned international... Singapore brings to the region high-end stealth aircraft while Australia, India and Japan are all stockpiling arms for a possible ‘world-class’ battle. The US, did not hesitate to meet the demands of all of the above; it is provoking regional conflict. It's very amusing to see some

of the countries vow to threaten or even confront China with force just because the US announced that it has ‘returned’ to Asia”.

It goes on to say that, “The tension of war is escalating second by second but the initiative is not in our hand. China should take part in the exploitation of oil and gas in South China Sea. For those who infringe upon our sovereignty to steal the oil, we need to warn them politely, and then take action if they don’t respond. But it is probably the right time for us to reason, think ahead and strike first before things gradually run out of hands. It seems all the countries around the area are preparing for an arms race... However, being rational restraint will always be our guiding principle on this matter.

We should make good preparations for a small-scale battle, while giving the other side the option of war or peace. Russia’s decisive move on the Caspian Sea issues in 2008 proved that actions from bigger countries might cause a shockwave for a little while but will provide its region with long-term peace.

‘The Ajam Spring’

General Mirza Aslam Beg

These are historic moments and a turning point for the struggle by Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran, against global hegemony. It bonds the three nations together for a common cause, ultimately forming into a union — the realization of my dream of ‘Strategic Depth’, which I first spelled out to my formation commanders and the officers of the Rawalpindi garrison on 25th August 1988:

“We are witnessing the dawn of a new era. Afghanistan is free after the defeat of the Soviet Union. Iran has emerged stronger after eight years of brutal war with Iraq and the Islamic Revolution has consolidated. Pakistan has opted for democracy after eleven years of military rule. This is the moment of ‘triumph of freedom’ for all the three countries. Freedom beckons us to unite and gain ‘Strategic Depth’ to safeguard our national security interests.”

It has taken us thirty years of turmoil, treachery, brutal wars, death and destruction, pushing the three countries together into a common bond, to provide the much needed depth of security, in all its dimensions. The sun is rising, and we can feel the soft fragrant breeze of ‘The Ajam Spring’ comforting our tormented souls.

The writer is the former Chief of Army Staff of Pakistan

India sub Continent and Eurasian Security

Andrei Volodin

The failed “unipolar” or “post-American world” is becoming more complicated in terms of structure and organisation, casting about for a framework that might contain the chaos driven by the “Arab revolutions” and the Libyan crisis. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), promises to be just such a cementing factor. US leaders, who enjoy the understanding and support of influential groups within the Indian establishment, seriously hope that a strategic alliance with Delhi would help “contain China’s expansion” in the Asia Pacific region: the “alliance of four democracies” – America, Japan, Australia and India – is routinely referred to in China as “the Eastern NATO.”

South Asia’s population may reach 2 billion by 2030. Pakistan, Bangladesh and India have, of course, particularly acute social and economic development problems and stability in the region and of state institutions there hinges on the South Asian countries’ social and economic policies.

The Indian subcontinent and adjacent territories have, of course, had millions of invisible links with Central Asia since time immemorial, these constituting a traditional concern for Russia, especially since the recent “Arab revolutions.”

Many experts believe that political tranquillity in Central Asia depends directly on the balance of economic and political institutions in Pakistan. Russia must, therefore, not only engage actively in the intricate balance of geopolitical forces emerging before our eyes in South Asia, but also use its diplomatic skills and expanding foreign economic links to defuse conflicts between the states of the region and steer them towards constant dialogue and meaningful mutual understanding.

The President of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, Asif Ali Zardari, made an official visit to Russia in mid-May and this will apparently determine the trajectory of Russian-Pakistani relations and the dynamics of political processes in South Asia and adjacent territories in the foreseeable future. During the visit, the two Presidents, Dmitry Medvedev and Asif Ali Zardari, discussed the fight against terrorism and drug trafficking. They also focused considerably on improving and intensifying bilateral trade

and economic relations because the two countries' mutual trade, which stands at \$400 million, clearly falls short of its potential and their geopolitical ambitions. No wonder particular attention during the summit was paid to promoting trade, investment and joint projects. Russia's participation in building a gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to India was discussed in practical terms. The pipeline would pass through Afghanistan and Pakistan. Incidentally, the bilateral projects between Russia and Pakistan are considerably more ambitious than similar American-Pakistani initiatives. The air link between the two countries is at last to be restored.

Cooperation with Pakistan also has distinct geopolitical implications. During President Zardari's visit, the parties reaffirmed the vital importance of maintaining internal peace and stability in Afghanistan, stressing that national reconciliation there could only be achieved by the Afghans themselves. Multilateral regional development projects based on the premise that the national economies of South Asia countries are mutually complementary may go a long way towards promoting an internal political settlement in Afghanistan. (India remains the biggest regional donor, having invested more than \$1.5 in Afghanistan's economy. China, however, has invested in Afghanistan at least twice as much).

Asif Zardari's visit to Russia has shown that Pakistan is actively diversifying its foreign economic ties and foreign policy. This attitude is welcomed by Pakistan's main "all-weather" ally, China, which is pursuing a policy of "soft reverse containment" of America in Asia, including Pakistan.

While developing its relations with Pakistan, Russia should remember its strategic partnership with India, which was recently described as "privileged." In view of the development of Indian-Chinese relations, India's foreign policy position in the region needs to be bolstered. The relations with those South Asian neighbours with whom China is actively developing bilateral ties remain to be regulated.

China is seeking to neutralise potentially anti-Chinese forces among the Indian regional elites by, for example, planning massive investments in the economy of Gujarat state, and this is only the beginning, according to experts.

India has to restore its relations with Russia as a potential countervailing force to China and one that can act in India's interests in South Asia (including through organisations outside the region). It would seem that India's concern about China's geopolitical intentions might be addressed

by closer cooperation among the BRIC countries. However, as Russian experts note, “the Russian political elite lacks a common strategic vision of BRIC’s role in the future world order.”

It must be admitted that the current delicate state of Russia’s relations with the “world’s biggest democracy,” India, is the upshot of neglect by some elements within the Russian elite with regard to Indian initiatives in the 1990s, notably the ideas of a geopolitical “triangle” of Russia, India and China.

The failed “unipolar” or “post-American world” is becoming more complicated in terms of structure and organisation, casting about for a framework that might contain the chaos driven by the “Arab revolutions” and the Libyan crisis. The Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO), to be joined by India and Pakistan in mid-June, promises to be just such a cementing factor.

Not surprisingly, the prospect of SCO enlargement and its growing influence on world politics is hardly welcomed by the Americans, who see these new processes as signs of the growing geopolitical activity of China and possibly Russia.

There is logic to their concern. Like in the times of Mackinder (1861-1947), Eurasia remains the world’s heartland.

At the same time, America – no matter which institutions, mechanisms and informal ties it might resort to – is finding it increasingly difficult to control the behaviour of continental powers (Russia, Germany and so on), let alone China. Effective help to the US from Britain and France – today and especially in the future – is even less likely. So, the role of India, another major continental power, is dramatically increasing for America’s plans for preserving its global pre-eminence. US leaders, who enjoy the understanding and support of influential groups within the Indian establishment, seriously hope that a strategic alliance with Delhi would help “contain China’s expansion” in the Asia Pacific region: the “alliance of four democracies” – America, Japan, Australia and India – is routinely referred to in China as “the Eastern NATO.”

Reflecting on the role of the Indian subcontinent in ensuring Eurasian security, we should remember the progressive development of Russian-Indian relations and seek to get rid of the negative baggage accumulated in the relations between the two countries over the last two decades. It should be remembered that the collapse of the USSR, followed by Russia’s “withdrawal” from India (in geopolitical, foreign trade and cultural-

ideological terms), created a negative attitude towards our country among various social-political strata in Indian society. Influential groups within the ruling class have already relegated Russia to “the second league” in world politics. In the current system of foreign policy coordinates, the Indian political establishment sees Russia as a regional state with a limited influence on world events.

The sceptics in Delhi took for granted Russia’s setback in the tender to supply 126 multi-purpose fighter planes to India (a contract worth \$9.2 billion). Russia, however, would do well to look at this setback in a broader political-economic and geopolitical light.

This brings up two questions that must be addressed promptly and effectively if Russia’s foreign policy is to be effective and Russia is to remain a “gravitation field” in the world system. First, could it be that the Indian (or any other) military-political establishment is having doubts about the ability of the Russian defence industry to provide its partners with the necessary weapons systems, incorporating the latest military-technical platforms capable of ensuring their security in the medium and long term, say, until 2050? Second, does the Russian state pursue an effective policy with regard to the defence industry in a world where the country’s foreign policy depends on its scientific and technical potential and the ability of the economy to absorb the latest intellectual achievements quickly?

The answers to these general questions will help Russia “reset” its relations with India and other South Asian countries and make a tangible contribution to security in Eurasia.

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