

CHALLENGES TO FOREIGN POLICY OF PAKISTAN IN 21ST CENTURY

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Abstract

Foreign policy of Pakistan seems to have been facing grim challenges since the very existence of the country. Indeed the challenges posed in 21st century are more serious threat to the foreign policy and state of Pakistan. The challenges like the event of 9/11, globalization, extremism, terrorism and economic decline have impeded the effectiveness of the foreign policy of Pakistan. The State is perceived by the world community as the most dangerous place on earth and hub of terrorism. This research paper unleashes the threats and challenges to the state and foreign policy of Pakistan and suggests some viable options for the stability, progressiveness and effectiveness of the state and foreign policy of Pakistan as linchpin for the stability of the South Asian region and an important ally of US in war on terrorism.

Keywords: *Pakistan, Challenges, Foreign Policy, War on Terror, Viable Options*

Introduction

The world has entered into 21st century and the challenges of the new century are grueling and intractable. Only politically stable, technologically advanced and economically sound countries can compete in the prevalent world of globalization. The challenges after 9/11 has put the world in a dangerous situation, where the clash of civilization, more sophisticated means and weapons in the hand of non state holders and pertinacious attitude of the super power seems to have an impregnable scenario. Security pretext of U.S has breached civilized norms of international law and provided an alibi to occupy any territory or promptly attack anywhere in the world.

Two events have brought about drastic change in the south Asian region. Firstly, the end of Cold War that created more cooperation among the countries in the region and new wave of Kashmir struggle that created Nuclearisation in the region and the emergence of Taliban in Afghanistan. Secondly, the event of 9/11 has given birth to new game in the region. The presence of America in the region seems to be emergence of new forces and factors which give birth to new challenges to the foreign policy of Pakistan.

For an understanding of country's foreign policy, it is also important to start with the circumstances of the beginning. For a fragile state like Pakistan that faced immediate hostility from its much larger neighbor the security concern was inevitable; and it should become the leadership's primary responsibility.

The changing geo-strategic, geo-political and geo-economic environment of the South Asian region has posed new kind of security, economic challenges to the foreign policy of Pakistan.

Implications of Changing Geo-Strategic Environment in the Region

Many analysts are of the view that 21st century is for the Asians. The South Asian region is crucially significant in many aspects. The countries like India and china are

emerging economic giants. The events changing in the region have spillover implications on the world in general and Pakistan in particular due to proximity with China and India. Events like Afghan occupation by the Russian and the 9/11 have made Pakistan important for the US interests.

“Pakistan is always pivotal to U.S interests in South Asian region and progressive interaction is crucial and significant for probing and managing in cross border terrorism and religious fundamentalism. Amicable relations with Pakistan is also crucial in managing restraint in the south Asian region for nuclear proliferation of both India and Pakistan .US found India a strategic partner in the region including its security concerns. Indeed the situation did not have any vulnerable implications to Pak- US relations. After the cold war Pakistan was impelled to join U. S for its role of frontline state in war on terror.” (2008: 46)
The U.S policy in the region is to establish triangle of China, India and Pakistan. China is considered the competitor in the region, India is considered the strategic ally and Pakistan as a partner in the War on Terror. U.S tilt towards India has strategic object to contain China in the region. However, China has adopted low profile, and policy of peaceful coexistence in the region, and the world at large. “In 1990s U.S gave due consideration on three major factors. One the nuclear explosions were conducted of both India and Pakistan. The Kargil in 1999, that consequently military coup was occurred in Pakistan in October 1999. The visit of American President to South Asia brought about drastic change of policy towards South Asia.” (www.stimson.org)

After the Cold War; U.S has adopted two pronged strategy towards South Asia policy. First, the Soviet Union does not have significant importance in the U.S. Policy towards South Asia; instead, Subcontinent is perceived by America from a regional perspective and consequently, deal with India and Pakistan in a different manner. Second, U.S. interests and threats to those interests are from inside rather than from outside the region. Economic liberalization, non-proliferation and democracy promotion became the main U.S. policy goals in South Asia.

The dramatic change in the Indo-U.S relations has left spill over consequences on Pakistan during the 1990s. It was era of isolation for Pakistan. U.S showed great deal of concerns over the nuclear program of Pakistan and force to yield Pakistan to roll back its nuclear program. In the end of 1990s, America’s tilt towards India seems a paradigm shift in the relations of both the strange democracies of the engaged democracies after cold war.

The rising interest of America in India can be seen in the following actions. Firstly, America establishes institutionalized interaction with India including widespread, areas economic relations political process military sharing. Second on Kashmir America adapted as to adore the line of control, the situation was largely in the favor of India. Third India’s importance in the south Asian is recognized by America and its widespread role and plane to interact with New Delhi in international affairs Fourth India appears to have FY 2000 reached \$ 170 million that is second largest amount in the South Asian and it is 45 times larger to Pakistan’s only \$ 3.78 million.” (Ibid)

The event of 9/11 brought U-turn in the policy of U.S and Pakistan once again became the front line state in U.S led war against terrorism. However, U.S has institutionalized its relation with India the “civil nuclear deal” is great concern for the whole region. According to the military analysts the deal will erupt new nuclear race in the region and will disturb the balance of power in the South Asian region. According to the new U.S National security strategy; “For establishing balance of power which enhance freedom, is

convinced that all nations do the job of responsible status. Those freedom loving countries must fight on terror. Those nations who want international consolidation must try to help out in the control of weapon of mass destruction.” (www.state.gov)

Since America is violating the principles of its own strategy in the south Asian region only to get its strategic objectives in the South Asian region. It is viewed that the post 9/11 has deteriorate the security milieu of the South Asian region .The countries in the region wanted to join the U.S led war on terror to get their perfidious advantages. India showed great offer to support in the war due to get its position in the South Asia. Pakistan has its own kind of interests by joining the war example: to protect its strategic assets and protecting its Kashmir policy.

Kashmir Issue and Nuclearisation in South Asia

Another great challenge to the foreign policy of Pakistan is Kashmir issue and Nuclearisation in the region. Since its very inception the issue of Kashmir remained cardinal credential to the foreign policy of Pakistan. On the issue of Kashmir both India and Pakistan have fought wars of 1965, 1971, and 1999 of Kargil, and in 1998 both the courtiers tested their nuclear weapons that has made the region a dangerous.

“Indo-Pak relations always remained security centric. The historic crises put both the states on the verge of nuclear explosion inmate 1998; the situation could seek nuclear aspect indeed nuclear deterrence in the South Asia is weak. Kashmir has been the flash point in constrain of both the states have been fought several wars including in 1947-48, 1965 and 1971and the Kargil conflict in 1999.The Kashmir conflict remains unfinished business.” (www.stimson.org)

The civil nuclear deal has further escalated the situation in South Asian region. Pakistan has great concern over the deal because according to Pakistani point of view the deal has breached the balance of power in the region and it is responsible for the new nuclear race in the South Asia. “ Pakistan opposes the deal on the grounds that it would lead to a new nuclear arms race in South Asia; would undermine the global non-proliferation regime; and that it “does not accept discriminatory treatment” and would have preferred a “package deal” that accommodates the energy security interests of both India and Pakistan.” (<http://www.sassu.org.uk>)

In recent development in the relation of Indo-Pak the composite dialogue, CBM (Confidence Building Measures) are the positive sign; where the issue of controlling nuclear arm race in the region and exchange of information regarding terrorists activities and advance warning system for missile test can at least make a pragmatic break through to the issue of non proliferation in the region among historic archrivals.

Globalization an Emerging Threat to Foreign Policy of Pakistan

Globalization is challenge rather than opportunity for under develop countries like Pakistan. According to the critics of globalization only those countries which are economically strong and politically viable can survive in this prevalent world. “Every nation has its principle in accordance with its environment that impales country to establish and execute its foreign policy to securing its national interest in challenges and opportunities that a global spectrum provides it.” (www.emory.edu)

Great deal of increase in world economy is creation of international standards and principles as the fundamental criterion of all economies. Indeed, there are principles of monetary

policy, fiscal transparency insurance and payment system, securities, corporate, governance and the entire draw up of other fields. It means a probing of policies of individual countries by taking part in the competition of market and policy managers have to endure in addition of projecting their policies to worldwide by great transparency.

Keeping in view the above credentials of globalization, Pakistan has to reform its political system, to flourish its economic performance, and to set out the essential elements like good governance and maintain rule of law to keep abreast with the new challenge of globalization. In south Asian perspective, where India is a threat not in perspective of arm race but also in terms of economic competition in the region and the world at large. India is an emerging economic giant with china in the South Asia. It horizontally and vertically affects the policy matters of Pakistan; because in the globalised world economic interests of countries are prior to the other interests.

Afghan Issue and War on Terror

The most gigantic challenge to the foreign policy of Pakistan is the issue of Afghanistan, and internal war against terror. In the war against terrorism launched by America against invisible enemy put Pakistan on the epicenter of the war.

First, the geo-strategic environment has impelled Pakistan to adopt defensive policy in the region. India has been trying to contain Pakistan in Afghanistan due to its fragile political economic and geo- strategic conditions. Second, after the withdrawal of America and disintegration of Russia a political vacuum was created in Afghanistan. Pakistan for securing its position in the region adopted the policy of ‘strategic depth’ to contain Indian influence in Afghanistan. Third, after 9/11 again it has become difficult to Pakistan to secure its interest in Afghanistan. Indian influence in Afghanistan is increasing day by day because some analysts believe that Government in Kabul is Indian friendly. Pakistan in the prevalent scenario is facing two fold challenges regarding Afghan crisis after the 9/11.

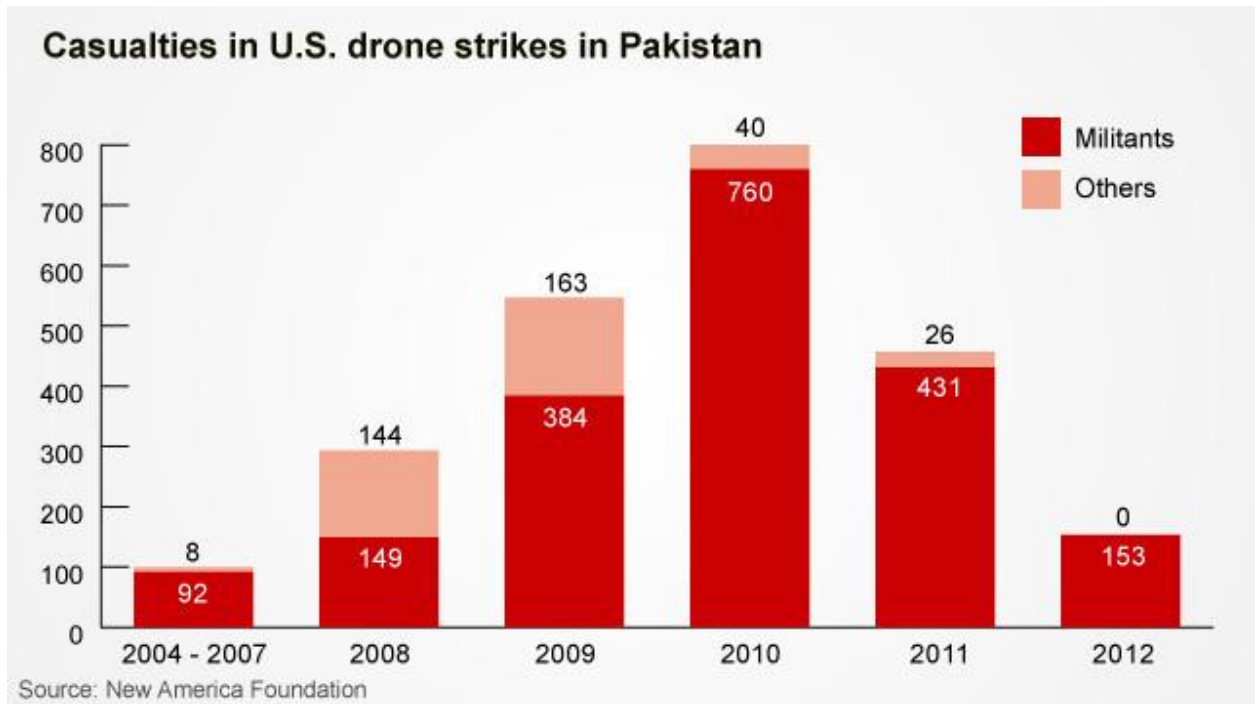
The critical challenges in Afghanistan, Pakistan, and the region include widespread violence, deep poverty, unsettled border tensions, nuclear weapons, drug trafficking, and poor governance. Moreover, issues of sovereignty, as well as the complex social, historical, and religious dynamics in the region, threaten to overwhelm national and international capabilities. Thus far, the external provision of financial, military, and technical governance support has been fairly significant, yet also largely ineffective and, in some instances, counterproductive. “Both Afghanistan and Pakistan are facing terrorism within their respective territories which is under the control of their authorities. Af-Pak has got some kind of amelioration than the past however there is kind of constrained between them” (www.barton-afpakonthebrink.pdf)

Drone Attacks

After terrorism drone strikes by the US is a singular challenge to Pakistan’s foreign policy. There are two points of views regarding drone strikes in Pakistan. One believes that drone strikes are being conducted by CIA on the approval of Pakistan government through secrete agreement. The effectiveness of the drone attacks lies on the fact that in these attacks major militant commanders of Pakistan Tehreek-e-Taliban (a terrorist group) are killed.

The other point of view regarding drone strikes is that the done attacks are clear violation of Pakistan’s sovereignty, and through theses strikes Pakistan is getting great deal of collateral damage and innocent people are being killed. Following chart shows some figures of civilian loss of lives by the drone strikes.

TABLE:1



As the drone strikes increase in numbers so the numbers of suicide attacks in Pakistan increase simultaneously.

Source: <http://www.thebureauinvestigates.com/2012/07/17/analysis-cnn-experts-civilian-drone-death-numbers-dont-add-up>

Terrorism Extremism and Sectarianism

Terrorism and extremism are intractable challenges to Pakistan ever before. The event of 9/11 has grave implications on Pakistan's economic, politics and society on foreign policy in larger context. Since the events Pakistan seems to be vulnerable in terms of its economy; so far Pakistan has lost cost 100 billion dollars, and have got an aid from America only 16 billion dollars . In foreign policy terms Pakistan seems to be an unsafe place, and the country is perceived to be the hub of terrorism.

Table-2: Cost of War (2001-2011)

Years	Billion \$	Billion Rs.	% Change
2001-02	2.669	163.9	-
2002-03	2.749	160.8	3.0
2003-04	2.932	168.8	6.7
2004-05	3.410	202.4	16.3
2005-06	3.986	238.6	16.9
2006-07	4.670	283.2	17.2
2007-08	6.940	434.1	48.6
2008-09	9.180	720.6	32.3
2009-10	13.560	1136.4	47.7
2010-11*	17.830	1528.0	31.5
Total:	67.926	5036.8	

** Estimated on the basis of 8 months actual data*

Source: MoF, M/o Foreign Affairs Joint Ministerial Group

Source: <http://www.finance.gov>.

Conclusion

Foreign policy of Pakistan remains hamstrung by host of issues; these issues are formation and implementation of the policy, its effectiveness and domestic political implications on it. By overhauling the policy it can easily be inferred from historic facts that foreign policy of Pakistan is largely determined and dominated by military and intelligence agencies of the country. The reason of the dominance are several as failure of democratic governments, Indian threat perception, relations with America and lack of political leadership. The most important reason of failure of Pakistan's foreign policy is its dependence on the super power countries especially America in terms of economy and military assistance.

It is a matter of fact due to its dependency on the donor in terms of economy Pakistan has been getting dictations from the donor agencies and in domestic and foreign policy issues. For example new coalition government of Pakistan People's Party abolish subsidies on electricity and on other items the influence of IMF and World Bank foreign.

On foreign policy front, Pakistan is in need of electricity the government can make agreements with different countries for the supply of electricity for example Pakistan can make an agreement with central Asian countries for electricity to Pakistan, because these countries have extra power generation capacity in summer seasons while Pakistan experiences desperate need in the season. But due to foreign influence Pakistan is unable to take decision on that.

Some Viable Suggestions to Strengthen Foreign Policy of Pakistan

- Self reliance is need of the hour, Pakistan must settle down its debt reduction, so that the interference from the donors can be curtailed in matters of Political and economic issues of the foreign policy of Pakistan.
- Pakistan must keep amicable relations with its neighboring countries especially with India.
- The solution of Kashmir issue is not consisting with policy of using force; even the policy has given boost up to the Nuclearisation in the region.
- For the solution of Kashmir issue Pakistan must strengthen itself. For example China could not get its parts as Hong Kong, Macao from Britain until it became politically strong and economically strong.

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