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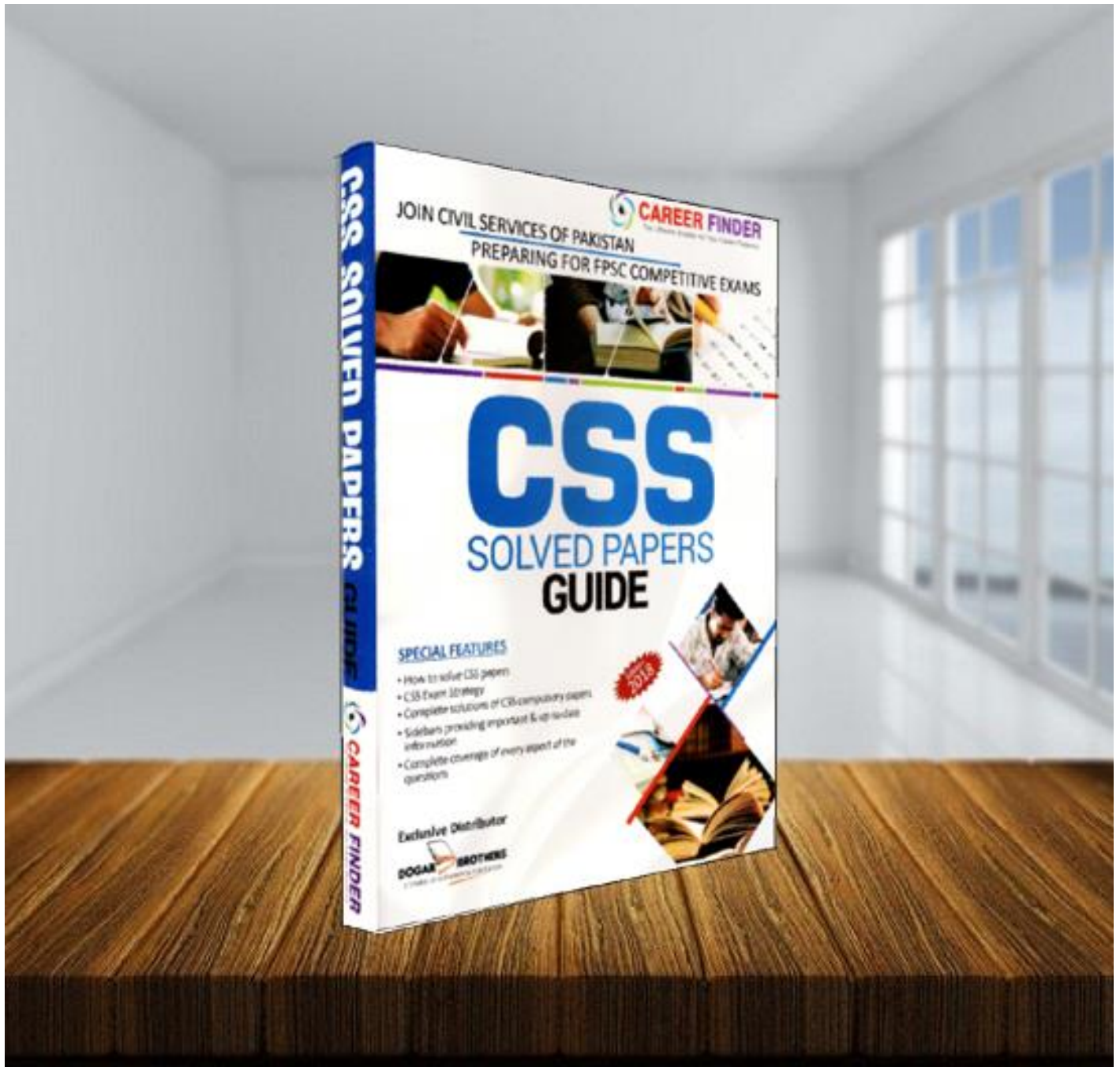
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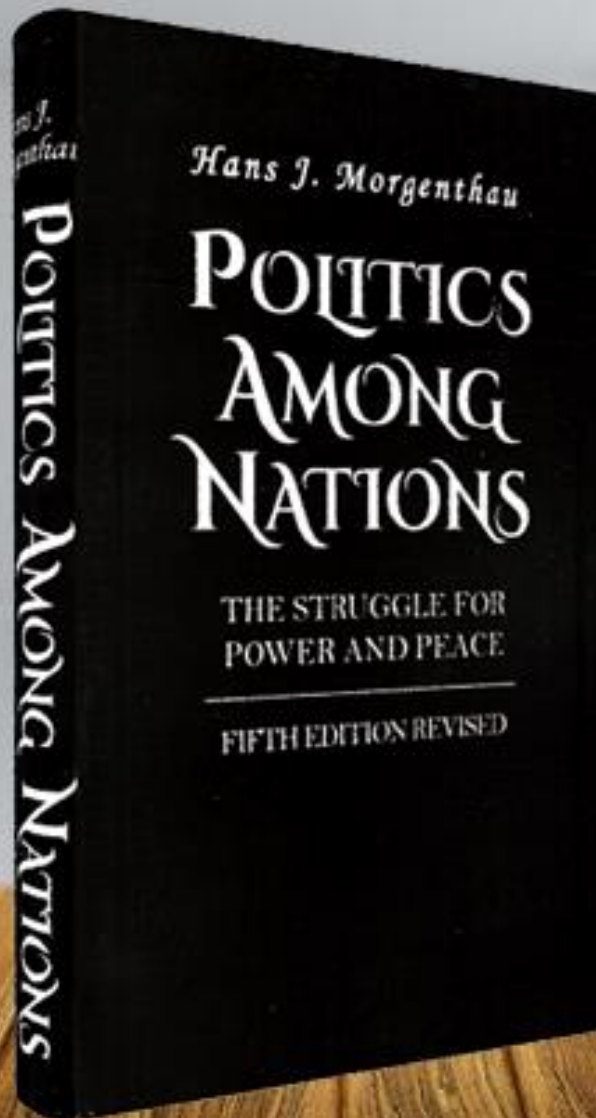
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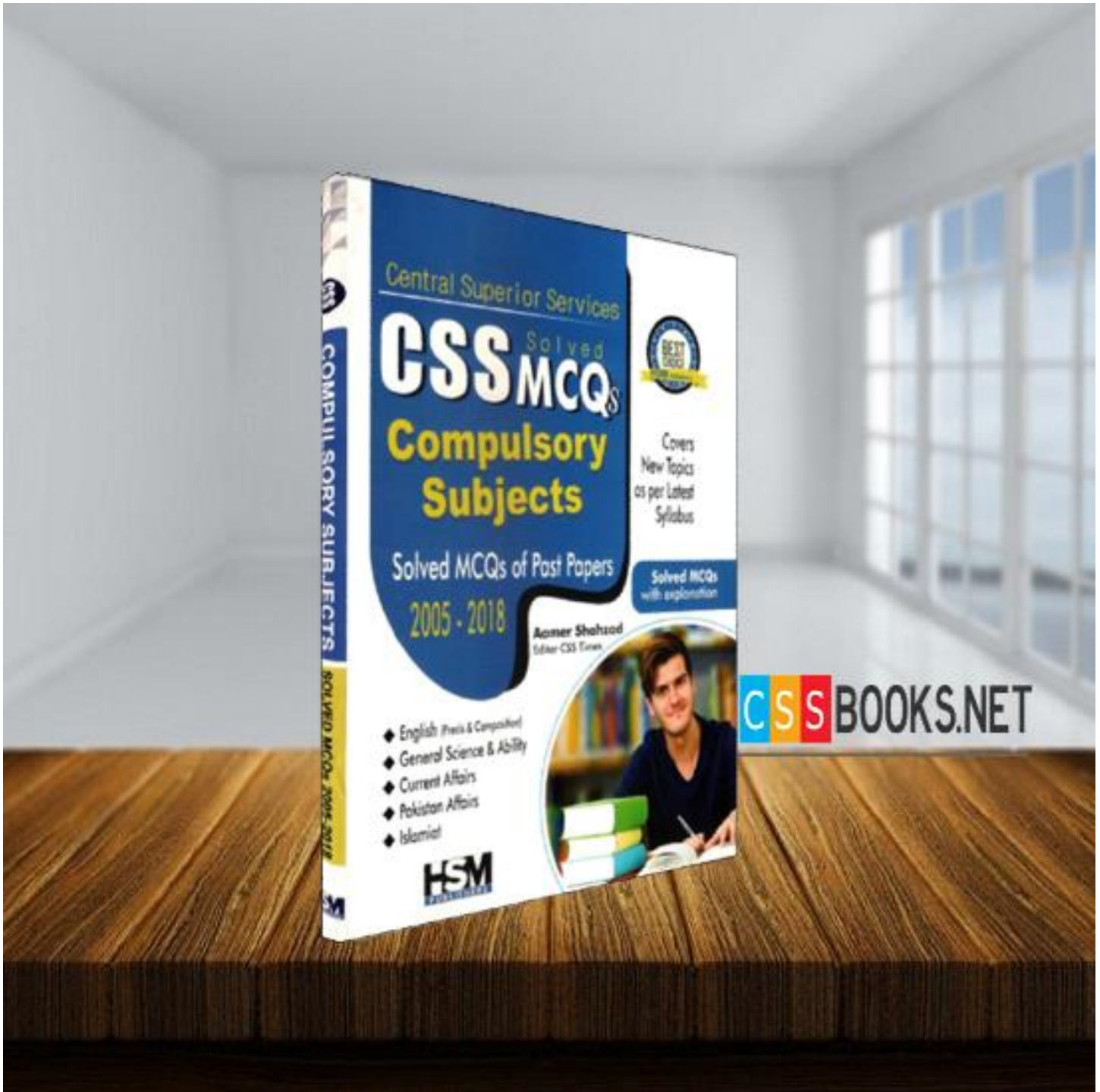
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# Table of Contents

## **PAKISTAN**

Foreign Policy Challenges   Editorial .....	10
Hope For Peace   Editorial.....	13
Nuclear Pakistan: Bolstering Strategic Stability in South Asia By Syed Ali Zia Jaffery .....	14
Twists And Turns Aside, NA Completes its Five-Year Term By Amir Wasim.....	18
A Brief History of Pakistan’s Turbulent Democratic And Political History By Abraham Shah .....	20
Pakistan’s Unfolding Water Disaster By Jehangir Khattak.....	26
Reasons Behind Indo-Pak Truce By Kamran Yousaf.....	30
The new NISP By Moeed Yusuf .....	32
How to Manage Pak-US Ties By Ayaz Ahmed .....	35
Pak-Afghan, Sino-India Détente? New Dynamism Sweeping Asia By Imtiaz Gul .....	39
Pakistan’s Major Problems And Their Solutions By Syed Zeeshan Haider .....	43
China Offers Trilateral Talks For Indo-Pak Peace By Mian Abrar .....	47
Keeping Pakistan out of the Nuclear Game By Beenish Altaf.....	50
Terrorism, Understanding and Solutions By Hamayun Sarfraz Chattha.....	53
Pakistan maintains numerical superiority over India in nuclear weapons: report.....	55
The Weight of Our Water and Energy Crises By Syed Shujaat Ahmed .....	57
The Grey List By Aasim Sajjad Akhtar.....	60

## **PAKISTAN & WORLD REATIONS**

Reconciliation in Pak-US Relations By Dr Muhammad Khan .....	63
The Only Way Forward in Indo-Pak Relations By Lt Gen (ret) Naeem Khalid Lodhi.....	66
Strengthening Pak-China Strategic Relations   Editorial .....	70
Growing Pak-Russia Ties By S Sadia Kazmi.....	72
Durand Line and Pak-Afghan ties By Muhammad Hanif.....	75

## **ECONOMY**

CPEC: Transport or Economic Corridor? By Hasaan Khawar .....	78
Economic Head Winds – Are We Alone? By Dr Kamal Monnoo .....	81

Currency Devaluation   Editorial .....	84
CPEC: A Momentum For Prosperity By Sherry Rehman .....	86
Sino-US Trade War   Editorial.....	91
Economic Outlook   Editorial.....	92
Road to ASEAN By M Nawaz Khan .....	93
Economic Crisis Management By Rashid Amjad .....	96
<b>EDUCATION</b>	
Education in Pakistan By Aadil Aamir .....	99
Education: 23m Broken Promises   Editorial.....	103
For a new face of Higher Education By Munir Ahmed.....	105
Pakistan Deserves ‘Education’ By Aadil Aamir.....	108
CSS Examinations And Chasing The Pakistani Dream By Nasir Khan .....	112
What Should HEC’s Role be in Strengthening Higher Education? By M Fazal Elahi .....	115
<b>WORLD</b>	
What Will It Take for Syrian Refugees to Return Home? By Maha Yahya .....	118
India to play US proxy in Asia? By M. Ziauddin.....	123
Security Brief: North Korea Summit Back On; End of the Korean War? By Elias Groll .....	128
America’s Next Move in Afghanistan By Saima Siddiqui .....	135
Atomic Weapons and American Policy By J. Robert Oppenheimer.....	138
Reckoning United Nations By Baber Ali Bhatti .....	149
Syrian Conflict   Editorial .....	152
Nobel Prize For Trump? By Farrukh Khan Pitafi.....	153
Saving South Asia From a Water War? By Syed Qamar Afzal Rizvi.....	156
Global Peace Index, 2018   Editorial.....	159
Afghan Ceasefire   Editorial.....	161
American Embassy Shift By Nafisa Hoodbhoy .....	163
The US-North Korea Summit By Dr. Ahmad Rashid Malik .....	166
What “America First” Will Cost Europe By Jeremy Shapiro.....	169
UN Report On Kashmir   Editorial.....	174
SCO-From Shanghai to Qingdao By S M Hali.....	176
Donald Trump Upends The Global Order By Shahid Javed Burki .....	179
NSG membership — India can’t have its cake and eat it too By Sonia Naz.....	182



Kim Jong Un Visits Beijing After Trump Summit .....	185
Palestine: A tale of plight, sorrow and hope By Aminah Mohsin .....	187
US Prepares for Trump-Putin Summit as Bolton Visits Moscow .....	191
With US Closing its Doors to the World, China is Happy to Step in as the New superpower By Wahab Butt .....	193
Xiplomacy: President Xi’s Foreign Policy By Khurram Minhas.....	196
A Trump Foreign Policy By : Dimitri K. Simes.....	199

## **Foreign Policy Challenges | Editorial**

A COHERENT, well-formulated and popularly supported foreign policy is essential, especially in an age of globalisation when new and daunting challenges have emerged. Foreign policy cannot be seen in isolation, for it is only a reflection of a country's domestic policy.

The two are linked inextricably, as foreign policy cannot be effective and credible unless backed by a domestic policy that promotes harmony and good governance at home.

The preceding sentences are drawn from the PML-N's electoral manifesto in 2013. They make for sensible reading. But 'National Security and Foreign Policy' was only the 12th section in the PML-N manifesto of 14 parts.

And while the measures and initiatives the PML-N pledged to undertake were mostly non-controversial, attempting to assert itself in the national security and foreign policy domains proved disastrous for the PML-N government, and may have contributed to Nawaz Sharif's ouster.

In hindsight, the collision between the military-led establishment and the Sharif-led PML-N government may have been foretold in the party's election manifesto. "Pakistan today is at war within, while isolated abroad," the 2013 manifesto stated. "Consequently, a deep malaise afflicts the country; its social, economic and political schisms creating grave doubts and misgivings even in the minds of our friends."

In 2018, the challenges in the national security and foreign policy domains remain numerous and complex. But there are significant opportunities too. Whichever party or coalition takes charge of the federal government after the elections, the conduct of foreign policy will be fundamental to its success.

The internal dimension ie managing civil-military relations will perhaps be as important as the external dimension. Ultimately, much will depend on how Pakistan manages its ties with four countries: China, the US, Afghanistan and India.

China is central to Pakistan's medium-term economic future. As a maturing world power, its importance in regional security will grow.

With CPEC an original pillar of the Belt and Road Initiative, many of the early CPEC-related projects set to mature during the next parliament's term and Pakistan almost certainly needing external financial aid, the economic dimension of the relationship will need further attention.

In particular, the growing criticism that the PML-N government was unnecessarily secretive and opaque in agreements reached with China and that the commercial terms of many agreements may not be favourable to Pakistan need to be addressed.

Surely, given both states' commitment to strong bilateral ties, an economic rebalancing can be achieved in a constructive manner.

In addition, Pakistan should heed the well-meaning Chinese advice that the regional security environment be improved.

The Chinese examples of developing robust trade ties with India and not allowing the Doklam stand-off to derail ties are instructive.

The growing economic and military strength of South and West Asia and of regional countries should be seen as an opportunity for engagement for Pakistan just as China has done.

The deepening of Pakistan's ties with China contrasts poorly with the worsening of ties with the US. President Donald Trump has proved as disruptive as candidate Trump had promised, and in the case of Pakistan, there has been a downturn in ties.

America's so-called South Asia strategy announced in 2017 and Mr Trump's New Year Day tweet combined with the state here bristling at the tone and substance of some of the American accusations against it have caused ties to further deteriorate.

If there is to be improvement, it will almost certainly centre on Afghanistan. There Pakistan continues to have a historic opportunity to help put an end to what next year will be 40 years of near-continuous war.

The next government's focus should be to work with the military leadership to help achieve a political settlement in Kabul with the Afghan Taliban. Lasting stability in Afghanistan is the stated desired outcome for all actors and it is within the realm of possibility.

Finally, India.

Recent overtures by our military leadership should be taken seriously and the civilian government that takes charge after the election should move quickly to try and restore dialogue with India.

It is not clear if Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi will easily accept a fresh Pakistani outreach to his government, but the logic of engagement and dialogue must eventually prevail.

All this will hopefully be reflected in the new manifestos. May the next government achieve more than its predecessors on the foreign policy front.

Published in Dawn, June 5th, 2018

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1412122/foreign-policy-challenges>

## Hope For Peace | Editorial

The state of relations between Pakistan and India is so poor right now that any sign of progress in the right direction is greeted with relief. After weeks of unprovoked firing across the Line of Control by Indian forces, including one incident where four civilians were killed in Sialkot, the DGMOs of both countries have now agreed to a ceasefire across the LoC and Working Border. They have also agreed to respond to any violations with restraint and by discussing it during the weekly hotline call between the DGMOs or through border flag meetings. Of course, there have been any such agreements in the past and a ceasefire has technically been in place since 2003 although that has rarely been observed. The difference this time is that both sides issued nearly identical statements and, for once, did not immediately blame the other country for being responsible for the violations. The hope is that this time better sense prevails and both countries abide by the ceasefire. Even if there is little possibility of a larger breakthrough – such as a meeting between the heads of government – peace can only be eventually achieved by starting small. If both countries can convince each other that they are honest negotiators who will abide by any agreement, that in itself can lay the groundwork for progress on larger issues.

Before we get too optimistic, however, we should keep in mind that India has become more brazen than ever in its unprovoked aggression. In the two years since Narendra Modi took power, there have been near 3000 incidents of Indian firing across the LoC which have claimed the lives of close to a hundred Pakistani civilians. The most notorious of these was after the Uri attack, when India indiscriminately fired on civilian areas in what it laughably called “surgical strikes.” Its increased brutalities in Occupied Kashmir and its brazen efforts to undermine and isolate us internationally show that the country and its leader are in no mood for peace. Even on a matter unrelated to militancy, such as water, it has refused compromise. Hoping that this détente leads to recognition on India’s part that it needs to allow diplomacy a chance is overly optimistic. As much as it is to be hoped that this LoC agreement represents a new dawn, bitter experience has taught us to be more circumspect. However, on hope hinges the future – and it is with that hope that we look forward to some sense of peace on the border.

Source: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/323946-hope-for-peace>

# **Nuclear Pakistan: Bolstering Strategic Stability in South Asia By Syed Ali Zia Jaffery**

28 May 1998 saw the birth of the seventh nuclear-weapon-state when Pakistan decided to respond to India's nuclear tests carried out on 11 and 13 May 1998. Pakistan's nuclearisation has engendered a great deal of interest in academic and policy circles.

As a matter of fact, the country's nuclear excursion was chastised, impeded and seen with a great deal of scepticism. However, all roadblocks were matched by the grit and determination of those involved in the nuclear programme, something that not only gave Pakistan a nuclear deterrent but also contributed toward strategic stability in the region.

However, before shedding light on nuclear deterrence and other concepts, it is important to understand the utility of the absolute weapon for Islamabad. Pakistan went nuclear in a bid to offset conventional imbalance with India and deter a 1971-like event, which split the country asunder. Neither Pakistan acquired a nuclear deterrent for prestige nor to achieve so-called grandiose goals. Its strategic weapons were and will continue to be India-centric. Also, the possession of nuclear weapons cannot improve the economic profile of any state; nuclear weapons must not be blamed for Pakistan's frailties, for they are meant to solve them.

Now let's talk about bilateral deterrence and strategic stability in the South Asian theatre. The tests in May 1998 brought India and Pakistan in a direct deterrence relationship with each other. According to classical deterrence theory, the destructive capacity of nuclear weapons on both sides outlawed military adventurism. However, detractors and pessimists would point to the Kargil conflict, skirmishes on the LoC and the working boundary as failures of deterrence.

However, here it is important to understand that nuclear weapons deter escalation. It is fallacious to assume that strategic weapons will ensure that no engagements take place at the tactical and theatre levels. If anything, the Kargil conflict, the Twin-Peak crisis and the sabre-rattling after Mumbai saw the laws of deterrence in action as nuclear signalling and the fear of massive obliteration discouraged further hostilities.

Pakistan is tailoring its deterrence and reorienting its nuclear doctrine to redress strategic instabilities in the region. As India looks at options to punish Pakistan, Islamabad is bringing in flexibility and dynamism in its doctrine. Despite challenges, Pakistan is looking to attain deterrence using punishment and denial

With both neighbours embroiled in the action-reaction syndrome, the strategic level treads towards stability now and then. Both states have augmented their arsenals, added arrays of delivery systems and both are aware of each other's capabilities. All this has ensured that despite tensions between the two countries, there is little incentive for either to go the full throttle (strategic stability).

Strategic stability cannot be achieved if a state deems its adversary incapable of giving a strategic response. Hence, strategic stability in the region is owed to Pakistan's timely and robust reactions to India's actions. Despite meagre resources, Pakistan paced not only the production of warheads but also delivery systems. In order to add value to its deterrence, Pakistan retained the nuclear first use option and kept its doctrine undeclared; these measures took away India's incentives of using massive force against Pakistan, thereby bringing about strategic stability.

However, nuclear Pakistan has remained alive to the multifarious threats to strategic stability in the region. In response to challenges to Pakistan's credible minimum deterrence, the country is shifting toward full spectrum deterrence. In a bid to obviate India's threats to strategic stability, Pakistan is singularly focused on plugging deterrence gaps. The induction of battlefield nuclear weapons is countering India's highly-incendiary Cold Start Doctrine. The Nasr missile with a range of 60 to 70 kilometres is designed to deter India from starting a limited war under the nuclear umbrella. Fear of a strategic response to military actions at

lower ends of the conflict spectrum enhances deterrence manifold and induces caution on the part of India.

The importance of second-strike capability to deterrence can never be overstated. If anything, deterrence is measured in terms of the ability to give a riposte. Second-strike capability and stability are directly proportional.

Pakistan's completion of its nuclear triad with the addition of naval nuclear forces has given the country a credible second-strike capability. Though more work is needed to lend credibility to Pakistan's seaward nuclearisation, the deterrence value of reacting to India's nuclearisation in the sea is immense. A deterrent at sea will not only lessen the imbalance between the two countries at sea but will complement Pakistan's response options vis-à-vis India.

Pakistan has also MIRVed its Ababeel missile. The step is a likely counterweight to India's Ballistic Missile Defence (BMD) system, for the ability to engage multiple targets simultaneously can challenge the efficacy of missile defences. However, the deployment of BMD remains a challenge for strategic stability in the region. If Pakistan's nuclear journey is anything to go by, then an appropriate response to the BMD is in the pipeline.

Pakistan is tailoring its deterrence and reorienting its nuclear doctrine to redress strategic instabilities in the region. As India looks at options to punish Pakistan, Islamabad is bringing in flexibility and dynamism in its doctrine. Despite challenges, Pakistan is looking to attain deterrence by punishment and denial.

Nuclear Pakistan has been seeking security and stability. It has come a long way in achieving both these goals and that too in the midst of exceeding pressures. Pakistan will react when India acts; this will be the guiding principle for nuclear Pakistan. An apt prognosis of the future can be made if one takes a cursory look at the history of nuclear Pakistan.

The country will do all that it takes to secure itself from a bellicose neighbour. Therefore, the state of strategic stability is paramount to Pakistan and its nuclear programme.



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Source: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/247119/nuclear-pakistan-bolstering-strategic-stability-in-south-asia/>

# **Twists And Turns Aside, NA Completes its Five-Year Term By Amir Wasim**

ISLAMABAD: For the first time in the country's chequered parliamentary history, the third National Assembly in a row managed to complete its five-year constitutional term on Thurs-day midnight — though it was not a smooth sailing.

However, it is only the second National Assembly under the civilian rule which is completing its tenure as the assembly which came into existence in 2002 continued to function under the military dictator Gen Pervez Musharraf.

The three National Assemblies, however, elected seven prime ministers over the last 16 years, clearly underlying the weakness of democratic institutions and political parties in the country.

Caretaker PM to take oath today

The Ministry of Parliamentary Affairs issued a notification on Thursday afternoon "in pursuance of Article 52" of the Constitution announcing the dissolution of the 14th National Assembly at midnight on May 31, 2018, on completion of its five-year term.

The Presidency has already issued invitations for the oath-taking ceremony of caretaker prime minister retired Justice Nasirul Mulk to be held on Friday morning.

Prime Minister Shahid Khaqan Abbasi spent a busy last day in the office attending the National Assembly's farewell session, addressing a news conference highlighting his government's achievements at his office and presiding over separate meetings of the Economic Coordination Committee and the Federal Cabinet.

During his National Assembly address, Mr Abbasi categorically stated that the PML-N would not tolerate delay of even one day in the general elections. He also reiterated his party's demand of formation of a Truth and Reconciliation

Commission to investigate all major political incidents which took place in the country since 1947 to identify those responsible for them.

His demand received a positive response immediately from Opposition Leader Syed Khursheed Shah, who expressed the hope that whoever formed the next government, must do it on priority basis.

Accompanied by Army Chief Gen Qamar Javed Bajwa, the prime minister during his visit to the provincial capital of Balochistan addressed student officers and faculty of Command and Staff College, Quetta.

Mr Abbasi appreciated sacrifices rendered and contributions made by the Pakistan Army in restoring peace to the country.

Since the famous 126-day protest sit-in of the Pakistan Tehreek-i-Insaf (PTI) in 2014 against the alleged rigging in the 2013 general elections, it had never been a smooth sailing for the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government which faced crisis after crisis amid its tense relationship with the two powerful state institutions — military and the judiciary.

Published in Dawn, June 1st, 2018

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1411264/twists-and-turns-aside-na-completes-its-five-year-term>

# **A Brief History of Pakistan's Turbulent Democratic And Political History By** **Abraham Shah**

On the 25th of July, millions of Pakistanis will brave the hot, humid July weather, perennial fears of security and their own apprehensions of Pakistan's fledgling democracy to head to the polls and to elect Pakistan's new government. The day is in fact a historic moment because this will only be the second time Pakistan will witness a successful democratic transition in its turbulent seventy year history. It is thus pertinent to chronicle the historical events that brought Pakistan's democratic journey to the groundbreaking moment of today.

1947-1958: An incipient democracy struggles to assert itself as the specter of dictatorship looms

The first decade after Pakistan's independence was marked by a struggling democracy trying to impose itself on Pakistan's landscape. This first decade in fact laid the groundwork for the civil-military imbalance that would come to define Pakistan in the coming years.

Pakistan's beginnings were marked by contrasting fortunes of the military and the civilian government. Pakistan's founders harboured genuine existential fears of India threatening action against Pakistan, and this fear led to Pakistan diverting scarce resources to the military. This Indian threat also led to Pakistan seeking a patron on the international level that would guarantee Pakistan's security. This line of thinking led Pakistan to entrench itself firmly in the Cold War camp on the hopes that America would protect Pakistan's territorial integrity. America, for its part, poured millions in the Pakistani army in a bid to make it a bulwark against possible Soviet aggression in Asia.

The patronage the military enjoyed from the Pakistani state and from America led to the military modernising on a far more rapid scale than Pakistan's civilian establishment. The latter, in fact, suffered from political squabbling and chose to adopt a centralised approach instead of decentralising power to the provinces. This decision once again stemmed from our leaders' fears that enemy forces

might exploit fissures in Pakistan's cultural and national make up, which could lead to Pakistan breaking up.

The diverging paths of the military and the civilian government eventually pitted the two forces in a conflict that was only ever likely to have one winner. Pakistan's first experiment with democracy thus came to an ignominious end on 7th October 1958, when the then President Iskander Mirza abrogated the constitution and declared martial law in Pakistan.

1958-1971: The years of development, conflict and direct military rule

Iskander Mirza's control of the state would turn out to be short-lived as well. The army chief Ayub Khan took power in his own hands and sent Mirza on a 'vacation' without a return ticket. Ayub then installed himself as Pakistan's president and presided over a decade that has been defined as a turning point in Pakistan's economic trajectory, but which also witnessed Pakistan fighting a war with India in 1965. The economic policies Ayub promulgated were also in large part responsible for East Pakistan breaking apart from Pakistan.

Ayub was candid about his disdain for parliamentary democracy from the beginning. Trained at Sandhurst and highly Western-oriented, Ayub took pride in Pakistan being the United States's 'most-allied ally', and installed a political system that strongly mirrored America's presidential form of democracy.

Ayub's 1962 constitution—which interestingly did not initially include the 'Islamic Republic' in its title, envisioned an electoral college of 80,000 people who would elect the President. The Basic Democracies system was in fact a multi-layered, and complex system that meant that Pakistan's president—who inevitably was to be Ayub Khan— would be indirectly elected. This system of indirect elections was moreover born out of Ayub's belief that the Pakistani 'mentality' was not suitable for Parliamentary democracy.

Ayub's economic policies also made him stand out from his predecessors and from those who would succeed him as Pakistan's leaders. Ayub harbingered the green revolution in Pakistan and also set Pakistan on the path of unprecedented industrial development. This growth, however, had a tremendous cost since it gave birth to regional inequalities. Pakistan's famed economist, Mehboob-ul-Haq,

for instance, dubbed Ayub's economic policies 'the Doctrine of Functional Inequality' and highlighted the stark inequality that had emerged in Pakistan in the 1960s.

This inequality, coupled with Ayub's stifling of democracy eventually gave birth to the social unrest that forced Ayub to resign in 1969. The former army chief, however, chose not to hold elections and instead passed on the baton to the then army chief, Yahya Khan.

Yahya continues to remain an enigma in Pakistan's history. Although Yahya was the first leader to hold direct elections in Pakistan on the basis of 'one person, one vote', his role in the subsequent political crisis highlights his inherent bias and disdain for sharing power with East Pakistan.

It remains a poorly kept secret of Pakistan's history that the 1971 tragedy was down largely to West Pakistan's economic and political isolation of East Pakistan, and owed little to India's pernicious role. India did indeed exploit nationalist sentiment in what is now Bangladesh, but the grounds for division were laid when West Pakistan ignored economic development in East Pakistan, and when Bengalis increasingly found themselves shut off from military, bureaucratic and political positions in the country.

1971-1988: The years of self-avowed 'socialism' and military rule

The division of Pakistan meant Zulfikar Ali Bhutto and his Pakistan Peoples' Party (PPP) found themselves governing the country. This was perhaps the best time for civilian politicians to assert themselves over the military since the latter found itself humiliated and short of pride after the 1971 incident.

However, as has become commonplace for our politicians, Bhutto resorted to authoritarian rule that isolated his party cadre, and stifled opposition in the country. Although Bhutto had soared to popularity on his socialist mandate of 'roti, kapra, makaan', and he did nationalise many industries in the country, his failure to implement his land reforms and his action against prominent trade unions highlight a sharp dichotomy and dissonance in his ideology.

Bhutto's taste for authoritarianism was only compounded by an economic crises that gripped Pakistan. The floods in 1973-74 and the OPEC oil crisis that triggered a global recession all contributed to decreasing Bhutto's popularity in the country. It thus only seemed inevitable that the military would re-assert itself, and the straw that broke the camel's back was the claim that Bhutto rigged the 1977 elections. As opposition to Bhutto mounted, General Zia ul Haq led 'Operation Fairplay' on the 5th of July, 1977, and ended Bhutto's rule.

Zia-ul-Haq's oppressive rule continues to haunt Pakistan's political and social fabric. Zia abrogated the 1973 constitution, and added the infamous Eighth amendment that would haunt Pakistan's democracy for the next twenty years. Zia's rule also blended a myopic view of Islam with authoritarian rule, that gave birth to many radical movements that plague Pakistan today.

Zia also took the momentous decision place Pakistan at the vanguard of America's war against the Soviet invasion in Afghanistan. CIA and Pakistani funded 'mujahideen' took on Soviet forces in an operation that radicalised Pakistani society, and gave birth to the present blend of conservatism that has gripped Pakistan.

Zia's tenure was another significant setback to the democratic project in Pakistan since his constitutional amendments and use of Islam as a political gimmick was to shape Pakistan's political landscape for decades to come. It was only his death in a mysterious plane crash on the 17th of August 1988 that ushered in a new, albeit significantly curtailed period of democracy in Pakistan.

1988-1999: Controlled democracy and the decade of presidential high-handedness

Pakistan's 1990s oscillated between rule by Nawaz Sharif and Benazir Bhutto. The 'Daughter of the East', Benazir made a remarkable return from obscurity in 1988 when her PPP surged to power in that year's elections. However, General Zia's legacy continued to stifle democracy in Pakistan, with Benazir coming in direct conflict with the now far more powerful position of President, and the army. Indeed, it was the eighth amendment that paved the way for President Ghulam Ishaq Khan's dismissal of Benazir's government in 1990.

The 1990 elections saw Nawaz Sharif's Islami Jamhoori Ittehad (IJI) come to power, but his tenure too was marked by conflict with the military and the President. Nawaz made the wise decision to keep Pakistan out of the First Gulf War, and laid the grounds for what would become Nawaz's brainchild—the motorways in his tenure, but his time in office too was cut short when the military forced both him and Ghulam Khan to resign in 1993 after Nawaz and Khan could not agree on key policy measures.

1993 and 1996 were the next election cycles which saw Benazir emerge victorious in the former, with Nawaz coming to power again in 1996. It was his heavy mandate in 1996 that allowed Nawaz to pass the Thirteenth amendment that limited the President's powers and finally gave breathing space to civilian rule. Nawaz, however, triggered inter-institutional conflict when his supporters first led a raid on the Supreme Court in 1997 and later when he tried to remove army chief Pervez Musharraf. The latter action, sadly, proved to be too much for the army to digest, with the military triggering a military coup, and once again pushing Pakistan into the grips of military rule.

1999-2008: 'Enlightened Moderation' and a period of seismic changes

Pervez Musharraf's rule was another defining period in Pakistan's history. These nine years once again witnessed near unprecedented economic growth—much of it owing to economic rewards from Pakistan's participation in the War on Terror—to the impact the WoT had on Pakistan's security and peace.

It was also under Musharraf's rule that digital media gained immense traction and growth, a phenomenon that would ironically lead to his downfall. Musharraf also promulgated the 17th amendment that undid a lot of the democratic gains Pakistan achieved in the thirteenth amendment.

Pakistan's exposure to democracy and to globalisation through a vibrant digital media, and the societal changes that emerged out of a rising middle class, however, eventually proved too much for Musharraf's stranglehold on the political landscape, and led to the lawyer's movement and the opposition to the emergency of 3rd November, 2007 which culminated in Musharraf giving up power. The rise of a religious middle class also served as the impetus behind



Nawaz Sharif's return, and it was his presence and the return of Benazir Bhutto that toppled Pakistan's third military regime.

2008-Present: Democracy gaining a foothold in the country?

2018 will mark a decade since Pakistan has had uninterrupted democratic rule. This period has seen tremendous democratic gains such as the passing of the 18th amendment, the passage of the seventh National Finance Commission (NFC) award, and more recently, the Thirty First Amendment Bill that paves the way for FATA's merger with Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

This decade, however, has not been bereft of civil-military conflict. In fact, events such as the Dawn Leaks, the multiple military operations during the PPP and the incumbent government's tenures, the 2011 American operation against Osama Bin Laden and the Memogate Scandal that emerged in the aftermath of this operation all damaged the already precarious civil-military paradigm, and led to calls that the country might return to direct military rule.

With the end of the incumbent Parliament's tenure on the 31st of May, however, it seems that democracy is finally entrenching itself in Pakistan. All parties seem united on holding elections on the 25th of July, and other state institutions such as the judiciary too seem to be on board with this idea.

As we cast our votes, however, it is important to realise the significance of this moment and the history that bears down on us as we head to the polls. We must also be cognisant of the fact that it is only through democracy that Pakistan can truly set itself on the path to prosperity.

Source: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/247440/a-brief-history-of-pakistans-turbulent-democratic-and-political-history/>

# **Pakistan's Unfolding Water Disaster By** **Jehangir Khattak**

The amount of water available for Kharif crops has declined by 42 percent. This has happened due to a decrease in water inflow to reservoirs, and is an ominous sign for Pakistan's water and food security. The Indus River System Authority says water inflow decreased from 9.32 million-acre-feet (MAF) to around 7.9 MAF, the worst in five years. On its May 15 meeting, the IRSA advisory committee noted that the water shortage experienced since the start of the sowing season had turned out to be much higher than the previous estimate of 31 percent.

The Kharif crop season starts from April-June and lasts until October-December in different parts of the country. Rice, sugarcane, cotton and maize are some of the key crops of the season. Non-availability of water at such a critical time of sowing season is bound to impact food production. Experts say much will now depend on the monsoon showers.

At the meeting, all the five members of IRSA urged the government to build new reservoirs on a "war footing". But completion of reservoirs in the short term remains a pipe dream. Even though the much-awaited and less-debated National Water Policy (NWP) was approved in April, the roadmap to securing our water remains largely hazy. The policy approval, giving to rest years old disputes between Sindh and Punjab, is a significant achievement but the enormous water challenge needs much more political commitment and institutional action than an agreement between feuding provinces.

The Pakistan Council of Research in Water Resources says the country has about a seven years window to plug this gap. PCRWR predicts that the country will approach "absolute scarcity" water levels by 2025 if its storage capacity is not enhanced. The NWP aims at doubling the water storage capacity from the current abysmal 30 days to 60, which looks highly unlikely, given the level of seriousness at the official level. And even if Pakistan achieves this feat by completing three Mangla sized dams on fast track by 2025, or even dozens of smaller ones, our water future remains insecure because it will need an additional 60 days storage capacity to reach the global minimum of 120 days.

Neighbouring India has 220 days water carry over capacity while Egypt, a lower riparian country like Pakistan, has over 900 days.

Pakistan's water challenge will be further compounded by the effects of global warming. It is losing its balmy spring to scorching summer at a pace never anticipated before. Temperatures shot past 40 degrees Celsius in March and 50 Celsius in April in parts of southern Pakistan

Pakistan's water challenge will be further compounded by the effects of global warming. It is losing its balmy spring to scorching summer at a pace never anticipated before. Temperatures shot past 40 degrees Celsius in March and 50Celsius in April in parts of southern Pakistan. Scientists warn that such odd spikes in mercury will be the new normal in the changing weather patterns. If non-seasonal high temperatures remain persistent, food production will be adversely effected. The rule of thumb for temperature versus crop nourishment, experts say, is simple – a 1-degree Celsius increase in temperature can drive down crop yield by 10 percent.

Higher temperatures increase the water demand for both agriculture and domestic consumption and can trigger a full-blown crisis, especially when it is not available. WAPDA has reported that snow availability in the catchment areas of reservoirs was 50 percentless than normal this year and rivers are likely to receive 11 MAF less water.

Most of the seven rivers flowing into Pakistan from Afghanistan, including Kabul, are also likely to stay below normal. Afghanistan received the lowest snowfall in the past 17 years this winter. Agriculture in the landlocked country heavily dependent on water from melting snow. A decrease in snowmelt is adversely impacting its food production.

It is already grappling with a drought affecting two-thirds of the country, triggering food shortages. The United Nations has warned that a 2.5 million tons shortage of wheat this year could impact up to two million people. Food shortages in Afghanistan will bring Pakistan's agriculture sector under more pressure, and demand additional grain stocks. But growing more grain will be a challenge while also dealing with worsening water scarcity. Low inflows in rivers is bound to

increase pressure on Pakistan's depleting aquifers. It is already pumping more water out of ground than can be replenished naturally.

A 2015 NASA study found that the Indus Basin aquifer, shared between India and Pakistan, is the second most overdrawn in the world, sinking the water tables at rates as high as three feet a year in Indian Punjab, one of the two states that produces 37 percent of India's food. The situation is no different on the Pakistani side. Quetta is projected to run out of water by the middle of the century, or even before, if additional water resources are not mobilised. The situation in Karachi is even worse while Gwadar, the mainstay of our CPEC-driven future economy, is already without water.

High population rate, lack of storage capacity and overall degradation of water quality are the three factors, other than drop in water inflows and tumbling underground tables, which will accentuate the water crisis. Despite this unfolding disaster, Pakistan's Investment in maintenance, improvement and expansion of its vast hydraulic infrastructure has remained dangerously low. No new reservoirs have been built in the last 44 years since the completion of the Tarbela Dam in 1974. A few are either on the drawing board or subject of preliminary hydrological and environmental studies, and none in advance stages of completion. Thus, no significant increase in the storage capacity is expected in the short term.

Hypothetically, even if the government doubles the water storage capacity over the next ten years, it will still not fill the gap between demand and supply because of population explosion, urbanisation, and water mismanagement. The rapidly growing population, projected to reach 261 million by 2035, will bring more pressure on the agriculture sector to produce food for an additional 50 million people. Water shortage and climate change-driven high temperatures will make it almost impossible to increase food production to meet the demand, unless some drastic measures are taken to increase the water availability and to conserve available resources.

This is a ticking bomb that could go off any time in the near future. The unfolding disaster is an existential threat – one much more threatening than terrorism – and needs a firm political commitment, innovation and long-term planning with clearly defined short term objectives.

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# **Reasons Behind Indo-Pak Truce By Kamran Yousaf**

On May 29, a special hotline contact was established between senior military officials of Pakistan and India. A few hours later, an official announcement was made simultaneously both in New Delhi and Islamabad that the two militaries agree to end hostilities along the Line of Control (LoC) that divides Kashmir between the two neighbours. The two sides also decided to restore the 2003 ceasefire accord. The announcement brought immediate relief to the civilians living on both sides of the disputed territory. At least 150 people, including dozens of civilians, have died on both sides in the last year and a half because of the LoC violence.

The development was unexpected in the absence of any structured dialogue between Pakistan and India. Also, it was not possible for the deal to be struck by the directors general military operations (DGMOs) in just one telephonic conversation. Incidentally, it was a hotline contact between the DGMOs that produced the landmark ceasefire accord in November 2003. However, the real agreement was struck through backchannels and brokered by the then Bush administration, which wanted Pakistan to focus on the western border to deal with the fallout of the invasion of Afghanistan.

Against this backdrop, the current agreement regarding the restoration of 2003 truce was not possible without backchannel diplomacy. The two national security advisers are thought to have played a key role in defusing tensions. The proposal for the restoration of the 2003 agreement was mooted by the Pakistan Army. The question is: why has India agreed to Pakistan's proposal now given the fact that under PM Narendra Modi, Delhi repeatedly spurned Islamabad's peace overtures? There are multiple factors. First, India failed to control the insurgency in the disputed Kashmir region despite massive use of force. Opposition parties in India as well as coalition partners of the Bharatiya Janata Party in the Indian-held Kashmir concluded that Modi's Pakistan and Kashmir policy has failed to achieve anything except more violence. That is why chief minister of India-held Kashmir Mehbooba Mufti was quick to welcome the ceasefire agreement between Pakistan and India. Another factor that may have brought a policy shift

in Indian policy towards Pakistan is the positive signals recently sent by Army Chief General Qamar Javed Bajwa for normalising ties with India.

The ceasefire was not the only development signalling a thaw. Days before the ceasefire agreement, India sent its delegation to Pakistan to attend a counterterrorism conference under the banner of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO). The two countries also held maritime dialogue in New Delhi last week. Moreover, the two countries are set to participate in joint military exercises for the first time along with other SCO members in Russia later this year.

These developments are not happening in isolation. The recent visit of Modi to China helped break the ice between the two countries. Improved Sino-Indian ties will certainly have a positive impact on relationship between Islamabad and New Delhi. The US is thought to have been also now backing the rapprochement between Pakistan and India. The reason is Afghanistan endgame. Despite tensions, the US is still relying on Pakistan for brokering a deal. Recently, the Taliban held secret meetings with Afghan officials to discuss a ceasefire. The US commander in Afghanistan, Gen John Nicholson, said the talks also involved foreign governments and international organisations. Those talks would not have been possible without Pakistan's help. But to take those negotiations to a logical conclusion, there has to be a broader regional arrangement. Continued hostilities between Pakistan and India will certainly be a distraction. Hence, de-escalation of tensions between the two neighbours is inevitable. But will this lead to a sustained dialogue?

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Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1727111/6-reasons-behind-indo-pak-truce/>

# The new NISP By Moeed Yusuf

ONE of the PML-N cabinet's last acts was to approve Pakistan's new National Internal Security Policy. This document, valid for the 2018-2023 period, replaces the first NISP announced in 2014. It was rendered largely inconsequential by the National Action Plan produced later that year.

Every time I hear of a new visionary policy in Pakistan, what follows is a forced read of a document that reinvents the wheel and spurts lofty ideals in superfluous jargon.

The new NISP has given me pause. At one level, it is no different: its ambit is exceptionally broad, it features a fair share of pie-in-the-sky ideas, and it offers an implementation plan so elaborate that it's barely digestible. In its analytical framing and description of the problems and buckets of issues that need correction however, it is exceptional. If those entrusted to implement can grasp the depth of the analysis of this document and commit to its vision, they may be on to something.

The new strategy is built around '6Rs' (reorient, reimagine, reconcile, redistribute, regional approach, and recognise). Collectively, they qualify as what Prof Ricardo Hausmann calls 'binding constraints' ie, the acutest problems that hold progress back.

The National Internal Security Policy captures key constraints.

For me, this is how Pakistan's binding constraints stack up:

First, we are now a society where intolerance of diversity has become a fast-spreading cancer. For all the focus on counterterrorism, the success in recent years cannot overshadow the long-term danger of growing intolerance. Such societal mindsets create greater propensity and sympathy for violence. As peacebuilding literature puts it: counterterrorism, at best, ends violence; acceptance of diversity ensures sustainable peace. We are surely in the red on the latter.



Second, elite capture. Today's Pakistan is of the elite, by the elite, for the elite. Laws are often made and implemented selectively to benefit this elite. They also control and curtail wealth redistribution. Such entrenched discrimination is another dynamic linked to systemic breakdowns in many countries. Yes, there isn't a revolution waiting to happen. And yet, it would be a consequential error to ignore increasing evidence of alienation and suffocation the average citizen feels from a system rigged against them.

Third, mounting international pressures. Two problems stand out. One, the neighbourhood is a mess and the US, India and Afghanistan blame Pakistan for much of it. Thanks to this, Pakistan's global perception is negative — with all the attendant effects on relations with multilateral lenders, investor confidence, etc. Two, the state seems to be responding with little innovation: the world critiques; Pakistan reacts by hunkering down further.

The way out is to turn Pakistan's geographical imperative into an opportunity, by acting as a trade and transit hub between South and Central Asia (in addition to China and the rest of the world through CPEC). Doing so is about the only way in the current environment for Pakistan to build leverage and influence over its neighbours, including India and Afghanistan, give a fillip to the economy, reduce the region's incentives for hard-nosed Machiavellian policies towards each other, and begin to change Pakistan's international image. Sans this, international pressure will continue, as perhaps will the link between poor neighbourhood ties and violence inside Pakistan that NISP outlines.

Fourth, the public sector is in a shambles. Policymaking capacity across the civilian sphere has eroded over time. Even the basic capacity to conceptualise and think strategically about new challenges and opportunities is almost absent. Moreover, in terms of security-sector challenges, the demands on the state apparatus far outweigh its resources and ability to coordinate coherent responses. The abilities of the criminal justice system are light years away from synching up to the needs. The military has proven it has the hard power to prevent a total breakdown but the deep civil-military disconnect prevents the kind of coordinated response needed to ensure irreversible gains.

Remarkably, NISP's 6Rs capture each of these constraints aptly: reimagine, reconcile, and redistribute amplify the need to promote greater tolerance in a

more equitable society; regional approach talks up the importance of geoeconomics; and recognise and reorient point to the urgency of strengthening the public sector. The way forward proposed by NISP is a logical extension of this analysis, and therefore equally apt.

The new NISP has the ingredients to be useful. But its success depends on how seriously those entrusted with its implementation take it. The authors of the policy deserve credit for what they have produced; now the next government(s) — federal and, more importantly, provincial — must make it their own rather than seeking to reinvent the wheel.

Source : <https://www.dawn.com/news/1412123/the-new-nisp>

# **How to Manage Pak-US Ties By Ayaz**

## **Ahmed**

It has been one of the most difficult tasks for almost all successive governments in Pakistan to effectively manage relations with the US. Even though Pakistan has helped the US achieve its overriding security and economic objectives in South Asia since the 1950s, Washington has unfairly blamed Islamabad for propping up the Afghan Taliban to perpetuate the festering Afghan insurgency.

US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo has recently told Congress that American diplomats are being treated badly in Islamabad. Pakistan's Foreign Office has, however, termed these allegations as unfounded. It has also shown its reservations about the undue restrictions placed on the movement of its diplomats in Washington. The ongoing climate of distrust and blame game between the two cold war partners suggests that the fraught Pak-US relations will further deteriorate to the lowest ebb owing to the aggressive attitude adopted by the Trump administration towards Pakistan's alleged flirtation with the Afghan Taliban.

The Pak-US relations have been on a slippery slope since Trump accused Pakistan of supporting the Afghan Taliban even though it has received \$33 billion in aid. When Pakistan refused to accept the US policy dictations against the Taliban, the Trump administration suspended economic aid to Pakistan and placed it on the FATF 'grey list' with the diplomatic support of some of its Western allies.

As Pakistan seems to have decided not to fall in line with the US South Asia strategy, the Trump administration will probably adopt more punitive measures to punish Islamabad economically and stymie its alignment with Russia and China in the region. At this critical juncture, the leadership in Islamabad should consult all foreign policy experts, relevant think tanks and seasoned academics of international relations to ensure that the country is safeguarded from the wrath of the wounded superpower.

Some feel that US diplomats in Islamabad have started flagrantly disregarding Pakistan's domestic laws. It seems that these diplomats think they should have

carte blanche to run over ordinary Pakistani citizens with their cars because Pakistan is financially dependent on them. Colonel Joseph Emanuel Hall, the US military attaché in Islamabad, jumped a traffic light in the capital city, killing a Pakistani citizen and injuring another. On January 27, 2011, Raymond Davis had killed two men in Lahore. Although diplomats cannot be arrested and punished for civil and criminal acts under the 1961 Vienna Convention on Diplomatic Relations, it doesn't mean that envoys can willfully violate the law of the receiving state – as US diplomats have done in Pakistan.

The lingering Afghan insurgency is the major irritant straining Pak-US relations. Being a world power with practical experience of conflicts all over the world, the US is fully alive to the fact that it cannot militarily crush over the Afghan Taliban on account of Afghanistan's treacherous landscape and all-out regional support to the Taliban, and the stiff resistance of the Pakhtuns. So, the US has continued to heap blame on Pakistan in order to hide its abject failure in terms of mopping up the Taliban and reconstructing a war-torn Afghanistan.

Despite the America's bullying and unfriendly attitude towards Pakistan, the latter sorely needs the support of the former to accelerate its economic growth and safeguard its territory from the spectre of terrorism and insurgency. Islamabad is aware that the US has the power and wherewithal to cripple a country economically and destabilise it on the security front. If Pakistan snubs the US and completely tilts toward China and Russia, the US will presumably resort to openly supporting Balochistan's low-level insurgency, terrorism in the tribal areas, and sanctioning Pakistan on the clumsy grounds of abetting terrorism and nuclear proliferation.

Since the 1950s, Pakistan has lacked efficient and pragmatic foreign policymakers. The country's deeply flawed policy of aligning with the US during the cold war against the former Soviet Union deprived the country of the USSR's technological, diplomatic, economic and military assistance. Islamabad's alignment with Washington against the threat of communism and its hostile relations with India made the country a security state. Pakistan was militarily dependent on the US. This emboldened Washington to pile up sanctions on Islamabad under the Symington, Solar, Glenn and Pressler amendments in order to inhibit Pakistan's nuclear programme.

Our successive governments have dismally failed to benefit from the integration of the world economy since the 1980s. The country should grasp the interconnectedness of the global economy by cultivating robust trade and military ties with Russia, China, East Asian and OECD countries. The diversification of external relations would compel the US to respect and value its relations with Pakistan. This would also bar the US from dictating and pressurising Pakistan, as such a bullying behaviour would further push Pakistan towards Russia and China.

It is time to realise that without economic self-sufficiency, the country can never be able to independently formulate and execute its foreign policy. The Trump administration has made Pakistan a laughing stock worldwide by accusing Islamabad of only lying and deceiving Washington, despite receiving billions of dollars in economic and military aid.

Has our leadership ever considered why the US gives special importance to India in the region? India's huge consumer market, potentially expanding defence sector and economic self-reliance have attracted the US to make India its strategic partner, supporting the Indian bid to join the NSG and make India the regional hegemon.

Our economic dependence on Saudi Arabia, China and the US has deprived the country of an independent and proactive foreign policy. At present, the US doesn't respect our territorial sovereignty, national interest and status as a nuclear power. This is mainly on account of our heavy economic reliance on the US.

The government must broaden taxation, industrialise the country, eradicate massive corruption, and make Pakistan a regional trade hub. The US would never try to browbeat and dictate an economically strong Pakistan. Our strong economic position will also goad the US into supporting our bid to join the NSG.

The country's leadership has also failed to understand the value of the global public opinion. Though it is imperative to win wars on the battlefield, it is equally important to dominate and influence public opinions across the world – especially in the West. On account of its adroit diplomacy and sound education system, India has defeated Pakistan on US talk shows and think tanks. Due to such

Indian diplomatic offensive against Pakistan, the Trump administration is reluctant to accept Pakistan's battlefield successes and sacrifices against terrorist and militant groups in the tribal areas.

In addition to political and military diplomacy, the country should promote public diplomacy in order to effectively project Pakistan's positive image in Western capitals. Such an initiative requires greater interaction at the civil society level. What is needed is that Pakistan's intellectuals, academic circles, experienced media personalities and diaspora need to be more active in their interaction with US think tanks such as the Brookings, Carnegie and Hudson institutes as these institutions play a significant role in shaping US domestic and foreign policies.

Pakistan should take stock of the evolving multi-polar world and the shifting regional alignments in Asia. Apart from establishing working relations with China, Russia and various East Asian and European countries, Islamabad should seek ways to cooperate with Washington in convergent areas and dexterously manage tensions where the interests of both countries diverge.

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# **Pak-Afghan, Sino-India Détente? New Dynamism Sweeping Asia By Imtiaz Gul**

Asia – from East to the West – is in the grip of intense diplomatic activity.

The Army Chief Gen. Qamar Javed Bajwa spent a day in Kabul Monday to discuss with President Ashraf Ghani the progress in the rejuvenated bilateral dialogue. Only a day earlier a landmark meeting between the Pak-Afghan Directors General military operations of the two countries at Rawalpindi took place to finalise deployment of liaison officers (LOs), establishment of Ground Coordination Centres (GCCs) for intelligence sharing and monitoring of cross-border movement of militants.

The same day the US President Donald Trump courted the north Korean leader Kil Jong Un for the much hyped summit on possible denuclearization of N.Korea.

A few days earlier, the US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo's phone call to Gen. Bajwa to discuss the "need for political reconciliation in Afghanistan", preceded by US Vice President Mike Pence's telephonic conversation with the caretaker Prime Minister Nasir ul Mulk, the first major high-level US-Pakistan engagement since Donald Trump announced his strategy for South Asia and Afghanistan in August last year.

These coincided with a meeting between the Chinese President Xi and the Indian prime minister Narendra Modi ahead of the 18th Shanghai Cooperation Organisation summit in the coastal Chinese city of Qingdao. In this bilateral, the second within six weeks, Xi sounded "cooperation and accommodation."

During the SCO summit, Xi called for further carrying forward the Shanghai Spirit to surmount difficulties, defuse risks and meet challenges.

Without any reference to the US-led NATO, Xi delivered a firm No to the western geopolitics disguised in the "narrative of security."

"We should reject the Cold War mentality and confrontation between blocks and oppose the practices of seeking absolute security of oneself at the expense of

the security of other countries, so as to achieve security of all,” said President Xi, and announced that China will set up a 30-billion-yuan (\$4.7 billion) equivalent special lending facility within the framework of the Inter-Bank Consortium of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization. Increasingly, the Chinese leadership’s outward thrust is enveloped in the talk of the Shanghai Spirit ( shared future, move toward a new type of international relations, and build an open, inclusive, clean and beautiful world that enjoys lasting peace, universal security and common prosperity).

And this possibly also provides the context not only for the unusual warming of the Indo-China relations but also the revival of formal contacts under the Afghanistan-Pakistan Action Plan for Peace and Solidarity (APAPPS), a new mechanism for bilateral engagement.

Based on recent interactions with officials in Beijing and Islamabad, one can easily decipher the context of this extraordinary string of diplomacy from East to West Asia in many ways.

Firstly, President Xi seems embarked on a charm offensive to win over as many friends as possible around China, meaning securing his country’s surroundings, and hence his two high-profile meetings with Modi

Secondly, Pakistan has been urged to pursue structured engagement with Afghanistan – regardless of what India or the US does there. Meaning thereby tightening the loose ends of its relations with the conflict-battered country.

Thirdly, stick to APAPPS mechanism, which rests on a commitment by President Ashraf Ghani to refrain from the one-way blame-game.

One would assume that Ghani and his colleagues realized that their policy of undermining Pakistan did not deliver the results they had expected. Nor did it benefit Afghanistan in any way.

Officials opine that the Afghan leadership possibly also saw through that that – together with India – they may have done some damage to Pakistan internationally but this did not help Afghanistan either, a country that itself has been a victim of violence for decades but was being used against Pakistan.



Fourth, the Pak-Afghan-China trilateral meetings at the highest foreign ministry levels do point to the buffer that Beijing has provided between Afghanistan and Pakistan. China is indeed playing a mitigating role in the region.

President Xi's engagement with the Indian premier Modi is one indication of the Chinese strategy to soften India's opposition to Pakistan and get them on board for the BRI projects and the Afghan reconciliation.

No surprise therefore that after a long time Ghani in particular has begun talking about the need to "close the conflict" and not about winning the war against Taliban.

Fifth, all stakeholders are puzzled by the fact that, while the US dumps the blame of violence on Taliban and the Haqqani Network, Daesh/Islamic State of Khorassan Province continues to stage spectacularly deadly attacks, including the one on June 11 that killed at least 17 and left over dozen injured. The group has in fact claimed most of the high-profile attacks in Kabul, Mazar, Helmand and Ghanzi in the last 14 months.

What is Daesh and who is its driver, is the big enigma not only for outsiders but also the Afghans themselves.

Sixth, the US – if secretary Pompeo's call to General Bajwa is any indicator – has come around the point that instead of peddling the "Taliban-Haqqani Network" unidirectional theme, it needs to take into account what the US Inspector General John Sopko and former US-ISAF commander General John Allen say about the internal dynamics of the Afghan conflict and on Pakistan's role in it. Speaking at a Brookings Institution seminar on May 24, both essentially rubbished the decade-old allegations that single-out Pakistan for the ills of Afghanistan. They spoke of the billions of US dollars that has thrown up a deadly nexus comprising corrupt officials, warlords, insurgents, terrorists and organized criminal syndicates.

Seventh, as evidenced at a security seminar end of May in Islamabad, almost all Central Asian states are expecting President Ghani and other members of his

government to act as a bridge, and not a barrier in the way of peace and regional trade connectivity.

Last, but not the least China, Pakistan and the central Asian states recognize the need to work on the internal reconciliation between Taliban and Kabul through a regionally coordinated approach involving all the direct and indirect stakeholders in regional peace.

Little doubt that the road to peace in Afghanistan goes not only through Pakistan but also India and Kabul itself, which needs to be insulated from negative Indo-US influences through a construction, cooperative multi-lateral engagement.

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# **Pakistan's Major Problems And Their Solutions By Syed Zeeshan Haider**

Keeping democratic institutions strong

Pakistan has faced major challenges in its socioeconomic situation over past seventy years. However, not all problems have been overcome. The key problems of today include: water scarcity; the lack of sustainable development projects; an increasingly unemployed youth population; the lack of focus on human development projects; a continuous reduction in the foreign exchange reserves; the increase in non-developmental expenditures; the increase in public debt; the unequal distribution of wealth; the rising deprivation in Baluchistan, interior Sindh, and Southern Punjab; unpleasant relations in the region, especially with the eastern and western neighbours; the poor condition of small and medium enterprises (SMEs); and the failure to effectively implement the local bodies system, which is considered the basis for democracy.

One of the major issues the country is facing is a shortage of water. According to research by the American University, Pakistan is among the top ten countries in the world which are suffering from a water crisis. Handling this water crisis will not be easy. It is necessary that work on the Kalabagh and Diamer-Basha Dams be completed at the earliest possible opportunity. According to a recent report, 40 million acre-feet (MAF) of water is draining into the sea due to lack of dams. The Kalabagh Dam has a capacity to store 6.4 MAF of water, the Diamer-Basha Dam can store 5.8 MAF, and the Dasu Dam can store 6 MAF of water. If these three dams are completed, then lot of water will be saved from being wasted which may aid in reducing the water shortage.

If these dams are not constructed, Pakistan will face a drinking water crisis and its agriculture sector will be destroyed. In Pakistan, agriculture has a deep connection with other industries, such as the textile and pesticide industries. Due to a lack of water, both agriculture and agriculture-related industries are on the brink of total collapse. The agricultural sector is affected by both the lack of water as well as the government's neglect: such as not providing reasonable support prices or subsidies on fertilisers and seeds.

Public debt is increasing because of which we must pay attention to the value of the rupee. Ishaq Dar has controlled the dollar due to which inflation remained under control but foreign exchange reserves continued to be depleted

Air pollution is another major issue. The country's climate is getting worse day by day, for which trees must be planted. The increasing severity of floods and silting of dams is leading to decrease in their storage capacity as a result of deforestation.

In the future, the water crisis will more serious than the load shedding crisis. While the load shedding crisis has been somewhat overcome, our transmission lines are worn out which causes the entire power system to keep on tripping. Timely action is needed to address this issue so that the requirements of the growing population can be fulfilled. Today there continues to be load shedding despite having no shortfall. Thus, even if we were able to generate more electricity, load shedding would still not be reduced because of the lack of capacity in the transmission system.

There is a lack of sustainable development projects in Pakistan. The number of youth in our country is constantly increasing, which means that unemployment is growing rapidly as well. That is why technical education needs to be provided. B-Tech education and other technical education should be made available to everyone. The maximum number of youth possible should be equipped with the skills they need to earn money abroad so that they can contribute to the gross national product (GNP).

The country's current population is more than 210 million. The growing population has a negative impact on the country reserves and depletes resources. Unchecked population growth can be extremely detrimental to Pakistan's development. For this, a family planning emergency must be triggered and must be enforced.

The country faces an unequal distribution of wealth. In Musharraf's era, this phenomenon increased rapidly because most of the economic experts at the time belonged to the banking sector. This meant that the agricultural sector was ignored and the small and medium business sector was also affected. The rich became richer and the poor became poorer. Afterwards, the Pakistan Peoples'

Party and the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz came into power which allowed this difference to be narrowed down. This suggests that democracy is a good option to achieve equal distribution of wealth. The local bodies system from Article 140 of the constitution states that power should be transferred to the lower levels of government. When this transition finally occurs, it will improve the condition of the public as well.

The country's tax net needs to expand as only a small segment of the population pays tax. Landlords, civil and military bureaucracy, large companies, bank owners, and housing society owners are included in the elite of Pakistan and are given special privileges in the form of tax cuts to avoid certain taxes.

Our commercial banks should invest in the SME sector. Projects like the Benazir Income Support Fund will not end poverty, but may rather create a huge population of poor people that are dependent on social welfare. Dr Younus's microfinance model can be implemented to revive the country's economy.

Non-developmental funds should be reduced. Attention needs to be paid to issues like food security, education, and health. In our country, 3.5pc of the GDP is spent on health and 2.8pc goes to education (as per budget 2016-17). Both of these sectors need significant increase in budget.

If the democratic government plays more proactive as well as assertive role in foreign policy, it is likely that relations with Afghanistan and India would improve. Spending on defense could be reduced and this money could be applied to development projects, health, and education.

Public debt is increasing because of which we must pay attention to the value of the rupee. Ishaq Dar has controlled the dollar due to which inflation remained under control but foreign exchange reserves continued to be depleted. Over the last five years, exports have declined by \$4 billion while imports have increased by \$8 billion. In 2012-13, our exports were \$24.5 billion and have now fallen to \$19.20 billion, while imports were \$45.1 billion and have grown to \$49.40 billion. The fiscal deficit now exceeds \$30 billion. Serious measures are needed in this area to rectify the problem.

The most important thing that should be focused on is strengthening the democracy. In the past, most of the worst decisions took place under dictators. For example, if democracy had continued after Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the country would not have taken part in the Afghan war and in the Musharraf era, the load shedding problem would have not arisen. The country's future possibilities for development and prosperity depend on the continuation of democracy in the country.

Source: <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/06/16/pakistans-major-problems-and-their-solutions/>

# **China Offers Trilateral Talks For Indo-Pak Peace By Mian Abrar**

Xi tells Modi Pakistan is 'ready to resume talks' with India

ISLAMABAD: China has conveyed India a message of peace from Islamabad and urged Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi to initiate a dialogue with Pakistan to help reduce tensions between the two nuclear-capable nations.

The development comes on the heels of the completion of five-year tenure of the Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government.

Perhaps, with the departure of the PML-N chief Nawaz Sharif, the military was eager to commence dialogue with India, reflecting the talks offer came directly from the military establishment which had 'suspected' Nawaz Sharif's overtures with Modi.

To add credence to the information available with Pakistan Today, Indian media also reported on Monday, quoting Chinese Ambassador to New Delhi Luo Zhaohui, that China has proposed a trilateral dialogue involving China, Pakistan and India.

Speaking at a seminar in Delhi, Ambassador Luo Zhaohui said China "cannot stand another Doklam" and pitched a trilateral summit on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO).

"We cannot stand another Doklam; we need to control, manage, narrow differences through expanding cooperation. The boundary question was left over by history. We need to find a mutually acceptable solution through special representatives," said the Chinese envoy.

"Some Indian friends suggested that India, China and Pakistan may have some kind of trilateral summit on the sidelines of the SCO. So, if China, Russia and Mongolia can have a trilateral summit, then why not India, China and Pakistan?" he said, adding that 5Cs would help promote India-China ties, including communication, cooperation, contacts, coordination and control.

Though Ambassador Luo did not elaborate on whether the proposed trilateral mechanism would include Kashmir dispute, the reference to Doklam reflected he meant Kashmir as well.

Doklam is a mountainous border conflict between China and India and the two countries had recently been involved in a border conflict.

It merits mention here that China has already initiated the dialogue to help improve bilateral relations between Islamabad and Kabul which has greatly helped the two countries to remove misunderstandings. However, the history of Indo-Pakistan acrimony is quite different from Pakistan-Afghanistan mistrust.

Official sources in Islamabad said that President Xi urged the Indian PM to start talks with Pakistan during the landmark meeting in Wuhan, China.

“President Xi Jinping offset Modi’s agenda by conveying him a message from Islamabad to restart dialogue – a surprise which balanced out Modi’s own agenda for talks,” said sources privy to the development.

“When Narendra Modi landed at Wuhan International Airport on April 27, he had no clue whether the Chinese president would blow him away with a secret message from Islamabad. But when Xi conveyed the message, it took Modi by a surprise who had prepared himself on Indo-China issues only,” a diplomatic source told Pakistan Today.

The sources further said that the offer made by Xi Jinping was a part of his new initiative to bring Pakistan and India to the table.

The message for peace comes when Pakistan is ready to go to the polls. The timing of the dialogue process also suits Pakistan’s military establishment.

Chief of Army Staff General Qamar Javed Bajwa has been very busy in dealing with Pakistan’s foreign policy. His recent visits to various countries in a bid to improve bilateral relations have been termed as “military diplomacy” by political commentators.



Bajwa has been 'credited' for having a detailed plan about Pakistan's foreign relations called "The Bajwa Doctrine". He has already been shuttling between Kabul and Islamabad for trust building between the two neighbours and has been successful in his peace overtures.

He has also achieved some success in repairing Pakistan-US relations and recent warmth between the two countries reflects some improvement after a rocky path in bilateral ties since 2011.

'Rule of law' is the theme Gen Bajwa has been selling, stating that army would remain within its constitutional ambit but would keep playing its role to stabilise the democratic process.

When approached, Foreign Office Spokesman Dr Mohammad Faisal chose not to comment over the question sent to him.

A former diplomat said that China was building pressure on New Delhi and Islamabad as hostility between the two archrivals did not go down well with the multibillion-dollar project launched by China under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI).

"With China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) reaching completion, Beijing is now building 'soft pressure' on Pakistan and India to resume talks. For the very purpose, China has now coined the term of 'trilateral dialogue' reflecting its seriousness on improvement in Indo-Pakistan ties," he said.

The former ambassador said that Pakistan would not jump to the dialogue offer until the nature of proposal is crystallized. "Pakistan would be keen to know whether the trilateral dialogue would include Kashmir issue or not," the former ambassador concluded.

Source: <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/06/18/china-offers-trilateral-summit-for-indo-pak-peace/>

# **Keeping Pakistan out of the Nuclear Game**

## **By Beenish Altaf**

There are nine nuclear weapon states. Four of these have not signed the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT). These include Pakistan, Israel, India, and North Korea-which withdrew from the treaty. These four states are referred to as non-NPT nuclear weapon states.

Pakistan possess nuclear weapons, and aspires to become a member of the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), an association of 48 nations that oversees the international trade of atomic and atomic-related materials and technologies with a shared commitment to global non-proliferation.

Although, not a signatory of the NPT or the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), the country's experience in civil nuclear program warrants the NSG's attention. Former Strategic Plans Division (SPD) director general Lt Gen Mazhar Jamil said that there is a concern that the non-proliferation regime is becoming increasingly politicised and discriminatory. Despite these abnormalities in the nuclear order, Pakistan remains positively engaged.

Reportedly, India is not considering any proposal to sign the NPT as a precondition for joining the NSG. However, the US is spearheading India's campaign for inclusion in the group. The super power contends that after attaining membership of other multilateral export control regimes like Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR), Australia Group, and Wassenaar Agreement, the Indian case will be ripe for membership.

Ironically, the keepers of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime are insisting on embracing a non-NPT South Asian nuclear weapon state (India) for nuclear commerce, while discriminating against another South Asian another (Pakistan) obtaining the same status. However, a small notwithstanding depleted group is holding out, preventing consensus on new admissions.

Ironically, the keepers of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime are insisting on embracing a non-NPT South Asian nuclear weapon state (India) for

nuclear commerce, while discriminating against another South Asian country (Pakistan) obtaining the same status

The credibility of the international nuclear non-proliferation regime faces a big question mark. The materialisation of the Indo-US nuclear deal posed stern questions for the non-proliferation regime and nuclear trade worldwide. It managed the NSG waiver without accepting NPT.

In addition, the deal also excluded eight Indian nuclear reactors from IAEA safeguards that are well suited for 1,250 kilograms plutonium upgrades for weapons. The US cannot in any scenario call the step an advantage to the global non-proliferation regime.

Paradoxically speaking, the creators of non-proliferation regime and its cartels have created room for nuclear mishandling within the group itself.

Countries, namely United States, United Kingdom, Canada, France, Japan, West Germany and Soviet Union got together to form the Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG), in response to India's diversion of plutonium from a Canadian-based reactor from peaceful to not-so-peaceful designs. The NSG's objective or purpose was to regulate nuclear commerce so further diversions as that of India could not take place again. India used the plutonium for military purposes, which resulted in Indian Peaceful Nuclear Explosion (PNE) in 1974.

Although, the group is not a formal organisation and its guidelines are non-binding, its members are still expected to incorporate the guidelines into their national export control laws. Ironically, it does not mean that any country-specific diversion or waiver would become legal under the guidelines of NSG. Indubitably, in order to step forward and improve the global non-proliferation goals, putting in new members in NSG would be an encouraging and constructive option. Along with that, it would be equally vital to uphold the efficacy and effectiveness of NSG. Therefore, the expansion should be carried out on non-discriminatory bases — by taking on a criteria-based approach.

However, the key decisions at NSG, like the admission of new members, are undoubtedly politicised. The decisions instead of following an equitable and non-discriminatory approach are motivated by geo-political considerations.

Admittedly, Pakistan does what it can; the non-proliferation regime should also do what it must, to become equitable and rule-based.

Nevertheless, stalemate on the issue of admission of non-NPT countries persisted at the last meeting of the consultative group of the 48 members' cartel, controlling the international nuclear trade.

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Source: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/254649/keeping-pakistan-out-of-the-nuclear-game/>

# **Terrorism, Understanding and Solutions By** **Hamayun Sarfraz Chattha**

Extremism is dying, thanks to Pakistan's policy makers and security institutions that have played their part in pushing our country away from the swath of extremism that has engulfed this region since long. It started flourishing three, four decades ago and knew no limits, taking thousands of precious lives and causing irreversible harm. Terrorists are dying and so are the ideologies that inspired them to this way of life in the first place. How this has been made possible is a matter of concern for the whole world, as they were not successful in curbing this menace themselves.

The Pakistani version of history talks about extremism and terrorism as something which was never endorsed by society, rather developed using religion as a tool. Developed countries have always blamed religion and third world countries for flourishing extremism and terrorism. Which is simply not possible, considering the resources required to conduct these activities. On the other hand, people from third world countries, and especially Muslims, always blamed the west for using extremism as a tool for furthering their political interests.

People of these regions truly believe that if developed countries resolve not to use extremism for economic and political purposes, then these ideologies will die a natural death. I am not sympathetic to religion, but to be fair it has been used as a tool, like in India, where it is based in nationalism and is heavily influenced by politics.

A very subtle look into steps being taken by Pakistan prove how committed they are in ridding our society of this disease.

Even though the second step will always remain education, and the empowerment of the masses, this first step is absolutely essential as well. Reforms undertaken in our system of communication have also had positive and encouraging results.

People from third world countries, and especially Muslims, have always blamed the West for using extremism as a tool for furthering their political interests

It requires concerted efforts and resolve on the part of world leaders to end this menace. A regular discussions at international forums need to be conducted so as to better understand the causes of extremism and terrorism. This is mainly because people of our region have a different understanding about its various causes than people of developed countries. Our overwhelming majority believes in peace and has always welcomed steps that can bring positive change to our society.

Poverty, illiteracy, sectarianism, financial incentives, political and economic agendas, states rivalries, religion, political ideologies and the need to oppress others are considered to be major causes of terrorism. However, for it to succeed, there needs to be a sizable inflow of capital as well as logistical support, something that almost every Pakistani understands quite well.

So, I appeal to the world, if you want to eradicate terrorism once and for all, do listen to us and give us at least an opportunity to prove ourselves.

The writer is LLB (Hons) (London), Barrister at Law and Advocate High Court.

Published in Daily Times, June 25th 2018.

Source: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/257592/terrorism-understanding-and-solutions/>

# **Pakistan maintains numerical superiority over India in nuclear weapons: report**

Pakistan maintains a lead in the number of nuclear warheads when compared to arch-rival India, according to an assessment by the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute on Monday, reported The Times of India.

The Indian publication noted that the country was now reliant on developing a deterrence capability which focused on survival in fear of strikes by Pakistan.

According to the newspaper, Islamabad has 140-150 nuclear warheads, as compared to 130 nuclear warheads owned by New Delhi. China, compared to the two countries, has 280 nuclear weapons.

The SIPRI report also highlighted that superpowers like the United States and Russia possess thousands of nuclear weapons, and account for 92 per cent of the nuclear stockpiles around the world.

SIPRI also stated that every nuclear-armed country is in the process of developing or deploying new nuclear weapons systems.

Nuclear conflict: Pakistan, India increasingly reliant on mediators

“India and Pakistan are both expanding their nuclear weapon stockpiles as well as developing new land, sea and air-based missile delivery systems. China continues to modernise its nuclear weapon delivery systems and is slowly increasing the size of its nuclear arsenal,” added SIPRI.

The Times of India quoted Indian establishment sources as saying that the country was now preparing a defence strategy to counter a threat of encirclement from China and Pakistan.

“The number of warheads do not really matter. With a declared no-first use (NFU) nuclear policy, India is keen to ensure survivability and credibility of our assets and NC3 (nuclear command, control and communication) systems for

assured second-strike capabilities...We have achieved this to a large extent,” claimed the source.

Nuclearisation of Indian Ocean pushing Pakistan, India closer to war: report

Islamabad also developed 70-km range Nasr (Hatf-IX) missiles capable of carrying nuclear warheads as an effective battlefield counter to India’s ‘Cold Start’ strategy of swift, high-voltage conventional strikes into enemy territory, the Indian publication acknowledged.

“For India, nuclear weapons are not war-fighting weapons. But we need credible minimum deterrence, with the certainty of massive retaliation against adversaries,” added the Indian source.

India wants to achieve a nuclear stockpile of 200 warheads in the decade ahead to counter the Chinese threat, according to The Times of India.

The tri-services Strategic Forces Command in India is now in the process of inducting India’s first intercontinental ballistic missile, the over 5,000-km range Agni-V missile, which can hit even the northernmost region of China, said the report by the Indian newspaper.

This article originally appeared in The Times of India

Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1737517/9/>



# **The Weight of Our Water and Energy Crises**

## **By Syed Shujaat Ahmed**

The water crisis in Pakistan is worsening with each passing day, and the increasing population growth along with drastic changes in climate have only added to this alarming situation. In a recently released report, the International Monetary Fund (IMF) has pointed out that of the countries facing water shortages, Pakistan takes the third worst position.

If one looks at Pakistan's water availability and usage, studies reveal that 96 percent of our water is being used for agriculture, while industrial and domestic sectors use two percent each. Within the domestic sector, 35 percent of the water supply is not included in the count. This usage also accounts for energy production and supply of said energy to the national grid.

When one looks at the energy contribution through water sources, the contribution of hydel power to the national grid stands at 29 percent. Of this contribution, a majority is being contributed by Tarbela Dam followed by Ghazi-Barotha Hydropower Project and Mangla Dam.

In one of the studies conducted by Sustainable Development Policy Institute (SDPI), the following water challenges will lead to detrimental impacts on our economy and social fabric. These include depletion of forest resources leading to increased soil erosion, silting of reservoirs and increased variability of flows, depletion of surface storage capacities by silting and groundwater resources with sharply declining water table in Balochistan, and high population growth rates and high rate of migrants towards urban centres.

With the exhaustion of water resources leading to the current energy crisis, a number of challenges and concerns arise regarding the shortage of electricity in the country. Key reasons for this shortage though are the inability of responsible companies to recover the full economic cost from the consumers, the existence of administrative line losses, and the high cost of maintaining subsidies (to finance energy sector deficit). As mentioned by Vaqar Ahmed in his book Pakistan's Agenda for Economic Reforms, the effective use of hydel resources

also adds to this concern — Pakistan has the potential to generate 50,000 MW of hydropower.

Studies reveal that 96 percent of Pakistan's water is being used for agriculture, while industrial and domestic sectors use two percent each

Similarly, both energy and water crises are also caused by inadequate resources. For example, the case of Golin Gol Hydel project in Chitral. The project is located far away from any major city, and there are a number of challenges that in the long run will hinder the development and sustainability of this project. These challenges include the weather, and climate effects, and road connectivity.

Besides these challenges, the number of water resources with the potential to produce energy and actual production along with utilisation also brings in numerous challenges. These challenges result in low productivity due to sudden power breakdowns bringing loss to the economy at the macro level. This significance can be viewed from percentage representation of business community (66 percent) giving energy high priority.

Further adding to the productivity challenges, studies also reveal that power breakdowns have affected GDP growth, raising inflation and resulted in capital outflow from the country — as is the case of textile industries where a number of units have moved to Bangladesh. Also, the cost of electricity generation is very high mainly due to faulty fuel mix and use of mechanised technology.

Thus for energy reforms to improve productivity and sustain the economy in the long run, political parties need to prioritise a number of agenda points ahead of the upcoming elections. Firstly, political parties should make both water and energy key features of their manifesto. In the manifesto, priority should be given to water and then energy. In water, preference should be given to water conservation and storage with facilities bearing the pressure of each season. This will thus further help improve the energy sector in terms of generation, balancing demand and supply.

Secondly, there is a need to bring a uniform policy at the national level. To make this policy effective, there is also a need for consensus at the national level.

Thirdly, for implementation, there should be a forum with representatives from each province — including political and technical representatives. Representatives from the technical side should look into the framework and challenges, which can be a barrier in implementation, while political representatives should take up advocacy, based on recommendations from technical representatives and legislate where needed.

Fourthly, there is also a need to come up with more water facilities along with improving the capacity of existing ones. New facilities should be constructed in a manner that they can connect a number of cities without any challenge from weather and infrastructure. Within these facilities, there should also be the provision for water facilities targeting jungles and those areas where trees can grow.

Fifthly, policies such as environment, water and energy should be aligned with one another, and they should be connected to each other. The focus should be such that a research component should also be dealt with accordingly.

These recommendations will not only improve the water situation across the country but will also help in curtailing the energy challenges.

The writer is associated with the Sustainable Development Policy Institute

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Source: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/258556/the-weight-of-our-water-and-energy-crises/>

# **The Grey List By Aasim Sajjad Akhtar**

ON Wednesday night, Pakistani officialdom's worst fears were realised when the high-profile Financial Action Task Force followed through on the warning it issued in February and formally announced that Pakistan has been placed on FATF's so-called grey list. This effectively means that we are now only one step removed from being explicitly labelled a sponsor of terrorism.

Like many Pakistanis, I am galled by the duplicity of the 'international community'. Shifting all the blame for the global and varied phenomenon that is 'terrorism' to a handful of countries is at best counterproductive, and at worst outrageous. There is hardly a state in the world today that does not use 'terror' as a political weapon, whether to suppress dissent at home or serve cynical strategic interests abroad.

The specifically 'Islamist' brand of terror that has enveloped Syria, Libya, Iraq, Afghanistan, Yemen and spectacularly rears its head in Western countries regularly cannot be attributed only to terror financing in Pakistan or the few other countries on the FATF grey (and black) list. Whether one considers the historic support of Western imperialist countries to the factories of Islamist militancy that were built during the 1980s, or the militarism and xenophobia that has characterised the dubious 'war on terror', the material and ideological terrain upon which 'terrorism' thrives is sustained by states the world over.

Having said this, those of us who for years have been crying hoarse over the establishment's alleged policy of patronising religious militancy also know it is not Washington, Delhi or London that is responsible for our ever-intensifying isolation on the global stage. It must be debated whether we can claim that Pakistan is purely a victim of terrorism that is imposed upon us from the outside, or that our self-defeating policies can be justified by the need to protect the state from the designs of 'enemy' countries.

One is galled by the duplicity of the 'international community'.

No matter how much we feel hard done by the hypocrisy of others, adopting a self-righteous position based on the premise that Pakistani state policy is not the primary cause of the crisis is getting us nowhere fast.

Being put on FATF's grey list shows that the viability of the state as well as the future of an extremely youthful society, whose ordinary men, women and children have their whole lives ahead of them, is at stake. International isolation and its political and economic fallouts should concern us, but our crisis is primarily a domestic one. We must get our own house in order by questioning and then overturning the logic of state policy in Pakistan to create a viable state and a peaceful society.

As election campaigning picks up steam, discussion about 'terrorism' has receded into the background. Why the eerie silence about a subject that has been a permanent feature of the public sphere for years? Surely those who are serious about winning governmental power to serve ordinary Pakistanis must have something to say about 'terrorism' and future policies to address it.

My sense is that the front-runners for elected office will not say much of substance; they will continue to heap blame on one another for our problems, terrorism included. No one will bring up fundamental questions about the failures of 'national security' policy. Or talk about making peace with our immediate neighbours and thereby granting our people a massive peace dividend.

One reason is that many of our mainstream parties know they have to do a deal with religio-political groups to come to power, including those militants who are now being mainstreamed. Note that the Ahle Sunnat Wal Jamaat chief has been cleared to run for elections, not to mention Khadim Rizvi's Tehreek-i-Labbaik Pakistan and the Tehreek-i-Allah-o-Akbar (read: Milli Muslim League aka Jamaatud Dawa). In short, political expediency plays out before our very eyes even while officialdom continues to spew rhetoric about eliminating all vestiges of terrorism.

Until and unless the opaque policies of decades are brought to account, our society will continue to be held hostage to terror. We need courageous and visionary leadership that can address the deep societal crises that decades of self-destructive policies have generated.

Hate speech on the (mainstream and social) media and the doctored educational curricula must be addressed, especially given the huge number of frustrated young people that continue to be drawn towards right-wing militant ideologies. A uniform system of education irrespective of class background is imperative. Young Pakistanis need messages of peace and tolerance, and policies that guarantee health, housing and employment. A state that values its people, its needs and promotes critical thought can move beyond grey and black lists. The question, as ever, is who is brave enough to own such a political programme?

The writer teaches at Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad.

Published in Dawn, June 29th, 2018

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1416801/the-grey-list>

# Pakistan & World Relations

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## **Reconciliation in Pak-US Relations By Dr Muhammad Khan**

There is a growing realisation in Washington that, deterioration in the Pak-US relations does not serve the US long-term objectives in South and Central Asian regions. This realisation was felt immediately after Trump announced its South Asian policy in August 2017. However, various lobbies working in the US constrained Trump Administration to reconcile its some of actions, which Pakistan rejected all together, considering those against its national interest. Despite US pressure and stoppage of its financial assistance, Pakistani response was well thought out and responsible.

Currently there have been two major developments for easing the tension between Pakistan and United States. US Vice President Mike Pence had a telephonic conversation with caretaker Prime Minister of Pakistan, retired Justice Nasirul Mulk, conveying him well wishes from President Trump and assuring him of complete US support. Earlier, US Secretary of State Mike Pompeo had an indepth discussion with Pakistani Army Chief, General Qamar Javed Bajwa on a range of issues. According to US Secretary Pompeo and General Bajwa discussed “advancing US-Pakistani relations, the need for political reconciliation in Afghanistan and the importance of targeting all militant and terrorist groups in South Asia without any distinction.”

Advancing Pak-US relationship by eradicating irritants is a major challenge, facing Islamabad and Washington. Out of these irritants, restoration of peace in Afghanistan has always figured out as the major cause in in the bilateral relationship of both countries. On this issue, there exists distrust and misperception between US and Pakistan. US blame Pakistan for the continuation of militancy in Afghanistan, whereas Pakistan feels that, it is because lack of will at Kabul and Washington which allows continuation of infighting between Taliban and Afghan forces. Pakistan has time and again ensured US that, its soil is not

being used by Haqqani network against Afghanistan. Which US does not believe while having no evidence?

India is another irritant in the bilateral relationship of Pakistan and US. Indeed, in the contemporary regional scenario, Washington's actions against Pakistan are mostly been viewed as New Delhi motivated. May be it is terrorism, Afghanistan, economy or diplomacy, generally it has been noted that, Washington takes a lead from New Delhi in its relationship with Islamabad. On its part, India is all out to target Pakistan on all fronts as a state policy. Indian spying network; Research and Analysis Wing (RAW) through its front organisation titled "A Publication of Bureau of political Research and Analysis" keeps on bashing Pakistan, Pakistani Armed Forces and ISI on one count or the other. Indian media and its state machinery is always seen busy in negatively portraying Pakistani image to mislead the world. For example, the recent US travel restriction over Pakistan diplomats within a radius of 25 kms has been misreported and negatively projected by India through a number of allegations. Though US act is quite adolescent, however India is further fuelling this incident to enlarge the gulf between both countries.

RAW is also projecting that, 14000 Indian citizens died in various terror attacks, sponsored by Pakistan in last 28 years, a baseless allegation. The truth is that, all terrorist networks in Pakistan are funded and harboured by New Delhi. There is a close cooperation between NDS of Afghanistan and Indian RAW for terrorist training, abetting and their financing to destabilise and destroy Pakistan. RAW also projecting BVR Missile test fire from Tejas, mainly projecting the indigenously developed Light Combat Aircraft (LCA) Tejas, besides successful firing of Air-to-Air Beyond Visual Range Missile (BVR). To create further rift in the Pak-US relationship, RAW and Indian media is projecting the recent closeness in the Pakistan-Russian relationship. Indeed, India is projecting this relationship to the disadvantage of United States. Indeed, China-Russia- Pakistani tri-angle for regional stability through peace in Afghanistan is negatively projected by India, for obvious reasons that India and U.S may desire the other way.

The current Indian centric US foreign policy towards Pakistan may have been obligated by its strategic and economic interest in India. But, this has deteriorated the regional peace in South Asia and enhanced the trends of terrorism in the region. US must stop seeing Pakistan from the Indian prism. It has to make an



independent and bilateral relationship with Pakistan. The last one year's US policies towards Pakistan are Indian centric, which US need to review and reconcile.

According to a senior US Presidential adviser, Lisa Curtis, Pakistan and United States are cooperating for larger peace and stability in Afghanistan. She said in a seminar in Washington that, Pakistan and U.S are pursuing "multiple lines of effort" for bringing peace in Afghanistan. "And we have sought to understand Pakistan's own core security concerns and ensure that its interests are taken into account in any peace process." This is a precise, constructive and workable approach; US need to take into consideration for a durable peace in Afghanistan. Geopolitically, Pakistan is a very significant country, thus US should not marginalise it at the desires of its rivals. Rather, Pak-US bilateral relationship should be revamped on the principles of mutuality, integrity, respect, sovereignty and as partners for peace in South Asia. Therefore, there is a requirement for the reconciliation of Pak-US relationship in the changing geopolitical developments at global level.

— The writer, Professor of Politics and International Relations, is based in Islamabad.

Source: <https://pakobserver.net/reconciliation-in-pak-us-relations/>

# **The Only Way Forward in Indo-Pak**

## **Relations By Lt Gen (retd) Naeem Khalid**

### **Lodhi**

Whenever two neighbouring states with strong political and military standoff acquire nuclear capabilities, with effective delivery means, the entire gambit of diplomacy and warfare changes. Nuclear parity (that exists between Pakistan and India) if properly understood by political and military leaderships, nearly precludes nuclear war as well as conventional military operations. This automatically pushes the conflict in the political, diplomatic, psychological and economic zones. The danger of overt suicidal conflagration, institutes deterrence, but may give space to other types of warfare, falling in the ambit of Hybrid War or Low Intensity Conflict (LIC) definition. But it has to be understood that if pain threshold of the opponent is crossed, LIC can escalate and lead to dangerous and unthinkable overt operations. If these facts can sink in the minds of both groups of decision makers and trouble makers, they would realise that India and Pakistan have no option but to change their attitudes from adversarial to cooperation mode.

Without going in the lengthy discussion of the reasons of deep rooted mistrust and adversarial nature of Indo-Pak relations , the conclusions could be simplified to dump it on 'history', 'unresolved issues' and 'absence of will at politico-military' levels of both countries. Also there are enough indicators that some 'other players', due to their own political and economic interests, are not very keen to see a rapprochement or détente in the relationship of these two neighbours in the sub-continent.

Now under the prevailing environment, where do we go? How do we get a fresh start? I propose moving from easier to difficult. First let us try to get out of the groove of past history of animosity and concentrate on the present sticking issues. Who did what to whom? Which grand empire was grander in expanse and administration, Hindu, Muslim or Sikh? What conditions led to the partition of the sub continent, etc etc ? The matter of fact is that India and Pakistan are two separate nation states, and both have the ability to do very well in the comity of nations. Both countries are very well recognised the world over with

memberships of all significant international and regional organisations and forums. Unfortunately both neighbours are afflicted with poverty, illiteracy, social and economic injustices and bad governance, to varying degrees. Social indicators are dismal and whatever resources have been developed, a major chunk of those are being wasted in continued useless confrontation.

So, can we try forgetting the by-gones and start afresh, willingly accepting each other's existence and importance, with an understanding that future rather than past should guide our relations? Coexist like any good neighbours in spite of some difficult issues that definitely require resolution. The two sides must realise that 'international arms producers' and those 'entities that get threatened' by the political and economic cooperation of the two neighbours, would never like and not encourage peace in the region. Our leaderships and peoples should not remain naive to fall prey to such machinations, and must show resolve and grit to live like self-reliant, confident, honourable countries, capable of making independent decisions, suiting the interests of about one and a half billion people of this region. We must refuse to become the leading weaponry markets, and to play puppets in the hands of those who want us to remain perpetually in a hate loop, whether these are external or internal entities. But, in my humble opinion the onus of removing environment of distrust and giving confidence for normalising the relations, squarely rests on the bigger power, that is India.

Now, coming on to the difficult area of outstanding disputes! Unfortunately our number of disputes have been increasing and piling up with the passage of time, thus raising the level of difficulty to pursue normalisation. Kashmir and waters were our initial and basic sticking points. We added to it Sir Creek, Siachen, Bombay, Pathankot, terrorism etc etc. the newly created issues could be easily resolved, comparatively, if the relevant experts, with clear political guidance, meet at serious platforms and undertake deliberations that lead to mutually acceptable positions. Also the two sides must show sincerity and resolve not to create further issues that would increase the already existing alienation between the two nations. Yes, Kashmir is a core issue, and not easy to resolve. Both sides had agreed many times in the past that it is an unfinished agenda of the partition, duly endorsed by UN resolutions. Any later bilateral agreements have not annulled the UN resolutions. But present and immediate problem is of acute human rights violations in Indian Held Kashmir that is continuing unabated, rather intensifying with the passage of time. So immediate focus should be to reduce

the woes of Kashmiri people and both countries along with the Kashmiris must agree, as a first step, to resolve this humanitarian issue.

The hard core and enduring problem of Kashmir, can only be solved in steps. And we can do it without compromising on the UN Resolutions and bilateral agreements. Initial phase could be to ask India to consider giving relief to the people of Indian Held Kashmir. Consider stopping their persecution due to their variant political thoughts of independence or pro Pakistan etc. Allow them normal life with enough political space to vent out their feelings. Secondly both countries should talk about demilitarisation of the Kashmir Region. Simultaneously create easement of movement and interaction, enabling social and economic activities in the region. Encourage people to people contact thus creating the right environment to recognise Kashmiris as the legitimate third party and initiate debates in pursuit of final settlement of the issue. The Resolutions of UN , all international and bilateral agreements remain in tact pending the final agreement by the three parties.

If the two countries succeed in lowering the tensions and switch to cooperation mode, one and half billion people of the region will benefit immensely. India will continue following the economic growth trajectory and smaller countries of the region will be able to latch on to this growing economy. Pakistan will be able to reorient its resources and overcome its economic and social woes. The whole region, including India will be able to benefit from China's new initiatives. India's desire of passage rights through Pakistan, both East-West and North-South will likely to be fulfilled. Iran, Afghanistan, entire SAARC Region and CARs will get connected and business as usual will result in social and economic development of a large chunk of the world. We shall all create bright prospects for one another, propelling the entire region on the rapid growth curve, bringing happiness and good life for all. Unprecedented growth likely as the hard earned capital will be diverted towards social sectors, raising the standards of education, health, justice and economic opportunities for the long deprived habitants of this unlucky region and beyond.

Now it is well understood that all the above is easier said than done; but is this region intellectually so bankrupt that we cannot see even our own bleak future if we continue on the present tracks? It is for India to understand that by keeping Pakistan under pressure, they also have no prospects to achieve their

international political goals. I think it would amount to insulting our collective wisdom and foresight if we think we will never be able to correct our course. People, media, intellectuals, leaders, soldiers, traders, farmers, and every segment of civil society should get involved in carving out our new destiny and force the present tides of hate and bigotry to subside, replacing it with cooperation, understanding and love. This is what all religions and philosophies profess .

Both countries should consider starting negotiations on a “No Aggression Pact”, “Resolution of Outstanding Issues through Peaceful Means”, “Strategic Stability Steps” etc. Also people to people contacts, business communities’ interactions, sports and cultural exchanges be encouraged. All this is only possible in the environment of mutual respect and accommodations. This must become the top priority of the two governments. For this purpose special task forces be constituted on both sides comprising politicians, diplomats, social scientists, jurists and nuclear experts etc.

Let us start a movement on both sides of the border to rise above petty or even bigger issues and get into the mode of resolving the problems, rather than fighting with or over them. This all might look strange coming from a veteran soldier. But believe it or not, no one hates war more than a soldier.

The writer is caretaker Minister for Defense, Defense Production, Civil Aviation Authority and National Security Division.

Source: <https://nation.com.pk/28-Jun-2018/the-only-way-forward-in-indo-pak-relations>

# **Strengthening Pak-China Strategic Relations**

## **| Editorial**

RESPECT, sincerity, empathy and friendliness are always discernible whenever the leaders as well as people of Pakistan and China meet each other. The same warmth was seen in the meeting between President Mamnoon Hussain and Chinese President Xi Jinping at the coastal Chinese city of Qingdao on the sidelines of SCO Summit. The words of Chinese President Xi Jinping that all-weather strategic cooperation is not only the shared asset of the two countries, but also offers a model for building a new type of international relations, unambiguously imply and strengthen the feeling that the bonds of friendship between the two countries are enduring and strong, no matter what changes occur at international or domestic levels.

While highlighting the significance of Pak-China relations, Xi said that his country is willing to intensify high level contacts and strategic communication with Pakistan. Indeed over the last few years one has seen greater exchanges taking place between the two countries at different levels and undoubtedly giving further impetus to them will help both the countries to explore and unearth more avenues of cooperation and learn from each other's experiences in different fields. This is also the way forward to take the relationship to new heights. In fact, the multi billion-dollar China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has further brought the two countries to a closer partnership for shared economic prosperity in the region and beyond. And to make the most out of this mega project, closer interaction in fields such as agriculture, trade, economy, scientific research, industries and so on will be a win-win situation for both the countries to actually realise what the Chinese President Xi is persistently articulating the vision of 'shared prosperity'.

During the meeting with President Mamnoon, the Chinese President also vowed to enhance anti-terrorism cooperation with Pakistan and renewed his country's support for sovereignty and territorial integrity of Pakistan. Indeed over the years, both Pakistan and China have always shared common viewpoints on matters of international and regional issues. At a time when some powers were and still are trying to make Pakistan scapegoat and browbeat it for their own failures, it is the Chinese side that came in full support of Pakistan and recognised, acknowledged

its sacrifices and efforts in the war on terror. This pragmatic approach and relentless support has further deepened the love of Chinese people in the hearts of Pakistanis and this is the reason that they fully support greater Chinese role at the international forums. It will also be unfair not to laud President Mamnoon Hussain who has always spoken highly about partnership with China and also misses no opportunity either at home or in his interactions with world leaders about the bright and multidimensional prospects of the CPEC.

It is a matter of satisfaction that both the countries also fully realise the conspiracies and threats to this mega project and as a result have also enhanced their security cooperation especially in the field of maritime for safe passage of cargo vessels from Gwadar port. As all-around partners and friends sharing weal and woe, China and Pakistan have jointly undergone a tough and glorious journey. Looking into the future, we have no doubt in saying that the two countries will stand together regardless of any change in regional and international situations and work together to shape a bright future not only for their own people but also for people of the region. The goal can be achieved by also involving Russia, Afghanistan, the Central Asian Republics (CARs) and Iran into a partnership or alliance that collectively work towards regional integration and economic prosperity which will also go a long way in freeing the region from conflicts and violence.

Source: <https://pakobserver.net/strengthening-pak-china-strategic-relations/>

# **Growing Pak-Russia Ties By S Sadia Kazmi**

WHILE the prospects of Pakistan and Russia cozying up to each other seem bright, there are certain geopolitical realities which shall be considered before getting too optimistic or skeptical about the future of the ties. The warming up of relations has been welcomed on both sides however one notices an intentional cautiousness regarding out rightly embracing each other. There are understandable reasons behind that. The Cold War grievances although are washing away, owing mostly to the reshuffling of interests at the regional and global levels, they can't be altogether forgotten. This is one of the reasons why Russia at many instances is being very careful lest it annoys its long time ally and strategic partner India.

Nonetheless, the positive drift has been set in motion through frequent diplomatic exchanges which have considerably cemented the way for promising military, security and defence cooperation. Recent in this regard was a high level ministerial meeting in Moscow led by the National Security Advisor Nasser Khan Janjua on April 22-23 with his Russian counterpart Nikolai Patrushev. The meetings came against the backdrop of the 9th International Meeting of High-Level Officials responsible for security matters, hosted by Russia in Sochi. It also came in the wake of a meeting between the Pakistani and Russian defence ministers at the 7th Moscow Conference on International Security in early April where Russian Defence Minister Sergei Shoigu said both nations would build upon efforts to boost defence cooperation.

A major factor for the convergence of interests between the two is the IS, wherein Russia has genuine fears regarding the existence, influence and spread of the IS and its supporters inside Afghanistan to the adjacent Central Asian states and eventually into Russia. This happens to be a concern for Pakistan too, having Afghanistan its westward neighbour, the threat of IS is brought quite close to home. Hence a collective effort by both Russia and Pakistan against this threat is the need of the hour. Russia has already been quite actively engaged with Iran and Syria in fight against IS. Russia's experience can come in handy for Pakistan, whose battle hardened military forces are already well equipped with fighting terrorism at domestic and global levels. While Pakistan can be helpful for Russia in the context of familiarity with terrain and can also provide much



required physical contiguity. In fact, this is the very reason Russia in Feb 2018, named an honorary consul to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa that border Nangarhar province in eastern Afghanistan, with IS having its headquarters there.

The presence of IS along the northern borders of Afghanistan also worries Russia since the influence is being spilled over into the adjacent Central Asian states. The desire to expand the military to military cooperation was expressed in the latest bilateral meeting between Pakistan COAS Gen. Qamar Jawed Bajwa and the Russian counterpart Gen. Oleg Salyukov. Both met when Gen. Bajwa went on a two-day visit to Russia on April 22-23, 2018. Russia openly acknowledged Pakistan as an important geostrategic partner and endorsed that Pakistan's efforts in curbing terrorism are praise worthy. This is quite opposite to what the US has been accusing Pakistan of and is continuously pressurizing Pakistan to do more. This could be good for Pakistan especially with regards to the FATF decision put in motion by the US, according to which it is likely that Pakistan is going to be put on the FATF watchlist/grey list by June 2018. This faith in Pakistan's efforts by Russia, surely makes the case for Pakistan much stronger and helps regain Pakistan's faith within the international community.

At the same time Russia and Pakistan both believe that economic development is the ultimate answer to any kind of extremism. There is a realization that the economic prosperity is bound to bring stability and peace and fends off any untoward elements. Even though at present, the trade volume between the two only accounts for US \$ 500 million, which is not much. The energy starved Pakistan could be a potential market for Russia. By forging military, economic and robust diplomatic ties, Russia can upend historic alliances in the region, as there are many common grounds on which to build a firm diplomatic ties. There is also a hope that Russia would explore the option of being part of the economic corridor with Pakistan. Although it might be too early to say anything in this regard with certainty but the possibility cannot be , as ruled out, as Russia requires a convenient access to the warm waters, which Pakistan can provide to it.

Along with that, the US factor also is one of the pushing elements, where in Russia views the presence of the US inside Afghanistan with concern. By warming up to Pakistan, Russia also wants to undermine the US influence particularly in Afghanistan and in the region. Last but not the least, the Russian

growing interest in renewing relations with Pakistan, provides a much needed respite to the deteriorating diplomatic Pak-US relations. While the Russia-Pak relations cannot probably serve as a substitute for Pak-US relations, but the opening has emerged where Pakistan can diversify its diplomatic options and may not necessarily have to rely on just one state.

— The writer is a Senior Research Associate at the Strategic Vision Institute, Islamabad.

Source: <https://pakobserver.net/growing-pak-russia-ties-2/>

# **Durand Line and Pak-Afghan ties By**

## **Muhammad Hanif**

THE Durand Line is an established international border between Pakistan and Afghanistan, based on the agreement, which had been signed between Amir Abdur Rahman Khan, the then ruler of Afghanistan, and Sir Henry Mortimer Durand, the then Foreign Secretary of the British India Government, on 12 November 1893. However, since the partition of the subcontinent in 1947 and the creation of Pakistan, while some Afghan governments had accepted the Durand Line as the international border, others had expressed their reservations. But the ground realities indicate that the reservations expressed over the Durand Line as the border had no solid basis and it was merely to play politics on behalf of some foreign powers hostile to Pakistan.

On the ground, the people of Pakistan and Afghanistan always considered the Durand Line as the border. The Afghan government's objections to the Durand Line as an international boundary line were also never considered seriously by international community and the Durand Line was taken over as an international border by the UN member states, including all major powers, like the US, Russia, China, UK, France, Germany and Japan. Since Pakistan's creation, official and private trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan across Durand Line always flourished.

In the post 9/11 strategic scenario involving Afghanistan, the new Afghan governments, the first one led by Hamid Karzai and the current one being headed by Abdul Ghani have also raised objections to the Durand Line. This is again being done as part of the regional geopolitics being played in Afghanistan at the behest of India and some other powers hostile to Pakistan and China to contain China's rising economic influence in the region by disrupting the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as well as to impede Pakistan's CPEC supported economic development.

To play geopolitics to their advantage, it is in the interest of India and other hostile powers to keep Afghanistan destabilized and put Afghanistan-Pakistan relations under strain by embroiling them in the interstate disputes by ill advising Afghanistan not to recognize the Durand Line as the international border and

should not cooperate with Pakistan in fencing that border. So, obviously these powers do not want improvement in Pakistan-Afghanistan relations.

Taking advantage of instability in Afghanistan and the porous nature of the border, India and other powers are using Afghan soil to destabilize Balochistan and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), as they want to keep Pakistan economically weak by discouraging CPEC related foreign direct investment (FDI). That is why they are supporting the Baloch insurgents by hosting their leadership and providing them training, weapons and resources to carry out terrorism in Balochistan. And, to get economic aid from India and other powers, Afghan government seems constrained in asking them not to use Afghan soil for destabilizing Pakistan.

In view of the above, it is in their own mutual benefit if Afghanistan and Pakistan reject the negative geopolitics being played in Afghanistan and jointly work for making an early peace in Afghanistan and concentrate on their CPEC related trade and investment based economic growth. This cooperation will be only possible if both the countries realize that they are equally important for each other. While Pakistan is important for Afghanistan to facilitate its trade with China, South Asia, South East Asia, Middle East and North Africa through CPEC and Karachi and Gawadar ports, Afghanistan is important for connecting Pakistan with Central Asia for enhancing its trade oriented development.

Thus, by rejecting negative geopolitical influences, both the countries would be able to work together for peace in Afghanistan and exploit CPEC related economic advantages to achieve high economic growth and development objectives. It should also be realized that durable peace in Afghanistan would only come through Afghan lead and Afghan owned peace process involving all ethnic groups in Afghanistan, duly supported by Pakistan.

And, the job of peace building would become easier if the Afghan government would accept the Durand Line as international border and cooperate with Pakistan in fencing this porous border so that terrorism can be effectively defeated in a short time frame. In this context, it would be better if Afghanistan also limits the influence of those powers that are against the development of the CPEC. In this respect, both Pakistan and Afghanistan should work in coordination with China and other nations that have joined the CPEC.

To adopt and implement the above suggested strategy for peace and economic development, the Governments of Pakistan and Afghanistan should take a big initiative to convince their polity and the people on the political and economic advantages of this strategy. In the meantime, both the countries should be able to enter into direct talks to reach at a grand understanding and agreement to adopt and start implementing above suggested strategy by displaying utmost mutual cooperation.

Source : <https://pakobserver.net/durand-line-and-pak-afghan-ties/>

## **CPEC: Transport or Economic Corridor? By Hasaan Khawar**

Three CPEC routes are expected to form an impressive transport corridor connecting China to the Arabian Sea. If the Chinese start using these routes to trade with Middle East and North African countries, CPEC will turn into a cross-border trade and transit corridor. With enough traffic, we might also get some toll income. But the real returns are to be expected for Pakistan, only if CPEC truly becomes a vibrant economic corridor. how can we make it happen? Merely by creating a few special economic zones? And what is an economic corridor anyway?

Trade corridors have been in existence for centuries, with famous Silk, Spice and Incense routes connecting the Orient with the Occident. Trade corridors depict movement of goods and services in specific geographical patterns. Transport corridors, a most recent phenomenon, generally refer to a linear area, connecting two or more economic centres and often employing a combination of surface transport networks such as road and rail.

Economic corridors however are a wider concept. They represent not just connectivity and trade but also widespread economic activity in a geographic area, in the shape of industrial and economic clusters, connected markets, and a network of economic centres. Connectivity is a prerequisite for establishing economic corridors but not sufficient.

History shows that transport corridors do transform into economic corridors through gradual development, urban agglomeration and increased trade and economic activities, leading to formation of new settlements and economic clusters. This however takes time. The present Grand Trunk (GT) Road is an example of a trade and transport route turned into a vibrant economic corridor, with numerous urban centres and economic clusters along the route. This route

however has been in existence for more than two millennia, upgraded by Sher Shah Suri in the 16th century.

If we could wait for centuries, CPEC might transform into a vibrant economic corridor on its own. But if we want it sooner, we need to catalyse this process through a well thought-out strategy.

Firstly, it is important to realise that economic corridor is not a linear concept, meaning thereby that CPEC, besides connecting China to Gwadar, needs to spread horizontally connecting to a network of secondary cities and smaller markets. Research shows that productivity impact of connectivity is higher for rural areas, which previously had poor connectivity. This requires aligning of public investments with CPEC through an integrated spatial planning strategy and plugging existing missing links, especially in less-developed regions.

Secondly, a real economic corridor of this scale cannot take off by public investments only. Therefore, the next step is to mobilise private investment, which would require regulatory and business environment reforms. Public investment should only be used to provide infrastructure or to address market failures in selected cases.

The third area is to ensure equitable growth. With new corridors coming up, there is a risk that much of the investment would flow to already flourishing urban and economic centres. The role of the government is therefore to ensure fair distribution of dividends of these new investments and remove any disparities.

These steps however require well-coordinated actions by multiple federal and provincial government departments. We therefore need to carefully think through our governance structure for corridor development. Other countries have established fully-empowered private sector-driven statutory bodies that coordinate actions across a range of departments and are accountable for clear performance indicators such as quantum of investment mobilised and number of new jobs created, rather than showing summits, conferences and roadshows as their achievement.

Investment for CPEC road infrastructure stands around \$11 billion. At 2% interest and 20-year repayment period, it translates into \$672 million debt-servicing

payment every year. The toll payments alone will not be sufficient to pay back this amount. Economic corridor development is therefore the only way to go.

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Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1727674/6-cpec-transport-economic-corridor/>



# **Economic Head Winds – Are We Alone? By** **Dr Kamal Monnoo**

The head winds towards Pakistan's economy are getting stronger by the day, with the country seeming all but trapped in an ever-tightening debt strangle, albeit without really seeing any of the possible fruits of a debt-spend find the light of the day so far. Reason? Because, bulk has been borrowed on the back of developments conducted by the public sector without really paying much attention to minimizing initial project capital outlays nor to self-sustainability. However, for the moment leaving this criticism aside, the larger question perhaps is that is Pakistan alone in this precarious position or are there other developing countries that also find themselves in more or less a similar trap on account of commonalities in their recent governmental policies with ours? A cursory look around the globe and one finds out that we are not alone – in fact there are quite a few. Countries like Turkey, Egypt, Venezuela, Nigeria, Sri Lanka and somewhat Indonesia have pretty much landed themselves in a position like ours – mounting debt; declining competitiveness; and tumbling currencies. And the common ground? Answer: Almost all, in recent years, have run high twin deficits in trade and revenue: Current account deficit and fiscal deficit. Pakistan: -5 & -5.5 percent of the GDP respectively, Turkey: -5.7 & -4.0, Egypt: -4.5 & -9.8, Nigeria: -2.5 & -2.5, Sri Lanka: -3.5 & -5.5, and Indonesia: -3 & -3. So, lesson No.1, to the in-coming government: Austerity, because unless we stop fuelling consumption with imports and curtail unnecessary spending in order reduce our fiscal deficit, the pain is going nowhere. Good examples to follow would be Greece, which from a bankrupt position not so long ago is today churning out a budget surplus of +0.2 percent of its GDP and of India, which also not too far back was flirting with nearly double digit budget deficits has now brought it down to -3.50 percent of GDP.

As per the latest global report released by the IMF (international Monetary Fund), the world's dollar based borrowing (or in the developing countries what we term as external borrowing) went up per se over the last five years. While on one hand it is may be a good sign, but on the other hand countries that did not either indulge in responsible borrowing or just couldn't put their borrowings to productive use are now finding themselves in trouble as the oil prices firm up and the Dollar strengthens – meaning these countries who borrowed significantly

back then, find themselves unable to meet their debt obligations today. No surprise, that all members of the club that we find ourselves to be in, have been guilty of this. So lesson No.2, for the incoming government: External liabilities need to be tackled on a priority basis whereby a strategy needs to be devised to first replace the current borrowings with cheaper and longer-term loans and that further foreign debt only to be undertaken with clear feasibilities in place on pay backs – ensuring that new borrowings do not add to foreign exchange outflows. For Pakistan, this could essentially mean renegotiating the existing terms of CPEC (China Pakistan Economic Corridor) loans to either convert them to local currency or to spread them over longer-terms with reduced ROI (return on investment) than originally guaranteed to the Chinese. Ironically, Sri Lanka, Indonesia (to an extent) and a number of African countries find themselves in a similar predicament.

Another similarity that we can find between these countries is that nearly all of them liberalized their economies too quickly. Poor trade agreements and a failure to first overhaul decadent, incompetent and corrupt institutions like the FBR (Federal Bureau of Revenue) and Customs before allowing a liberalized import regime are amongst the principal reasons for the ballooning of trade deficits. Add to this a rather callous approach towards safeguarding home industry and the result is an overtime erosion of the national SME (small and medium sized enterprises) sector and a sudden dip in employment generation. Ironically, as the developed world, which was the original champion of free trade, turns towards protectionism to shore up domestic manufacturing, we foolishly continue to open up our markets to dumping by larger economies. So lesson No. 3, for the incoming government: Renegotiate all trade agreements that exacerbate Pakistan's trade deficit and make policies to improve competitiveness of local manufacturing. We first have to build export surplus to be able to meaningfully increase our exports. Also, 25,000 youngsters enter the job month every month and the economy needs new jobs!

Conceded that going to last resort institution like the IMF has its advantages, as it can help instill financial discipline in a country's economic management, but there are also some obvious downsides, since the advised recipes not only originate through a generic policy prism, but also at the end of the day its recommended measures are invariably aimed at securing its very lending. One such policy that has been forced down our and the other club members' throats is the application

of exceptionally high rates of VAT (value added tax) or sales tax. For a lending institution it is a sound way for collecting revenues/taxes, but for a developing economy it could mean compromising on the inherent competitive edge of the business itself. Rate of sales tax in Pakistan averages 17%, in Sri Lanka 15%, Turkey 18% and Egypt 14%. Whereas, let's say in South Korea it is 10%, Japan 8%, Thailand 7% and in Malaysia also 7%. So lesson No. 4, for the incoming government: Rationalize the sales tax by bringing it down. Indonesia has already brought it down to 10% and Nigeria to 5%.

Finally, last but not least, one of the most glaring commonality witnessed between these countries is that as there borrowing increased the footprint of the state/government in the overall economy increased even more. Nothing new in reminding the readers, that capital tends to be least inefficient in hands of the government. In all these countries, we notice, that over the last decade not only all big tickets projects/investments (along with of course the related borrowed funds) went to the government, but also that in the process the private sector got crowded out with its share in lending being at a continuous decreasing trend.

In the process, though the financial institution artificially thrived on the back of sovereign lending, in reality this skewed business model only added to compromising the very underlying sustainability of the overall lending that went into the national market. One glance at the unusually robust results of our national financial industry's and at their unhealthy lending-mix in this period, and the answer is quite obvious. So lesson No. 5, for the incoming government: Work towards reducing the State's footprint on the national economy.

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# Currency Devaluation | Editorial

Pakistan's central bank has devalued the rupee. For the third time since December. Yet even before this week's latest move, the currency was the worst-performing in the whole of South Asia; according to data compiled by Bloomberg.

Nevertheless, the interim set-up seems convinced that the country will not need a fresh International Monetary Fund (IMF) bailout package. Thus the message is that the fall in the rupee's value by 5.1 percent to 121.5 per dollar is worth it.

If only things were so straightforward.

In theory, the protectionist measure of currency devaluation is good for the economy in the short-term. For this translates into cheaper exports; affording nations a comparative advantage of sorts. Yet this is often only passed on to the end consumer. Meaning that when this occurs during periods of salary stagnation, the outcome is invariably a fall in real wages. This should be a cause of concern for Pakistan given that analysts predict economic growth will slow in 2018; for the first time in six years. Though the country will escape the impact of currency devaluation on foreign labour given that this largely comprises those working in the international development sector; who are paid by donor nations above and beyond market prices.

Paradoxically, however, cheaper exports can often incur increased costs at home over time. This happens when manufacturers are less incentivised to adopt more efficient practices; which, in turn, may push up inflation. In addition, the flip side of cheaper exports is that import prices rise. In real terms, this affects petrol, certain foodstuffs and raw materials. If Pakistan is to offset this with the lure of a devalued currency as a visible boost to its tourist industry — it will have to build on the gains made to the overall security situation in the country.

The priority for the incoming set-up, therefore, is to truly get to grips with the fact that an economy cannot run on repeated currency devaluations. Not when the country is already home to a trade deficit of nearly \$30 billion (as of May). Thus it must look to increase investment in manufacturing industries to make them more competitive. Infrastructure projects are certainly important. As are trade routes.

But unless Pakistan boosts exports it will end up paying through the nose many times for such interconnectivity; both in terms of imports and the due return on infrastructure investment.

All of which underscores the urgent need for Pakistan's fiscal policy to look beyond avoiding emergency bailouts. And to remind everyone that the trade-not-aid mantra only becomes feasible when debt is written out of the equation. \*

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Source: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/253182/currency-devaluation/>

# **CPEC: A Momentum For Prosperity By**

## **Sherry Rehman**

THE CPEC Summit 2018 was an important event with a distinguished group of thought leaders. In a conference full of unconventional wisdoms and cutting edge info, a lower-riparian speaker's job was quite unenviable. In more ways than one, the summit signalled Pakistan's commitment to change and growth. What it signalled bang in the middle of election year was Pakistan's agreement across the board on one thing: no one wants to be left out of this momentum.

The first thing that came to mind at a big-ticket CPEC conference in Pakistan was that we are currently standing at a nodal pivot in Pakistan and China's long-established special relationship; but what also came to mind is that we are at an axial point where the world is rapidly turning in a re-calibration of its priorities. Amidst the noise of dangerous new global conflicts that threaten the peace and prosperity of many nations, and fires that engulf entire regions, CPEC and BRI signal another engine moving relentlessly on, in entirely another direction of growth and peace. We can literally hear the wheels of a bold new order shift its shape under our feet.

We can also see the pulsation of the pointless regional neuralgia this partnership is giving some. My advice to them is that, they really shouldn't worry, but instead join this enterprise.

It is truly the Asian Century. By linking the Atlantic to the Pacific through BRI, President Xi Jinping's China is poised to redefine the global economic order as we know it, and change the way we think about the world. As the tracks for new global connectivity reframe human enterprise, with Gwadar as its launching pad, and Malacca not the only option, China becomes a two-ocean power. This is both commercially relevant and strategically significant. As a key part of the constitution of the Peoples Republic, One Belt One Road (OBOR) has now cemented its place in the wheelworks of China's long-term vision of progress through economic partnerships. It is a projection of soft power unparalleled in the 21st century.

All this is relevant to Pakistan obviously in ways no other grand plan for exporting surplus was. Today, as we see China's investments in Pakistan materialising through CPEC, I am clear that a major part of its success is powered by the groundwork and foundation PPP's government provided.

Under [the then] President Zardari's leadership, rooted in Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's revolutionary vision to share the Chinese Communist Party's goals, and PM Benazir Bhutto's brilliant championing of this joint vision, Pakistan's relationship with China has gone into another dimension altogether. President Zardari's vision was based on a grand idea for pivoting to the East at a time when the rest of the world was still busy calling on other capitals. This vision is shared and will be carried on forward by PPP under Chairman Bilawal Bhutto-Zardari's leadership.

PPP understood the grand Chinese dream well. Providing state support and strategic access to our warm waters was part of the vision. Therefore, we knew that Chinese development stewardship for Gwadar Port was pivotal to the CPEC becoming a reality.

CPEC has already created 60,000 jobs and Pakistanis would likely be able to make the most of these opportunities. We need trained manpower though. Over the years, all of us have worked closely with Chinese officials and investors in facilitating projects, people-to-people relationships, cultural exchanges, and, most importantly, ensuring the security of everyone involved in CPEC projects. As we speak, 2,700 students from Pakistan were granted scholarships to study in China with thousands already learning Mandarin across the country. This kind of exchange is as important as big-scale projects. Because building trust between peoples is what binds countries together in ties that sustain the tests of time, in all weathers and all storms.

As the first container ship sailed into Gwadar in March, CPEC has already started making an impact in all provinces. We have a long way to go in providing safe drinking water and schools to the people of Gwadar, but I am glad to see that social responsibility and signature projects are beginning to complement each other.

This must be something we work on together as early projects start harvesting into reality. Everywhere there is an industrial park or SEZ, a port or energy

project, there should be a groundswell of children going to schools, functioning healthcare units and waste-to-energy plants, which China is so good at doing at every level. The responsibility for this lies with Pakistan, and with the provinces too, but I urge our Chinese friends to double their interest and investment in social development as they are doing already in partnership with UNDP in Balochistan.

We are proud to say that the forward-looking government of Sindh has also been leading the way in renewable energy projects. Sindh province contributes 930 megawatts of wind energy to the national grid with the help of CPEC projects. In line with this, the federal government should allow the use of renewable energy in Sindh.

As part of our history of joint cooperation, PPP looks forward to continuing to work closely with local and Chinese stakeholders in achieving our common goals and interests for the betterment of our people and the region. Two ports are now operating in their optimal capacities and other commercial ports, including the important Ketu Bunder, are under development in partnership with the Chinese.

But CPEC is not a one-party or one-province ambition. It is a national project that goes beyond infrastructural development and we will stand by all efforts to create consensus and operationalise this grand ambition. Consensus-building among political parties and provinces is crucial as the windfall from this venture can change the game for Pakistan.

Pakistan is not equivocal about its relationship with China. Right now, as we see promises turning into projects, the widespread public ownership of the 'feel-good' factor that China generates in Pakistan continues as do questions about equity transparency spread. With a multi-billion dollar investment like CPEC, responsibilities and obligations for both Pakistan and China double. Transparency and equitability are the foundations for which an initiative with a scale as grand as CPEC must be built on.

As CPEC rolls out in Pakistan, there are three obvious areas to focus on: economy, environment and security.



It is undeniable that as an infrastructure and investment pipeline, CPEC has the potential of taking Pakistan into a quantum leap of prosperity and peace. It is believed that Chinese investment can stimulate a 15pc increase in Pakistan's GDP by 2030 and would likely create over a million jobs across multiple sectors in Pakistan. While still in its very early stages, CPEC has already created 60,000 jobs and we hope that Pakistanis would be able to capitalise on this new job market. We need more Pakistanis trained to hold down these jobs.

However, development does not start and end at infrastructure and economic growth. We must also look into tech-knowledge sharing and collaborations as we enter the Fourth Industrial Revolution. The development of regional value chains, a phenomenon that has entirely reshaped global trade in recent decades, is a particularly exciting prospect. Pakistan is well-positioned to gain from this shift and CPEC is the perfect opportunity to bring advanced manufacturing and production practices to the country.

We have a responsibility to empower our youth and Pakistan can be a powerhouse of opportunities. Almost 60pc of Pakistan's population is under the age of 30, making it the country's most important demographic. To put that in context, three out of five Pakistanis are under the age of 30, full of hope and energy, but most without real employment prospects. Close to 60pc of them are currently in unstable or underpaying jobs and about 35pc are working in unpaid jobs. CPEC has given the millions of young people who enter the workforce every year a renewed hope. We have a joint task to find ways in which we can tap into the potential of Pakistan's youth and expand their growth, and look at ways to accelerate youth employment and skill training. I look forward to working with the Chinese leadership on ensuring that more jobs and skills are created for Pakistanis.

As CPEC grows, Pakistan and China must look into a broader range of ventures and issues where we can cooperate and work on, one of which is environmental protection and climate change. Pakistan currently is the 7th most vulnerable country in the world to climate change. Pakistan's carbon emissions are expected to double in two years and surge 14 times by 2050, which is way more than the global average. Given my travels in China, I know that the People's Republic is no stranger to challenges brought about by climate change.

The enormous industrial investments and projects that will come with CPEC can be amplified if we prioritise creating a clean energy economy. I can only hope that we safeguard the future of the generations to come and that what we do today, in the name of progress, does not create new challenges for them. We hope that the Chinese government can bring to Pakistan the clean energy initiatives they have strictly enforced at home. We are old friends, and whom else can you ask for more, except from friends. Together, we must resolve to move towards eco-friendly, sustainable and renewable energy sources.

Let me reiterate, if there is one thing that Pakistanis agree on, it is CPEC's vision of human security, economic cooperation, reform and joint prosperity. As an economic bloc, South Asia will be one of the wealthiest regions in the world, with markets and growth vectors second only to China. At the same time, the region is also forecast for growing inequality, land hunger, poverty-based migrations, water stress, and social deficits. These trends can be divisive in a region already crackling with tensions.

We believe that CPEC will create a new engine for reinvigorating innovation and ingenuity not just in both the countries but for the region as well. It is this cooperation, innovation and ingenuity that will drive the project of peace in a world divided by inequities, conflicts and social disorder.

The CPEC Summit once again highlighted the Chinese government's unfaltering cooperation, support and friendship to the people of Pakistan. The future really does lie in peace through economic partnerships. Let us hope our roadmaps take our young people into a brighter, energised, connected millennium.

The writer is Leader of the Opposition, Senate of Pakistan.

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1409514>

# **Sino-US Trade War | Editorial**

TRADE war between the two biggest economies of the world — the US and China — has already started showing its adverse impact with major Asian stock markets such as Japan, South Korea and Singapore witnessing fall on Monday and undoubtedly it could have serious rippling effect on the global economy if the two sides especially the US Administration which in fact made the beginning by imposing tariff worth \$50 billion dollars on Chinese goods, did not act responsibly and with more maturity.

The immediate tit-for-tat response from the Chinese side is very much justifiable and understandable. In fact the country was forced to take strong and forceful measures in response to the short sighted acts from the US side. Trump's recent actions including the trade spats with the European Union, Canada and Mexico has also drawn strong criticism within the US. Things could get worse as reportedly the White House is formulating a plan for restricting Chinese investment in the United States and putting stricter limitations on the types of advanced technology that can be exported to the country. Then, Trump has already promised more tariffs in response to China's retaliation. While the Chinese officials are stating that it does not want to engage in a trade war but Trump going ahead with more tariffs will definitely draw a reaction from Beijing. There are reports that China, in turn, is likely to back away from an agreement to buy \$70 billion worth of American agricultural and energy products — a deal that was conditional on the United States lifting its threat of tariffs. Indeed as experts are saying the Chinese proportionate and targeted tariffs on US imports are meant to send a strong signal that it will not capitulate to US demands. It will be challenging for both sides to find a way to de-escalate these tensions but indeed the way forward lies only in a negotiated settlement. Instead of considering China as a threat and its trade enemy, the US Administration should accept the new multi-polar world order and keeping in view the changing times should sit with the major capitals to sort out the differences and issues in a congenial environment.

Source: <https://pakobserver.net/233977-2/>

# **Economic Outlook | Editorial**

Not so positive anymore

With Moody's downgrading Pakistan's outlook to negative, the current account deficit bloating to \$6b, the rupee in free fall, the stock market tanking, ADB cancelling a multi-million-dollar privatisation loan and the FATF verdict just around the corner, there's not much good news coming from the economic front, to say the least. How distant 2016 feels now, when MSCI upgraded Pakistan to emerging market and the local bourse became the best performing regional player. But it only took the next year's politics to demonstrate just how quickly hot money can pack up and leave; and PSX ended 2017 as the worst performing market in the whole world.

All the while Pakistan's snowballing deficit, insufficient reserves and chronic reliance on borrowed money rang alarm bells from the press to the national assembly, yet the PML-N government counted on its mega projects with high visibility to win the argument. And, not quite unexpectedly, its house of cards began unraveling just as soon as its government's time expired. Moody's downgrade will resonate loudly with senior investors in financial havens looking for reliable emerging markets to park their investments. Yet even as foreign markets begin closing to Pakistan's nearly insolvent economy, there are not many options open to the government except all out borrowing, as always – in effect simply kicking the can further down the road.

And SECP could have been less lazy in putting together its new set of regulations to satisfy FATF. With the review only days away, the Board would already have prepared a decision in light of its findings. And since the Commission did not act promptly – even though all it eventually did was collect scattered notifications into one circular – we cannot exactly lay all the blame at the FATF's door. The economy, simply put, is on crutches. And the caretaker government has neither the time nor the mandate to address it. To make things worse, it does not look as if anything will improve till the next administration takes over.

Source: <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/06/22/economic-outlook/>

# **Road to ASEAN By M Nawaz Khan**

PAKISTAN has been looking eastward as well as westward for cooperation and security for political, economic opportunities and market access. The relationship between Pakistan and ASEAN countries did not take off as per Pakistan's Vision East Asia, whereas progress is being made. It will take some years for ASEAN and Pakistan to establish a mature political, economic and security relationship. The ASEAN region is a hub of international, regional and sub-regional organizations and multinational companies, which not only enhance the geostrategic and political importance of the ASEAN region, but also put Pakistan in a competitive economic environment, especially in the background of the ASEAN's Free Trade Area (AFTA) agreements signed with several states and organisations. Pakistan's relations with the ASEAN countries are normal, friendly and unmarred by any conflict or disputes. They cooperate with one another on full range of international issues of common interest. Pakistan is having the support of majority members of the ASEAN countries for becoming a full dialogue partner, but it could not succeed because of historic baggage of rivalry with India, which stole a march on Pakistan by becoming a full dialogue partner of the ASEAN in 2014.

The ASEAN is an important region in global decision-making at the United Nations and its related organizations and international financial institutions. Pakistan needs their support on UN reform, peacekeeping, disarmament issues, international finance, post-2016 development agenda, climate change, human rights and elections in the UN and other international bodies. Pakistan and the ASEAN countries' trade and economic relations have not reached a level of maturity and engagement where full dialogue partnership or the possibility of a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) becomes attractive and compelling. However, trade and investment between the two parties are expanding. Pakistan needs to have comprehensive economic agreements covering trade in goods, services, and investment with all the ASEAN countries.

Rather, the Pakistani business community needs to be involved in the drafting of free trade agreements with ASEAN. The reasons for this are twofold: a) It shall help develop an agreement that takes into consideration various sectors of the industry, and gives concessions that would help these sectors to develop, hence

increasing the competitiveness of local manufacturers and industries; b) It shall create awareness amongst the business community of new opportunities for trade available as many items in the FTA have the 0% tariff track; a fact many of the local manufacturers and exporters appear to be unaware of. There is a scope to invite private businesses to invest in Pakistan in various sectors such as agro-food industry, chemicals and petrochemicals, infrastructure development, banking, insurance, energy, automobiles, software industry, auto parts manufacturing, construction, sea food/fish processing industry or fisheries, food processing, packaging, gems and jewellery, information technology, agriculture, telecommunication, and hotel industries, etc. They can also enter into joint ventures with Pakistani counterparts, which can fulfill the investment needs of Pakistan.

Pakistan's "Vision East Asia Policy" suffers from less priority due to Pakistan's engagements in the war against terrorism, spillover effects from Afghanistan's situation and internal security challenges. The ASEAN countries appreciate Pakistan's efforts in establishing and maintaining peace in the region and consider Pakistan a stronger partner in the international community in fight against terrorism. Pakistan got the membership of the ASEAN Regional Forum (ARF) because it is a significant military power with nuclear weapon capability and its major role in war against terrorism. There are several measures that need to be taken in the field of terrorism by the both. First, ASEAN countries and Pakistan should tighten control over illegal human trafficking crossing ASEAN countries and Pakistan. This measure requires tighter immigration control by the two sides. Secondly, Pakistan and the ASEAN countries should find modalities for maritime cooperation. This should be implemented more in bilateral and operational levels. The forms of cooperation could be trilateral and bilateral. Thirdly, the ASEAN countries (Indonesia, Malaysia, Brunei) and Pakistan should develop cooperation in education, especially with regard to religious schools. The main idea here is that there should be joint efforts to promote better understanding of the role of the religion in societal development.

ASEAN nations cannot ignore Pakistan as an important geopolitical entity with nuclear capability. Pakistan has to go an extra mile in terms of increasing her exports in the region. Pakistan has to improve growth equity, quality control and sustainable policy. Pakistan requires greater regional cooperation as a reward for its role in making world peaceful place to live. Regional cooperation is a must for

economic prosperity. It is often stated that there exists considerable possibilities for the expansion of trade between ASEAN and Pakistan. In this connection, it is suggested that the private sector needs to be encouraged and provided with the requisite information about the competitiveness and availability of tradable goods.

—The writer works at Islamabad Policy Research Institute, a think-tank based in Islamabad.

Source: <https://pakobserver.net/road-to-asean/>

# **Economic Crisis Management By Rashid**

## **Amjad**

DO forgive the people of this country if they cannot make sense of our present economic predicament. On one hand, they are told repeatedly (and correctly) that the economy has started reaping the benefits of CPEC — the ‘game changer’ — in the form of significantly reduced load-shedding, an upturn in investment and a not unimpressive recovery in economic growth. At the same time, they are told that the economy is in dire straits!

A severe foreign exchange crisis threatens to reverse significantly the recent economic upturn. Our import bill exceeds our export earnings, including remittances, and if we add to it the repayments due on foreign loans, the gap is immense: \$25 billion or over eight per cent of GDP. The country’s foreign exchange reserves are fast running out. We have already reached the critical level of just two months of imports. The alarm bells are ringing as foreign exchange reserves continue to lose almost \$1bn a month. We must now wake up to the reality that, unless we can raise \$8bn to \$10bn in new loans and obtain a roll-over of existing debts, we could well face default on our debt payments — which is a polite way of saying ‘bankruptcy’.

The current state of economic affairs requires that some important decisions be taken.

The economic problem we now face cannot be traced solely to the previous government’s stubborn refusal to adjust the overvalued exchange rate. Our economic managers appear to have lost the plot over the last two years. For one, they were unable to keep track of CPEC-funded investment flows, whose exact form of financing has never been made transparent. The second and perhaps more important reason for our plight is that the federal and some provincial governments decided to go on a spending spree — launching projects, oblivious to their cost and foreign exchange implications. This is not new: the last two governments were equally guilty.

The current state of economic affairs cannot be allowed to continue. Some important decisions may need to be taken in the crunch, even by the interim



government in the national interest. The simple reason for this is that, unless some immediate measures are taken to restore business confidence and, most importantly, to calm the foreign exchange market, the exchange rate will continue to fall. In the extreme scenario, we could enter a freefall situation. Given this uncertainty, anybody with some staying power will not be willing to part with their US dollars, betting that the rupee will fall even more. Those wanting foreign exchange will be chasing less and less available in the market.

Yet, nobody will bail us out, whether it is the IMF or anyone else, without imposing 'conditionalities' — primarily to ensure that they get their money back. Here, our team of negotiators (from the finance ministry and State Bank) must learn some lessons from the past. The last two governments entered into agreements with the IMF almost immediately upon coming into power. The 2008 agreement with the IMF was an unmitigated disaster in terms of its impact on growth, which fell from near 6pc to less than 1pc. The economy never quite recovered after that. The 2013 agreement, partly due to the groundwork done by the interim finance team, was able to avoid this shock through a more gradual decline in the fiscal deficit. However, agreeing almost immediately to a reforms agenda was unwise. To the extent possible, the new government should seek some time to finalise the content and sequencing of economic reforms, for which it can take full ownership and deliver.

The immediate challenge will be to agree to a stabilisation package, at an appropriate speed and sequencing of adjustment, that protects the country's economic interests. Despite its weak bargaining position, the government should work towards a stabilisation package in which the burden of adjustment primarily falls in a sequenced way on the fiscal deficit rather than on the exchange rate. This is not to deny that we need to adjust the exchange rate, but we must keep this limited to its current overvaluation. We must remain fully aware that the cost of a very steep devaluation is especially high for our heavily indebted economy. Doing so would also raise the value of imports, especially oil products, fuelling inflation and eroding competitiveness. To that extent, it would neutralise the gains from devaluation. Most importantly, it would increase the cost of our defence preparedness, which in the current volatile situation cannot be compromised at any cost.

Of course, cutting the fiscal deficit is not without cost, even if the decline is made gradual. A 2pc drop in the fiscal deficit would reduce our current GDP growth of around 6pc to near half this amount. Most importantly, to counteract this, we must put in place measures that allow the recent growth momentum to build on the revival of manufacturing and upturn in exports and create the climate to encourage the much-awaited revival in private investment. All this will ensure that the decline in GDP growth is minimised. The emphasis here should be on reversing the anti-export trade and tariff regime and making a serious attempt at cutting down on losses from public-sector enterprises. This should entail including workers and their elected representatives in any restructuring negotiations.

Over the medium to long term, the policy focus must shift to expediting coal mining in Thar (which could finally remove our dependency on imported oil and gas), preserving and supplementing our water resources, and switching the emphasis in education from merely increasing numbers to improving the quality of education imparted and the social skills of our graduates.

If seriously and successfully monitored and implemented, this agenda will likely keep the newly elected government busy through its term in office. Come 2023, it will be judged on these achievements. Inshallah.

The writer is professor at the Lahore School of Economics and former vice chancellor of the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics.

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Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1417008/economic-crisis-management>

# EDUCATION

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## **Education in Pakistan By Aadil Aamir**

The problems

Education is a process that facilitates the acquisition of skills, beliefs, wisdom and values rather than the mere accretion of degrees like the Pakistani society believes. At the heart of Pakistan's problems lies the education conundrum. If Pakistan is to emerge as a stable polity, equipped to dive deeper in the twenty-first century and reap dividends from its burgeoning population, it must provide a skilled workforce that can power progress and an environment that is conducive to economic growth. In order to realise that dream, Pakistan must fix its outdated, colonial and 'slave-producing' education system. In order to do this, fractures in the present system must be pondered upon.

Anyone who dwells into this ocean of problems is inevitably taken back to the 19th century and Lord McCauley. For here is where the erosion of the Sub-continent's ancient value oriented, religiously neutral education system happened. The old system placed an explicit focus on the learning of languages especially Persian and Sanskrit (which is written in Devanagari script), while McCauley's system shifted the emphasis to an English centred education system which hurled the local population into an array of inferiority complexes (This is also where the present colonial mindedness emanated from).

Secondly, the axe of history inescapably falls upon the Lawrence brothers of Punjab. The brothers who were vehemently opposed to each other, decided to rule the local populace via their own local elders. The brothers achieved this by training sardars and nawabs in the ways of the English vis-à-vis chiefs' colleges such as Aitchison College (which still boasts not only colonial tradition but the outgoing students proudly walk around with an air of superiority).

Economic mobility in Pakistan is mired with wealth, social connections and corruption, and therefore, education is looked towards as the means to make a place in the corporate world and consequently becomes an expectation builder.

The problems in the education system can be broadly stratified along three lines i.e. demand-supply gap (which most literature has focused on), lack of quality (which most drawing room discussions focus on) and education-employment gap.

Firstly, the demand supply gap is grounded in the provision of education, which according to the Constitution of Pakistan is the responsibility of the state. Several surveys have revealed that ample distance needs to be covered to get to a school and more so in rural areas. This deters students and especially girls from attending even primary school.

Deconstructing the demand-supply gap reveals that lack of basic facilities in schools such as electricity, sanitation and clean drinking water also hampers the resolve of parents to send their children to school. The population council conducted a research in 2002 and the findings were confirmed by subsequent surveys. It revealed that at least 80pc of young males and 70pc of their female counterparts had a desire to get education. This portrays a failure on the state's part to deliver on its constitutional promise (Not to mention, it hampers Pakistan's social contract, if one exists).

Those left out of the education system would at best become sub-optimal 'cogs' in Pakistan's economic structure and their massive numbers stand for an opportunity lost to Pakistan, which is detrimental to a sustainable economic-growth model (which Pakistan obviously hasn't been able to come up with as of now).

Secondly, Pakistan's education system has not only failed to deliver quality education and counter radicalism but also has three disconnected systems operating simultaneously. These are the public schools, private schools and religious seminaries. The three types can be easily recognised by three broad markers: ideological, qualitative and socio-economic.

Madrassahs cater to the poorest segment of the society and have the greatest divergence with contemporary economies. The syllabus taught in these seminaries is grounded in religious biases and portrays a narrow-minded worldview. A majority of the public schools and 'non-elite' private schools cater to children representing the middle class, and therefore, the majority. These

schools follow a syllabus which is strictly regulated by the government and has a particular emphasis on rote learning. The medium of instruction is Urdu and students fail to develop a minimum proficiency in the English language, which unfortunately is a basic prerequisite for most white collar jobs in the country including the Central Superior Services (CSS). The syllabus is an imperfect blend between Islam and nationalism characterised by historical inaccuracies and biases.

Elite private schools apply indirect and stringent economic screening via their fee structures. These schools are without doubt for those that possess opulent amounts of wealth. These schools use English as the medium of instruction and promote critical thinking, objectivity and an adherence to foreign culture. Their curriculum is set by foreign universities such as Cambridge University but a few subjects such as Islamiyat and Pakistan Studies are regulated by the government (Nelson Kelly's Pakistan Studies book, which has been taught to students since decades were recently banned by the government). The students of these schools generally depict wider world views in comparison to graduates of seminaries and non-elite public schools.

Interestingly, such is the divergence and isolation between the three systems that most students go their entire lives without intellectually engaging along systems. This in turn produces three varied and highly distinct cohorts within the same generation.

Lack of quality and the state's failure to provide livelihood at the culmination of one's educational journey has exposed students to become amenable to radical literature, ethnic violence and sectarian terrorism. The failure of quality is evident in the Mashaal Khan case, where university students murdered a fellow student for allegedly committing blasphemy without investigating or asking for the slain student's side of the story (It was later proved in court that Mashaal had indeed not committed blasphemy). Similarly, those involved in the Safoora Goth carnage were university graduates.

Pakistan's education sector has also failed to draw on contemporary education techniques and questions by the students are deemed as disrespectful to the teacher. The students are not allowed to intellectually challenge what they are being taught and this limits their ability to not only learn but also to think. This is

why even after several years in a job, many people still falter during their basic work routines. Why? They were never taught how to learn.

Perhaps, the paramount structural problem with education in Pakistan is its examination system. The examinations are conducted to ascertain a student's ability. Contrary to this, examinations in Pakistan attempt to determine a student's ability to reproduce what they have read in books and sometimes exact paragraphs. Similarly, lengthy answers are expected which contrary to popular social belief do not represent intellect rather the inability of a candidate to vividly and coherently explain phenomena. The examinations do not focus and do not even ask the students to critically analyse situations and events. When it comes to sciences, students are expected to reproduce exact derivations and they are not taught how to apply formulas to given problems. This defeats the purpose of teaching them science in the first place. The students therefore mature into intellectually redundant adults.

Problems that ensure that Pakistan's education system continues to stay in the 19th century have been discussed. Democracy can only flourish in politically aware and educated societies and the dismal state of the education sector in the country exacerbates the regressive cycle. This cycle ensures that such men and women are allowed to sit in the halls of power that do not wish for the masses to be educated. The 'what to do' and 'how to do' will be discussed later.

Source: <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/06/02/education-in-pakistan-5/>

# **Education: 23m Broken Promises | Editorial**

REFORMING the education sector will be a colossal challenge for the next governments at the centre and in the provinces, no matter what claims political parties make in their manifestos.

Some 23m children are out of school in Pakistan because governments have neglected education, even though free universal education from ages five to 16 years is a constitutional right.

Access to public schooling remains dependent on family income, geographical location and gender. Most children drop out by the age of nine; and girls from poor communities are least likely to attend school.

On top of this, Pakistan's gender enrolment gap is the widest in South Asia after Afghanistan. If this election is to change the status quo, voters should elect representatives for their commitment to education.

In 2013, political parties, including the PPP, PTI and PML-N identified education reform as improving learning abilities, reducing teacher absenteeism and eliminating gender disparities in schooling among other issues. But the reforms undertaken have been a drop in the ocean.

While the PML-N government increased enrolment, gave stipends to girls, and pioneered merit-based teacher recruitment in Punjab, it failed to offer education expertise and resources to other provinces.

Although a part of the coalition government in Balochistan, it abandoned educational reforms in a province where 1.89m children remain out of school.

In KP, the PTI's ambitious education policies showcased a first-time party's keen intentions. But the trajectory starting out with promises towards implementation remained thorny.

A new government should focus on policy implementation improving learning scores, enrolment and retention in a province where 51pc of girls remain out of school despite budgets higher than the UN recommended 20pc baseline.

Meanwhile, for too long, the PPP-led Sindh government's atrocious report card has needed attention, especially the concern of 'ghost' teachers and the wide gender gap.

In the 2018 manifestos, parties would do well to commit to bringing out-of-school children into the education system, indicating the duration, sustained reforms and budgets required to achieve the goal.

Only realistic goals and incentives are beneficial. Reforms vary countrywide which means policy consensus across party lines will provide opportunities to learn from best practices.

The major goals are to ensure that education is 4pc of GDP as stipulated by the UN, to improve resources for those students who gain the least, and to ensure schooling is not discontinued at any stage.

Replicating some successful public-private partnership school models seen in Punjab and Sindh can also be an election goal, as could regular reviews of district performances and ensuring accountability.

Nelson Mandela noted: "Education is the most powerful weapon that you can use to change the world." Only parties with a vision can understand the truth of his words and work towards implementing their promises.

Published in Dawn, June 5th, 2018

Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1412121/education-23m-broken-promises>



# **For a new face of Higher Education By**

## **Munir Ahmed**

The appointment of well-known educationist, environmentalist, and development expert Dr Tariq Banuri as the new chairperson of the Higher Education Commission (HEC) has been warmly welcomed by higher education activists, and representative staff bodies from different universities.

Having been a member of the activist group, I know how intense were the efforts of the learned members to depoliticise the HEC chairperson's selection process, and to play the part of a genuinely concerned watchdog.

Sincere efforts of the activists always pay back to the society. Now, Dr Banuri's appointment after an unfortunately quite bumpy tenure of Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, former HEC chairman, is being considered as impartial and thorough merit-based professional decision of the federal government.

Although it took a little longer than the usual to make the final decision for the HEC chairman slot, it is being termed a good omen for the future of higher education in Pakistan by all stakeholders. Education in general and the higher education, in particular, has been a big challenge for decades.

Unduly and excessively, it is the political interference and the prevalence of vested interests and prejudices that make the tenure of an HEC chairman a lousy one. The stakeholders of the higher education in Pakistan are hoping that Dr Banuri's tenure will be free of all these issues.

Nevertheless, we shall expect from Dr Banuri some significant change in the practices and development approaches for improvements in higher education. Optimists, including myself, are banking on his creative and innovative soul, in hopes that he will fix the pace of the system. The most recent example of his hardworking genius is the rebirth of the Global Change Impact Study Centre (GCISC). The dead-horse emerged as a focal organisation for over a dozen leading organisations and international partners to successfully organise the first international Science-Policy Conference on Climate Change in the third week of December last year.

The stakeholders of higher education in Pakistan are pinning hope that Dr Banuri's tenure will be free of all the political interferences and other issues

In his maiden official statement as HEC chairman, Dr Banuri extended his gratitude to the prime minister and the selection committee for reposing their confidence in him for the esteemed position of HEC chairperson. He expressed that the first challenge lying ahead of him is to live up to this confidence and trust. He also stressed the need for identifying the key issues facing the sector, setting targets for the next four years, and brainstorming on how the HEC procedural deficiencies can be addressed. HEC has to play a supportive role for higher education institutions, faculty and students at large, as it is a service organisation meant for facilitating all the stakeholders.

Dr Banuri also emphasised that HEC has to go beyond numbers towards the quality of higher education, constantly safeguarding the rights of academia. He said the HEC would not be a bottleneck on the growth of higher education. It is a problem-solving entity that will empower universities and realise the HEC vision. Necessary trainings will be held for HEC employees regularly for their capacity building so that they may improve their potential and work smarter.

The last chairman, Dr Mukhtar Ahmed, completed his term on April 14. It is said that he has left behind a mix of successes and failures. Funding for the HEC saw significant improvement in his tenure but the funding was not completely utilised. He took some steps to improve the quality of education in universities, which induced a positive reaction as well.

At the same time, a media report says that Dr Mukhtar's tenure left much to be desired. The new chairman must attend to restoring the HEC's role as a supportive and facilitative body. The 18-member commission has been ineffective and dysfunctional for the last two years.

A good working relationship with provincial governments and higher education commissions, bringing ad-hocism to an end in the commission, and ensuring quality teaching and research at universities should also be among the chairman's top priorities.

Only two Pakistani universities are ranked among the top 500 in the world, and the quality of education has also become a matter of growing concern, with many educationists claiming that universities have been focused on the quantity of students instead of the quality of students.

Quite unfortunately, hundreds of PhD holders are jobless or underpaid. They don't have right opportunities to utilise their education to unleash their potential and to serve the society. We have seen them sometimes protesting outside the HEC and press club to shake the dead bureaucratic system. No one knows how many hold genuine PhDs. It is alleged that most researchers are simply offering 'tablework'. No genuine content is coming up from these researchers, while plagiarism is also a serious concern that needs to be addressed.

Education experts have said the quality of education at universities needs to be checked, as in many cases teachers are working on administrative posts and compromising on academic activities.

Being on administrative positions, they keep on grabbing all opportunities for international exposure and participation. The HEC shall ask the universities to submit the lists of those faculty members that have participated in international conferences, trainings and workshops. It would reveal the severity of the situation, exploitation and marginalisation of many deserving faculty members.

The over 150 unregistered educational institutions — whose details are available on the HEC website — are also a challenge for the new HEC chairman, as is grouping within the HEC employees. In-house grouping needs to be discouraged to wipe off malpractices from within the HEC, and to make it a more vibrant and professional body.

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# **Pakistan Deserves ‘Education’ By Aadil**

## **Aamir**

The turnaround of Pakistan’s education is daunting but not insurmountable

Education is the only phenomenon that cuts across horizontally through all sections of social and economic classes. Unfortunately, Pakistan’s education not only fails to do that but on the contrary produces three vividly distinct cohorts within one generation and subsequently the nation is divided during the nation building process. Much has been said about the problems of the education sector in Pakistan. It is time to present a coherent plan to fix education in Pakistan.

Pakistan has the means and the ability to produce a well educated population, which may be allowed respect in the comity of nations. This can only be realised if the policy makers make massive quantitative and qualitative changes in the education sector of the country. Equally important is that the state must produce an intellectually sound and value neutral educational apparatus. This will serve the dual purpose of providing not only real education to the populace but also allow the production of a counter narrative that challenges the radical terror-producing and religiously biased discourse. Otherwise, as evident, the state will be unable to de-radicalise society and asymmetric violence, ‘Safoora Goth’, ‘Mashal Khan’ and ‘attack on minorities and their worship places’ will continue to happen. Another unfortunate example is of the book titled, ‘Islam: The misunderstood religion’ by M. Qutb which is a “suggested” reading by the FPSC for CSS Islamic studies. The Qutb brothers were responsible for radicalising the Middle East and propounded the version of Islam that the Saudi crown prince has recently denounced.

Education must be at the heart of a policy solution that aims to provide a panacea for the state’s problems, power a sustainable economic growth model, eradicate poverty and build lasting peace. Reversing the identified failures present an increasingly daunting challenge. Pakistan carries in its heart one of the largest youth populations in the world but the chief provocation comes from politicised Islamic clergy which has run its course and the largely unregulated private education sector which deforms the state’s education setup.

The Fins share a laudable cultural characteristic with the Koreans; a deep social respect for teachers, social value for academic accomplishments and economic response for academic accolades later in life

UNESCO enjoys the mandate to cover the varying aspects of global education and it has been allowed space to lead the struggle vis-à-vis UN's SDGs. The Education 2030 Framework for Action (EFA 2030) takes on the intimidating task and provides a vividly structured roadmap that enables policy makers around the world to construct an education plan tailored to indigenous needs and rooted in inclusive and equitable education for the citizenry. Pakistan has already missed the MDGs but would do well to abide by the education SDGs and EFA 2030. Following the EFA 2030 would allow Pakistan to build an education apparatus that increases teaching quality, covers vocational and tertiary education, develops unbiased gender parity and ultimately aspires to reach the free education benchmark.

Pakistan needs to challenge its failing education apparatus by coming up with appropriate legislation backed up by equitable and rigorous bureaucratic implementation. Pakistan must be able to provide a level playing field and equal access to education for the entire citizenry regardless of religion, geographic location and socio-economic background. This can only be achieved if the education in Pakistan is nationalised. All future education policies must be cognizant of the explosive ramifications of neglecting underprivileged children.

The nationalisation process must not be swift. Public sector education must be uplifted and progress must be viewed with a qualitative lens. Only then will the public sector slowly absorb the private education setup and eradicate the private education *cosa nostra*.

Similarly, the process of revamping religious seminaries must be undertaken swiftly. Their faith based focus must be shifted to a moral and civic sense focus grounded in humanitarian studies and moderate nationalism. It is imperative for Pakistan's survival that the religion-nationalism nexus is broken. This will give birth to graduates with a wider world view, respect for dissent, acceptance of difference of opinion and skills necessary for contemporary economies.

Financial outlays for the education sector must be enhanced magnanimously. Education must weigh heavier on the education vs infrastructure development scale. It is vital for Pakistan's survival. Funds in this regard can be collected by introducing a progressive tax regime that targets elite private schools such as Aitchison College, TNS and the Lahore American School (LAS). The regime must also be inclusive of public-private partnerships and full bright scholarships for the underprivileged.

Furthermore, the problem of quality teaching can be catered to by initiating a short-gap initiative. This would entail a varying cohort of teachers being imported from educational utopias such as Finland, Singapore, Sweden and Norway, to not only work on the quality of teaching and education but also to provide invaluable policy inputs. These teachers and professors must be systematically placed at different levels of the education setup including primary, secondary, graduate and post graduate education levels.

Pakistan has a burgeoning population of retired servicemen including military persons, judges and bureaucrats. These retired officials must be barred from working after retirement and instead must be encouraged to join the education sector as teachers. They must not be allowed administrative posts. This will not only normalise them after a lifetime of high service but also allow the younger generations to capitalise on an untapped wealth of wisdom and experience.

Similarly, a propaganda wave must be launched with the aim to enhance the teachers' respect in society. Only then will the profession attract intellectuals from across the society. Their remuneration must be significantly increased, especially in the public sector, and their salary and perks must be updated so that they are at par with the Basic Pay Scale grade system. This is because a teacher who worries about making ends meet will never be able to concentrate in class and focus more on running from one university to another and teach more classes that he or she can handle. This might sound revolutionary, but it is only logical, since the future of the country is in their hands. Capitalistic endeavours within the education system are treasonous and consequently evening academies and private tuitions must be rigorously contained. The future of Pakistan cannot be given into the hands of those that make profit out of those that represent the ultimate future of the country.

The examination system in Pakistan's education sector is redundant, outdated and reeks of McCaulism. It is of the essence to re-engineer this system. The present focus on writing ability must be shifted towards critical thinking, establishing opinion backed by logical reasoning and the ability to learn. This will in future prove to be the breeding ground for minds that are able to conduct effective and pragmatic research.

To ensure that Pakistan's education system is pulled out of the abyss it presently finds itself in, policy makers must familiarise themselves with state's that portray outstanding education systems such as Finland. Once that is done, the men and women in the halls of power can come up with policy solutions that mirror the world's education utopias tailored to local needs.

An example that warrants mention is of Finland. Half a century ago, Finland was on its way to become the economic stepchild of Europe but today academic intelligentsia term the Finnish education system as "utopian". The said system is grounded in intrinsic motivation and extracurricular choice. Pakistan's education sector lacks both of them. The Fins share a laudable cultural characteristic with the Koreans; a deep social respect for teachers, social value for academic accomplishments and economic response for academic accolades later in life. Pakistan has so far failed to mirror this and unless this is reversed Pakistan's education sector will continue to present a dismal picture.

Today's world is indifferent to tradition and unforgiving of frailty. The turnaround of Pakistan's education is daunting but not insurmountable. If the task is not undertaken swiftly, the state will continue to be frail. Success will follow when the state is slow to complain and quick to adapt. Education is the only way to heal the ruptured, marginalised and polarised social fabric. What remains is that the state must ensure that successive regimes, institutions and the people must rise up to this challenge. It is time for Pakistan to take the Great Leap Forward.

Source: <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/06/08/pakistan-deserves-education/>

# **CSS Examinations And Chasing The Pakistani Dream By Nasir Khan**

What is the Pakistani dream? Most people want their life to be full of resources, with a high standard of living. A venerable post to be seated on, a smart salary package, felicitous job nature, a secure working environment and gratuitous perks are the demands of the current generation.

A government job promises to fulfill all this and more! That's the purpose behind a CSS aspirant's long years of hard work, endurance and constant patience. Isn't it fair enough to give their best to get the best? It is often seen that we give up on our goal when we are closest to it, when we actually need to have a breakthrough in our plans, methods of preparation and our attitude. If CSS candidates want to achieve their goal, they are required to do the same things differently from others.

CSS is the toughest examination in Pakistan, leading up to the most prestigious and powerful positions in the country. Almost all the graduates want to be civil servants. Students keep preparing themselves for this long journey. It is interesting to note that only a few hundred out of thousands qualify the written portion of the exam. This indicates the quality of education at our schools, colleges and universities.

There are number of reasons behind the failure of university graduates in the competitive examination.

It is quite a common practice to pin hopes on a bunch of books and study material rather than focusing on the quality of the same. The aspirants need to know that they have to acquire apt knowledge to get into their dream job. There is no harm in acquiring additional knowledge but prudently it will be wise to do so when they have plenty of time. They should build their trust in one or two sources of study material of a particular subject. Instead of reading from various books or content, they should study and grasp the subject from one book by practicing with it a number of times.



Students often rely on other successful candidates' notes. It has to be understood though that everyone's technique of learning process varies widely. Each brain is designed differently. The way one captures from a single study content can be different from the other. It is not necessary that the same advices would work for all aspirants as their time distinction, dealing with tricks and techniques and approach towards a single topic could vary. Their skill scales might be sharper than other potential candidates'. Some may get the whole concept in only a few handy notes while it couldn't be so for the others. However, in the end, it is the will not the skill that decides the outcome. If one stays the course, even an average mind can beat a brilliant one with hard work.

It all comes down to how badly one wants it. People have their daily life distractions. These distractions of the present might just become the reasons of their failure in future. Is it not a smart decision to work harder for now and live one's whole life enjoying success, rather than wasting time helter-skelter and regretting it later? Turn these distractions into a fuel to boost yourself. Instead of searching for useless videos on YouTube, look for exam preparation videos; instead of leaving worthless comments, ask your queries, instead of being a part of impertinent social groups, join online study groups.

Students expect success too early. The factors success demands in one's attributes includes patience too. They are, at times, well prepared to come across all the obstacles but then they become an obstacle to themselves with a fragile attitude and a lack of perseverance.

Students are not honest with themselves. They usually become inspired for a while and then get back to the same old track. They start lying to themselves. Each day's hard work counts in the final result. A person needs to ask oneself first if this is what he actually dreams of, not just for the sake of meeting requirements or demands of others. And then chase your goal like it is the only thing in the world that matters. Stop telling yourself that there is enough time to start, to plan, to proceed.

Unsuccessful aspirants do lots of material hunting, both offline and online. Offline, they inquire and purchase all feasible books and magazines. Online, they join all possible discussion forums, WhatsApp groups and so on.

According to a research study, people forget 77% of what they learn in the next six days. Entertainment materials (like movies, songs, gossips, etc.) tend to be easier to remember than productive and intellectual material. Unsuccessful candidates focus more on relatable and entertainment material and avoid the cognitive pain of reading and revising syllabus. They don't have a proper schedule to revise previously covered topics in coaching/self. They just keep going without looking back. It is important to remember "to ensure success in any examination, one needs to plan, execute, revise and most importantly enjoy whole preparation journey." Try to face the situation with a strong willpower rather than avoiding or escaping from it. If the students keep their faith, their trust, the right attitude, and if they're grateful, they'll see new doors of opportunities and success opening up on their own.

CSS aspirants should always bear in mind that the competition is tough for everyone; you are not the only one who has to fight

Reading different books for grabbing material is important but how to read the book is a difficult job. The way questions are asked in exams and the way they're solved in books are totally different. In books, authors try to explain every step in depth whereas in exams the students need to solve questions using their analytical skill. The analytical skills are lacking in Pakistani students.

CSS aspirants should always bear in mind that the competition is tough for everyone; you are not the only one who has to fight against it. Second, no one is inferior to anyone as one might get a lead over you in a particular subject but they might be weaker in another subject that you are excellent at. Third, every weakness can be turned into strength once worked upon efficiently. Fourth, if they keep practicing with the test series on a regular basis, no competitive examination seems outlandish to them because they are already used to facing that interface. Fifth, time can be managed by working on their schedule and planning their study hours out. Remember, hard work beats talent when talent doesn't work hard.

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# **What Should HEC's Role be in Strengthening Higher Education? By M**

**Fazal Elahi**

AN enlightened response to the question as to what should be HEC's role vis-à-vis strengthening the institutions of higher learning and their integral components, faculty and students would be; it should be "supportive and facilitative". In other words, mentoring, nurturing and bolstering the higher education institutions should be the cornerstone of HEC's policy to administer the higher education sector of the country. This is precisely what HEC's role should be, and this is exactly what the new Chairman of the HEC Professor Dr. Tariq Banuri, a scholar, academician, researcher and administrator of international eminence, articulated during his maiden address to the senior members of his team immediately after taking the reign of country's premier higher education regulatory body in his hands.

The question however is, has HEC, since its creation 15 years ago, played the role expected of it? One would find it rather difficult to respond to this question in the affirmative. Regrettably, the role that HEC has played and continues to play has been more dogmatic towards its stakeholders rather than supportive and facilitative. Instead of making things easier or less difficult for its major stakeholders in the country, it has taken inordinately drastic measures that certainly wouldn't promote but surely gag the higher education institutions and have an immensely damaging impact on higher education in the country. In the realm of higher education, world over, the institutions of higher learning are the primary stakeholders. The other two equally significant stakeholders are the faculty and students. A supportive and facilitative higher education authority mandates itself to strengthen the principal stakeholders, the higher education institutions (HEIs); the secondary stakeholders, the faculty and students, automatically become the ultimately beneficiaries.

Unfortunately, however, the scenario in our part of the world has been totally different. It has conspicuously been devoid of such progressive philosophy. The Higher Education Commission (HEC) has, particularly during the past five years, played an autocratic role in dealing with its principal stakeholders. The

universities, both public and private, have been governed with a sense of utmost haughtiness. The Commission felt enormously contented in closing down a number of institutions, and completely blocking a large number of academic (bachelors, masters, M.Phil and PhD) programs of innumerable public and private universities. Some of these institutions, it would be pertinent to state, were placed in the highest (W 4) category of university rankings by HEC itself, and they have made phenomenal contribution towards the cause of higher education in the country.

Undeniably, the institutions which have become victim of the Commission's autocratic stance may have been deficient in some areas of its academic endeavors. But this shouldn't have led to total or partial closure of the academic programs of these institutions. Had the intent of the Higher Education Commission been positive and had it played a role of a mentor, rather than a tenacious regulatory body, the scenario certainly would have been very different. HEC would have taken these institutions along. It would have mentored, nurtured and bolstered them to maintain high standards in their endeavors to impart top quality education, and make them stand out conspicuously among the high ranking and venerable universities of the world.

It wouldn't be inappropriate to quote an appalling instance, recently reported in Pakistan's print media, that stridently speaks of serious mismanagement on the part of the Commission. According to the published report, about 671 PhD degree holders are jobless in the country since the last two to three years. They are running from pillar to post in search of jobs, but in vain. HEC and some notable foreign funding agencies invested huge sums in producing these high profile scholars. This was done with the specific intent of addressing the dire need of institutions of higher learning of the country for PhD faculty, to raise the standard of higher education and promote the culture of quality research in these institutions. When seen in the backdrop of this sad and abysmal situation, it seems that all efforts of the Commission to attain this vital goal have proven futile. Closing down of the academic programs of various institutions and inability to establish quality research centers and vocational training institutes unquestionably has had a key role to play in the joblessness of a huge number of PhDs.

All this shows that a crucially important factor that the Commission has, for some reasons, completely failed to appreciate vis-à-vis its principal stakeholders is that institutions are not built in days. It takes decades and a lot of pain and hard work to build institutions, but just some reckless notion or desire to obliterate them. In view of the foregoing facts, it can be candidly said that in the process of asserting its power and authority, vested in it as the country's highest regulatory body in the field of higher education, HEC has endeavored more to make itself stronger rather than its stakeholders. Undoubtedly, the situation should have been the other way round; HEC should have focused more on strengthening the institutions and the other stakeholders in higher education rather than itself. Had it done so, the impact certainly would have been far greater and not only HEC but the entire nation could have had the opportunity to take genuine pride in its achievements in the field of higher education.

With a new leader at the helm in the HEC, one sincerely hopes things would change for good. Professor Dr. Tariq Banuri, the incumbent Chairman of the Higher Education Commission is a highly experienced, educated and enlightened academician, researcher, scholar and administrator. His profound exposure to the academic world, both within the country and abroad, must enable him to take judicious decisions vis-à-vis the higher education sector of the country. It is expected, and rightly so, that he would mandate HEC to play a guiding and facilitative role in dealing with all the stakeholders of higher education in the country. HEC should conclusively rise above prejudices; mentor and facilitate, and not jeopardize the efforts of the institutions which have enormously contributed and are contributing towards the cause of higher education in Pakistan.

— The writer is freelance columnist based in Islamabad.

Source: <https://pakobserver.net/what-should-hecs-role-be-in-strengthening-higher-education/>

# **What Will It Take for Syrian Refugees to Return Home? By Maha Yahya**

Syria's 18 million people make up less than one percent of the world's population, but a whopping one-third of all refugees are Syrian. Since 2011, more than 5.5 million people have fled the country and 6.1 million have been internally displaced. Syria's neighbors have borne the brunt of the crisis: there are 3.3 million registered refugees in Turkey, one million in Lebanon, and 650,000 in Jordan. Another half million Syrian refugees now reside in Europe. (Canada and the United States have taken in approximately 50,000 and 18,000, respectively.)

These refugee flows have destabilized other countries in the region, reshaped global asylum and migration policies, and fueled a populist backlash in the West that has undermined liberal democracy. And so it may be no surprise that most international discussions about the future of Syrian refugee populations settle on a simple solution: sending them back to Syria once the conflict is over. The various peace negotiations under way—such as the Geneva process, sponsored by the UN, and the Astana talks, co-sponsored by Iran, Russia, and Turkey—take for granted that refugees will willingly return home once a political settlement is in place.

But these plans have ignored a crucial piece of the equation: what the refugees themselves want. My colleagues and I at the Carnegie Middle East Center sought to fill this gap by interviewing refugees in Jordan and Lebanon about what it would take for them to go home. These conversations made clear just how difficult mass voluntary return would be.

### WHAT REFUGEES WANT

Although experiences of discrimination in their current countries of residence have led many refugees to romanticize pre-conflict Syria, those whom we interviewed overwhelmingly cited safety and security as a chief condition for

return. But most do not believe that these security conditions will be met any time soon without some form of political change. The majority of refugees oppose the regime, and for them, safety and security can only be guaranteed if Syrian President Bashar al-Assad goes. This is especially true for women, who fear for the safety of their children and families if they return. But the departure of Assad is not all that refugees want; many believe that safety and security also means demilitarization, which would involve the disbanding of all militias and armed factions and putting an end to arbitrary arrests and checkpoints. For most refugees, local actors bring only chaos and instability. Their hopes for ending the conflict lie mainly with external actors. Even pro-regime refugees (who qualified for refugee status because they were fleeing conflict-heavy areas) have doubts about whether their homeland will be safe enough to return. Although some believe that there is hope for political stability if the Syrian army regains control over enough territory, most feel that no solution in sight.

Another key obstacle to refugee return is Syria's mandatory military conscription for men between the ages of 18 and 42, a policy that also spurred the departure of many of our young focus group participants. Sectarian grievances compound this fear. Given that the Alawites dominate Syria's ruling political class, some Sunni youth believe that they will be sent to the frontlines to die, while Alawite conscripts will receive safer deployments. Recent laws have further complicated this issue. In 2017, the government imposed an \$8,000 fine on men who fail to register for military service within three months of turning 18. Because this law also applies to those who fled before it was ratified, male refugees of conscription age who want to come back to Syria must pay the fine. Those who subsequently fail to join the military will be imprisoned for a year and penalized \$200 for every year after the starting date of conscription, and the government can seize the conscript's assets until these payments are complete. Given the destitution of most refugees, such fines would cripple a family's finances.

Justice also ranked high among the refugees' condition for return. Many feared that without the proper legal framework to hold individuals responsible for crimes committed during the conflict, lawlessness and vigilante style justice will prevail. But our focus group disagreed over how this should be accomplished. Pro-regime refugees rejected the notion of a presidential pardon for those who evaded conscription or participated in anti-regime activities because they believe that individuals who opposed the regime are traitors and should not be forgiven.

Most anti-regime refugees, on the other hand, opposed the idea of a blanket impunity for all crimes committed during the conflict because they are adamant that those who committed grave crimes should be held accountable.

Surprisingly, economic opportunity was less of a concern for most refugees than political stability. When asked if they would return to Syria under favorable political conditions, even if they lacked economic opportunities or housing, most refugees stated that they would. But they also specified that they wanted to return to their cities of origin. Only a minority of the focus group suggested that they would be willing to settle in any region of Syria if that were the only option.

## FACTS ON THE GROUND

In practice, however, going back home will be challenging for even the most committed refugees. Fragmentation of territories, widespread destruction, and new legislation governing property rights will all complicate refugees' ability to reclaim the lives they left behind. Mass displacement has produced large-scale secondhand occupation of housing, and many poorly equipped camps have been erected on land still legally owned by civilians. These settlements will generate property rights issues for refugees seeking to recover their assets.

The Assad regime has only made matters worse. A number of studies indicate that the regime has used land registries to identify areas allied with the opposition and target them with military campaigns in the hope that this would turn civilian populations against the opposition. Credible reports in 2016 also claimed that the regime deliberately destroyed land registries in order to dispossess those who fled and forge new ownership records for pro-regime citizens. In Homs, a recent urban renewal law (no. 10), took this approach to a new level by creating administrative units charged with reconstructing parts of the city and requiring all Syrians who own property in those areas to file a claim within one month. Those who fail to do so risk having their assets seized by the government, but for many refugees, returning to Syria could be a suicide mission. This legislation is designed to reward regime loyalists, who will be tasked with the redevelopment of Syria, and to dispossess opponents, including the millions of refugees who either cannot return or who fled without property deeds. In the long run, such policies could make exile permanent for many refugees.



Vetting procedures, such as those outlined by the governor of Homs, Talal Barazi, also ensure that going back to Syria will be difficult. To recover their homes, returning refugees must submit a legal document that certifies their place of origin and property ownership and they must undergo a security check by local police to ensure that they have no pending security or felony charges. New regulations also mandate that refugees must reclaim their property within a period of 30 days. This is an issue for men who avoided conscription and risk being arrested. Furthermore, in 2004, around 40 percent of property in Syria was informal, meaning that owners either did not have the right permits or built on publicly owned land. Half of our focus group participants fled Syria without proof of ownership. And because most refugees have limited access to information about new laws (especially those that relate to housing, land, and property rights), the process of reclaiming their assets would rely largely on informal networks and word of mouth.

## THE ROAD AHEAD

For many refugees, the traumatic experiences of departure, compounded by the survival of the regime that forced them to flee, complicate the prospect of returning to Syria. Many remain wary about the unpredictable security situation. Although the intensity of the conflict may subside in the near future as the Assad regime consolidates more territory, the country will likely remain fragmented into different zones of influence for some time. Meanwhile, urban planning laws, reconstruction plans, forced conscription, and vetting procedures have become instruments in the hands of a regime bent on rewarding its loyalists and using the question of refugee return—a high priority for both its neighbors and Europe—as leverage to amplify its territorial gains and to initiate the process of reintegration into the international community.

No political settlement to the Syrian civil war will be sustainable unless it accounts for the needs and circumstances of refugees. The international community should insist on a refugee-centered negotiating framework that upholds the right to voluntary return. This means engaging with the key demands of refugees for political stability and justice, as well as pressuring the regime to roll back laws that dispossess refugees or hinder return. For example, international funding for stabilization and reconstruction at the local level could be directly linked to the maintenance of refugee rights. Addressing the Syrian

refugee crisis requires acknowledging its political roots and including the voice of refugees in the peace process. If this does not occur, Syria will continue to be an epicenter of instability and human misery. And millions of Syrians around the world will remain refugees.

Source: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/syria/2018-05-28/what-will-it-take-syrian-refugees-return-home?cid=int-lea&pgtype=hpg>

# **India to play US proxy in Asia? By M. Ziauddin**

India is clearly being prodded by the US and its own overambitious hawks into a confrontational mode vis-à-vis China. Their mantra: The so-called Asian century is as much that of India's as it is China's. New Delhi is being told that it should step in as the US withdraws from Asia. In other words Washington wants India to play its proxy against China which the US fears is fast replacing it from the Asian continent.

According to an inspired piece of writing (Modi needs to show India has teeth—published in Foreign Policy weekly on May 31, 2008) by Atman Trivedi and Amy Searight Asia's uncertain political and economic climate presents an opportunity for Modi as U.S. President Donald Trump's policies, including the withdrawal from the Trans-Pacific Partnership trade agreement and a purely transactional approach to longtime alliances, have contributed to strategic drift in the region as China grows assertive and authoritarian.

“The situation calls for steady leadership — and the United States and its Pacific allies hope that New Delhi can deliver,” add the authors, one (Trivedi) of which is a Managing Director at Hills & Company and Adjunct Fellow at the Pacific Forum. He worked on India policy at the US State and Commerce Departments and the Senate Foreign Relations Committee. The other (Searight) is a Senior Adviser and Director of the Southeast Asia Program at the Center for Strategic and International Studies, and served as a Deputy Assistant Secretary of Defense for South and Southeast Asia at the Pentagon.

Pakistan needs to keep the related developments under close watch to be able to safeguard its own strategic interests in case they are threatened by the emerging alignment ostensibly against China but could also undermine Islamabad's interests by way of collateral damage.

India's 'inadequate' defense-industrial base and lack of regional economic integration are said to threaten to frustrate the idea of it playing the proxy for the US. To be of any use as its proxy the US wants Modi to convince Asia's elites

that his country is ready to become a leading power that can ensure no one country can dominate the region's future.

As a first step towards gaining the confidence of its East Asian neighbours the US wants India to match its military expenditure which currently is 1.5 per cent of GDP to China's 2 percent of its GDP which itself is five times that of India's. It is more than a tall order.

Moreover, despite being world's top buyer of military weapons India still has acute shortfalls in major weapons systems like fighter jets, basic infantry combat equipment, and even ammunition.

Pointing out that being world's fastest-growing large economy, India could get better positioned to build its defense capabilities if it can muster the political will, streamline procurements, and improve both civil-military and intra-services coordination. In other words, the US wants India to increase its purchases of weapon systems which in turn would boost the sagging US and European economies which are crucially dependent on their respective military hardware manufacturing industries.

Continuing their seemingly persuasive argument the authors insist that Modi should beef-up presence in the Indian Ocean, as well as assistance and capacity-building activities in the Bay of Bengal region.

"China is testing India around South Asia and surrounding maritime trade and energy routes as never before. Events this winter in the Maldives led some commentators to wonder whether its leader, Abdulla Yameen, was shifting allegiances from New Delhi to Beijing. Modi must meet the challenge," maintain the authors.

In this regard they quoted a former Indian Foreign Secretary Shyam Saran saying, "It is India's neighbourhood that holds the key to its emergence as a regional and global power."

The authors further maintain that Modi should also call on collective efforts to help strengthen the maritime capacity of Southeast Asia. In their opinion the

region will listen attentively to what Modi says about related disputes and the need to resolve them peacefully and in accordance with global rules.

India has rapidly expanded security ties with Japan and Vietnam, participated in sea exercises with other powers, and joined the revival of the quadrilateral U.S.-Japan-India-Australia democratic security grouping. The authors consider getting the band back together is positive, but Southeast Asia, they believe, doesn't want to be left out.

“The 10 Association of Southeast Asian Nations countries await confirmation that the Quad complements, not substitutes for, that body's centrality and the inclusive multilateralism that ASEAN-led frameworks represent,” opine the authors.

Modi is asked to restate these principles and also call for greater cooperation with Europe's democracies reminding that France, for example, has significant Indian Ocean interests and is sending clear signals to India, Australia, and the region that it's ready to work together.

Modi is advised to embrace the nation (US)'best equipped to underwrite India's defense and technological transformation — and, even today, Asia's rules-based security order'. While at it, the authors say, Modi can gently remind the United States why it's in its own self-interest to do so.

At the same time, India is advised to accelerate the building of ties with Australia and South Korea, and in Southeast Asia, cultivate closer relations with Indonesia, Singapore, and the new Malaysian government. As China's influence expands to include the Indian Ocean and the South Pacific, the region is said to be headed toward more networked security partnerships. Modi is further advised to welcome this variable geometry.

Recalling that Modi and Chinese President Xi Jinping recently tried to reset fraying ties after a tense border confrontation, the authors believe “the giants' inveterate mistrust suggests the détente may not last.” India is told that the smaller countries are watching to see if India would stand its ground.

China's Belt and Road Initiative to build Eurasian infrastructure, in the opinion of authors, creates potential debt traps, as has already happened in Sri Lanka, and Beijing's political and military leverage limits countries' independence.

"Thus far, territorial grievances with Pakistan and sovereignty concerns have animated New Delhi's criticism of the initiative. This can come across as too myopic. Modi should pivot to making the case that India, Japan, and the West offer bankable alternatives for the private sector, while keeping the door open to partnering selectively with China," said the authors.

The authors want India to restart economic reforms after next spring's parliamentary elections in order to win the confidence of its Southeast Asian neighbours and a pledge to reinvigorate its efforts to conclude the Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership, they believe, would draw resounding applause.

India is said to be understandably nervous about opening up its agriculture and manufacturing to China and 14 other countries. But, the authors believe, it however needs to meet them in the middle to strengthen global competitiveness and enable its high-skilled services professionals to work abroad.

"Both India and Southeast Asia have far more to gain strategically and economically by finding a way forward and protecting against overdependence on China," believe the authors.

India's willingness to advance deeper economic integration with the region is said to be also essential because, as they said, it's much harder to be a reliable security partner while arguing with everyone over trade and often sitting outside Asia's supply chains.

Finally, Modi is asked not to shy away from highlighting liberal values such as openness, tolerance, and rule of law. It's these attributes, they said, that make India's rise so compelling and essential to the preservation of the Asian order. Building New Delhi's soft power, it is said, requires tackling India's own injustices and addressing the horrors suffered by the Rohingya (and other groups) in Myanmar and now Bangladesh.

They insist that Modi has the perfect moment to show world leaders that India's future belongs at the high table of global powers — and that its ascendancy comes with obvious benefits for their countries.

But all this appears to be a wishful dream of the US which is fast losing its powers to control the levers of global hegemony. India is too big a country to play the proxy of any one, especially of a declining power. And even if it wanted to play the role, it would find itself too inadequate because in the first place it is still a developing country; it is not in a position to be able to assume the role of a big power even if it is only in Asia.

Secondly, it is ravaged by a number of domestic secessionist movements, especially in its Eastern and North-Western peripheries. Its killing fields in occupied Kashmir have forced New Delhi to maintain as many as 700,000 troops encircling the valley. With the rise of BJP, Modi's ruling Party India has become one of most intolerant countries in the world. Its treatment of minorities is perhaps the worst by any country in the world. It is becoming an increasingly illiberal and closed society sans rule of law.

Source : <https://pakobserver.net/india-to-play-us-proxy-in-asia/>

# **Security Brief: North Korea Summit Back On; End of the Korean War? By Elias Groll**

It might actually happen. American and North Korean negotiators met for a fifth round of preparatory talks at the border village of Panmunjom on Monday, days after President Donald Trump abruptly declared that the canceled summit meeting with his North Korean counterpart is back on.

As American and North Korean diplomats scramble to arrange an agenda for the summit set for June 12 in Singapore, U.S. officials continue to drive a hard line on the need for North Korea to give up its nuclear weapons. “North Korea will receive relief only when it demonstrates verifiable and irreversible steps to denuclearization,” U.S. Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said on Sunday.

“We can anticipate, at best, a bumpy road” to the summit, Mattis added.

South Korean officials, meanwhile, are arguing for a more open-minded stance. “Just because we have been tricked by North Korea in the past doesn’t guarantee that we will be tricked in the future,” South Korean Defense Minister Song Young-moo said Saturday.

While a huge gap remains between American insistence that North Korea give up its nuclear weapons and Pyongyang’s obvious reluctance to do so, the June 12 summit may end up focusing on formally ending the Korean War.

“Preparations are already underway for President Moon to declare a formal end to the Korean War with the two leaders on June 12, the date of the North-U.S. summit, or the next day on the 13th,” a diplomatic source told Korea JoongAng Daily. “Singapore has already begun preparations to host President Moon.”

On Friday, Trump hosted North Korea’s former intelligence chief at the White House and emerged from the meeting speaking of the need for a peace treaty.

“We talked about ending the war,” Trump said. “And you know, this war has been going on — it’s got to be the longest war — almost 70 years, right? And there is a possibility of something like that.”



Welcome to this Monday morning edition of Security Brief. As always, please send your tips, questions, and comments to [elias.groll@foreignpolicy.com](mailto:elias.groll@foreignpolicy.com).

Assad to North Korea. Syrian President Bashar al Assad said he plans to visit North Korea, according to the North's state media. Syria and North Korea are believed to actively cooperate on chemical weapons development.

Musical chairs. North Korean leader Kim Jong Un replaced the top three officials in the country's armed forces, in a move that appears to further consolidate his control over the army at a critical juncture. "The United States is seeking a negotiated end to North Korea's nuclear weapons program and U.S. officials believe there was some dissension in the military about Kim's approaches to South Korea and the United States," Reuters reports.

NK Leadership Watch has more details on what is known about the newly elevated officials.

So, you'll get this, right? With American and North Korean officials scrambling to get the logistics squared away for a possible summit meeting between President Donald Trump and Kim Jong Un, diplomats working at the summit site in Singapore have stumbled on a surprising snag: Who will pick up Kim Jong Un's hotel tab? "The prideful but cash-poor pariah state requires that a foreign country foot the bill at its preferred lodging: the Fullerton, a magnificent neoclassical hotel near the mouth of the Singapore River, where just one presidential suite costs more than \$6,000 per night," the Washington Post reports.

Does Kim want Trump's help? Trump administration officials have repeatedly dangled economic aid as a prime motivator for North Korea to come to the table. But a close look at North Korea's official statements indicates that the country "has been emphatic that it will not give up its nuclear weapons in exchange for American economic aid," the New York Times reports.

Will the U.S. sanction European energy companies? With transatlantic relations under strain already, the Trump administration is considering taking a step that would strain it further — sanctioning German and other European energy companies in order to target a Russian natural gas pipeline, Foreign Policy

reports. Nord Stream 2 would deliver gas from Russia to Europe, but the U.S. worries it would come at Ukraine's expense.

Google ices Maven. Facing an employee revolt over its artificial intelligence work on behalf of the Pentagon, Google executives said last week that they will not renew their contract for the DoD's Project Maven, which uses AI technology to analyze drone video, according to Gizmodo. Google's move deprives the Pentagon of arguably the most sophisticated AI-company in the United States, represents a major setback for Defense Department's efforts to forge a closer relationship to Silicon Valley, and marks a major turning point in the debate over the ethics of marrying artificial intelligence to defense technology.

The job no one wants. The Department of Defense will take over principal responsibility for investigating security clearance applications for the federal government, the Associated Press reports. "Pentagon officials said that over the next three years, the Defense Department will take responsibility for all background investigations involving its military and civilian employees and contractors. But according to a U.S. official, the White House is expected to soon give the department authority to conduct security reviews for nearly all other government agencies as well," according to the AP.

Mattis throws some zingers in Singapore. Speaking at the Shangri-La security dialogue in Singapore last week, Secretary of Defense Jim Mattis called out Beijing for "intimidation and coercion" in the Pacific region, emphasizing the United States will continue to maintain its presence there. "China's policy in the South China Sea stands in stark contrast to the openness our strategy promotes. It calls into question China's broader goals," Mattis said. China didn't miss the opportunity for a few barbs of its own; one Chinese general slammed the United States for "disinviting" China from the RimPac naval exercises.

U.S. may increase patrols in the South China Sea. As Beijing has continued to construct military facilities on artificial islands in the disputed South China Sea, the Pentagon is considering upping the number and size of patrols it sends through the region, Reuters reports. The United States has regularly conducted freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea to ensure that no nation is attempting to block maritime activity there.

Arms race. The countries of Southeast Asia are caught in a losing arms race with a resurgent China, and they must seek a diplomatic solution to the brewing conflict, Philippine Defense Minister Delfin Lorenzana told the Financial Times.

“They can come and go in our West Philippine Sea unimpeded because we don’t have the wherewithal to confront them,” Lorenzana told the paper, referring to the South China Sea by its Philippine name. “China is actually using its military might to intimidate countries.”

Sputnik moment. China is making significant investments in basic science research and is increasingly able to lure top scientific talent away from American universities, the Washington Post reports.

“The United States spends half a trillion dollars a year on scientific research — more than any other nation on Earth — but China has pulled into second place, with the European Union third and Japan a distant fourth,” according to the paper. “China is on track to surpass the United States by the end of this year, according to the National Science Board. In 2016, annual scientific publications from China outnumbered those from the United States for the first time.”

Naval drone swarm. A new video shows off a neat bit of Chinese drone technology: naval unmanned vehicles conducting swarm maneuvers. The video is the latest example of China’s major investments — and advancements — in drone technology.

Zuck, call your office. Facebook has a possible new privacy scandal on its hands. “Facebook has reached data-sharing partnerships with at least 60 device makers — including Apple, Amazon, BlackBerry, Microsoft and Samsung — over the last decade, starting before Facebook apps were widely available on smartphones, company officials said. The deals allowed Facebook to expand its reach and let device makers offer customers popular features of the social network, such as messaging, ‘like’ buttons and address books, the New York Times reports.

You’re not paranoid. Devices for snooping on cellular phone calls and texts have been spotted around Washington, D.C., including near the White House, according to a newly revealed federal study. It is unclear exactly who operated

the devices, but they could be the work of one or more foreign intelligence services.

“The discovery bolsters years of independent research suggesting that foreign intelligence agencies use sophisticated interception technology to spy on officials working within the hub of federal power in the nation’s capital. Experts in surveillance technology say that IMSI catchers — sometimes known by one popular brand name, StingRay — are a standard part of the tool kit for many foreign intelligence services, including for such geopolitical rivals as Russia and China,” the Washington Post reports.

Get one of these for the coming nuclear winter. New details are trickling out about Russia’s arctic combat vehicle, which is essentially a dune buggy equipped with skis and machine guns. “Some of Russia’s most elite troops appear to be eyeing a variant of the Chechen-made Chaborz M-3 combat buggy modified for Arctic operations,” the Drive reports. “Looking like something out of a Hollywood blockbuster or better suited to carrying around action figures, the vehicle is the latest indication of the country’s steadily expanding presence in the highly strategic Arctic Region.”

Cyber in warfare. American commanders are beginning to describe how cyber operations figured into the campaign to defeat the Islamic State. American forces successfully located the Islamic State’s primary command posts but could not track their subcommands, so the United State used “capabilities from space and cyber to deny the enemy’s primary command post, forcing him to move and unveil his alternate command posts,” Gen. Stephen Townsend, the Army’s former head of the anti-Islamic State taskforce, told a conference. After Islamic State forces left their primary command posts and revealed their other locations, the American task force attacked.

What’s in a name? U.S. Pacific Command has a new name: U.S. Indo-Pacific Command. The move is a not so subtle jab at China. The name signals that no country, no matter its size, is “bound by any nation’s predatory economics or threat of coercion,” Defense Secretary Jim Mattis said in announcing the change.

Saber strike. Some 18,000 troops began annual drills in Poland and the Baltic on Sunday. This year’s exercise comes as Polish officials are agitating for a

permanent U.S. military presence there, a base that the government says it is willing to pay up to \$2 billion to fund.

But the ground is the F-35's natural environment! The availability of F-35 fighter jets is suffering as the plane's maintenance crews can't get the parts they need to keep the advanced planes in the air, Defense News reports.

Train and equip SNAFU. A new Government Accountability Office report on American foreign military training operations will make for unhappy reading at the Pentagon. With nearly \$2 billion being poured into 21 projects in 2016 and 2017 to train foreign foreign militaries and provide them gear, a mere eight of those projects improved the capabilities of the local force, Military Times reports.

Meanwhile in Afghanistan. A new report paints a dismal picture of the state of education in Afghanistan. "Nearly half all children in Afghanistan are out of school due to conflict, poverty, child marriage and discrimination against girls, the number rising for the first time since 2002," Reuters reports.

Still fighting. Undeterred by their failure so far to block the Trump administration's pursuit of a new low-yield nuclear weapon, some House Democrats are still fighting to kill the proposal. Rep. Barbara Lee, the California Democrat, has offered an amendment that would end funding for the weapon as part of the 2019 Energy and Water appropriations bill, Defense News reports.

Major missile news. The U.S. Navy has selected a new over-the-horizon anti-ship weapon, and it's the Norwegian Naval Strike Missile, Defense News reports. The weapon will replace the Harpoon on some ships, and represents a major victory for its designers, Kongsberg and Raytheon. The contract could be worth as much as \$848 million over its life.

Hypersonics for subs. Russia's next generation of submarines may be equipped with hypersonic missiles, according to a report in Russian media.

"Little is known about the Husky-class submarines. They're called fifth-generation multipurpose submarines in the Russian press and are being designed by the Malakhit design bureau in St. Petersburg, but there is not yet a finalized version of the boat's design," Defense News reports. "According to TASS, the Husky

class will feature a typical — or rather typical for Russian subs — dual-hull design, with a 12,000-ton displacement.”

Lawfare. The Department of Justice decided that President Donald Trump’s May strikes on Syria were legal in large part because “the anticipated hostilities would not rise to the level of a war in the constitutional sense,” the Washington Post reports. The broad interpretation of executive authority asserted that Trump had the power to launch the strikes in the “national interest.”

Agni 5 test. Indian armed forces claimed to have successfully tested the Agni 5 missile, a three-stage long-range weapon capable of hitting targets within a 5,000 km range, NDTV reports.

Back to the mothership, drones! The U.S. Navy and researchers at Florida Atlantic University are researching an unmanned naval drone that would serve as a mothership for other, smaller drones, Defense One reports. The Navy is trying to speed up the way it develops and deploys drones.

The U.S. is considering taking a Yemeni port by force. The United Arab Emirates has asked the Trump administration for help capturing Yemen’s main port Hodeidah from Houthi rebels, the Wall Street Journal reports. House lawmakers have called American intervention in the Gulf conflict unauthorized.

Source: <https://foreignpolicy.com/2018/06/04/security-brief-north-korea-summit-back-on-end-of-the-korean-war/>

# America's Next Move in Afghanistan By Saima Siddiqui

Most aspects of life are often imitated by art and games. In the case of politics especially, the game of chess parallels with power politics and represents the art of politics and its structural order. Political analysts often use chess as a metaphor to describe world affairs. The states and people move around the board struggling to make incremental gains. Using the metaphorical assist, an analysis would be drawn to help answer the big question of the US's next move in Afghanistan.

After almost 17 years of America's longest war, the United States owes the American people a realistic assessment on its next move. The United States' role in Afghanistan is still questionable. In accordance, it has three options: it can help stabilise the afghan government and limit its stay on the ground, or the United States could withdraw its forces, on the premise that it cannot "win" in Afghanistan, or the United States could acknowledge and resolve that its presence in Afghanistan is essentially permanent.

Even though Obama's administration had certain deadlines but Trump's new Afghan-policy is a great question mark on US's presence in South Asia. On the other hand, Pakistan-US relations are always affected by the new US strategies in Afghanistan. However, Trump led US administration seems to have a long term strategy in Afghanistan which is easily cleared by its new policy.

Keeping in view that the major US objective is not allowing the Taliban to win. Even in the current situation, with the adopted foreign policy, the United States is losing in Afghanistan or at least not winning and should abandon the effort. But a simple win-loss dynamic is the wrong way to think about a 17-year-old war.

After a long war of attrition, the Americans have realised they are drowning in their own trench

"The strong do what they can, and the weak suffer what they must" to date, Thucydides thesis is relevant in global politics as the powerful still define the world political affairs. However, the next move can be critical for America

considering their options and in metaphorical terms it has cost them to lose many key pieces.

America is like a queen on the chess board which has maximum power but limited in numbers, whereas, Afghan Taliban are like the pawns that don't have the power but due to their numbers they can cause fatal and some serious damage to the region.

In the current scenario, with the options available for US, it has to play wisely and with patience to turn their failure into some victory. The US started this war by militarising the common people in 1970's to defeat Russia with the help of Pakistan. Now, after a long fought war, the US has realized that they are drowning in the trench they created them self.

With the world moving away from Unipolar to see other powers emerging, the United States has to take concrete steps to get back in the game before they are trapped from all the sides. In order to secure their position, the United States has to find a permanent solution to the Afghan war. Keeping in mind the knowledge from history and recent activities, it seems quite obvious that the Afghan people have never accepted an outside ruler.

America has been trying to have a strong hold by mean of power and local investment, but they have come to a conclusion that their struggle is all going down the drain. The US should understand the fact that it's a tit for tat situation, and every action has a reaction. In order to clean the mess, they have to go back to those common people and let them decide their fate.

US intends to stay in Afghanistan militarily for the foreseeable future, that defines US motives and goals as US on the other hand, will not have a complete victory and is ready for partial success on military, diplomatic, and political fronts. This creates doubts about US' real intentions to its parties and stakeholders, the same way US is trying to stay in the region to contain China as China's power is rising due to economic development, becoming the biggest threat for US interest in the region.

The only possible solution that seems to make sense is to clear the country from foreign insurgency as US has to play wisely now and let the people who seem to



understand the local culture and governance system decide their future and their destiny. If America couldn't force any system on the Afghan people since 2001, how can they picture it in future with more input of power?

Indeed, the solution lies with the people themselves, since it is obvious that by accepting the defeat America might save many of its resources and future loss. The US Administration needs to hold talk with Afghan Taliban and bring them in a circle of the governance system accepting their demands and imposing the rule of law. In case, other incentives push American administration towards other options, it might face the same consequences, and Afghanistan will repeat history by becoming the graveyard of another major power.

The writer is an MPhil student

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Source: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/248473/americas-next-move-in-afghanistan/>

# **Atomic Weapons and American Policy By J. Robert Oppenheimer**

IT is possible that in the large light of history, if indeed there is to be history, the atomic bomb will appear not very different than in the bright light of the first atomic explosion. Partly because of the mood of the time, partly because of a very clear prevision of what the technical developments would be, we had the impression that this might mark, not merely the end of a great and terrible war, but the end of such wars for mankind.

Two years later Colonel Stimson was to write in Foreign Affairs, "The riven atom, uncontrolled, can be only a growing menace to us all. . . ." In the same paragraph he wrote, "Lasting peace and freedom cannot be achieved until the world finds a way toward the necessary government of the whole." [i] Earlier, shortly after the war's end, the Government of the United States had put forward some modest suggestions, responsive to these views, for dealing with the atom in a friendly, open, coöperative way. We need not argue as to whether these proposals were stillborn. They have been very dead a long, long time, to the surprise of only a few. Openness, friendliness and coöperation did not seem to be what the Soviet Government most prized on this earth.

It should not be beyond human ingenuity for us to devise less friendly proposals. We need not here detail the many reasons why they have not been put forward, why it has appeared irrelevant and grotesque to do so. These reasons range from the special difficulties of all negotiation with the Soviet Union, through the peculiar obstacles presented by the programmatic hostility and the institutionalized secretiveness of Communist countries, to what may be regarded as the more normal and familiar difficulties of devising instruments for the regulation of armaments in a world without prospect of political settlement.

Instead we came to grips, or began to come to grips, with the massive evidences of Soviet hostility and the growing evidences of Soviet power, and with the many almost inevitable, yet often tragic, elements of weakness, disharmony and disunity in what we have learned to call the Free World. In these preoccupations—one wholly negative, and one largely positive though very difficult—the atom, too, was given a simple rôle, and the policy followed was a fairly simple one. The rôle

was to be one ingredient of a shield: a shield composed also in part of the great industrial power of America, and in part of the military and, even more, the political weaknesses of the Soviet Union. The rule for the atom was: "Let us keep ahead. Let us be sure that we are ahead of the enemy."

Today it would seem that, however necessary these considerations and these policies may be, they are no longer nearly sufficient. The reason for that one can see when one looks at the character of the arms race. The reason for that one can see when one compares the time-scale of atomic developments here and abroad with the probable time-scale of deep political changes in the world.

It is easy to say "let us look at the arms race." I must tell about it without communicating anything. I must reveal its nature without revealing anything; and this I propose to do.

There are three countries embarked on this race: The United Kingdom—and of that we need to note only that it is unfortunate that so talented and hard-pressed a country, so close to us in history and tradition, should be doing all this separately from us—ourselves, and the U.S.S.R.

As for the U.S.S.R., it has recently been said officially, and thus may be repeated with official sanction, that it has produced three atomic explosions, and is producing fissionable material in substantial quantities. I should like to present the evidence for this; I cannot. We do need one word of warning: this is evidence which could well be evidence of what the Government of the U.S.S.R. wants us to think rather than evidence of what is true. I may, however, record my own casual, perhaps too rough guess as to how the U.S.S.R. stands in relation to us in the field of atomic munitions. This does not refer at all to other elements of armament. I think that the U.S.S.R. is about four years behind us. And I think that the scale of its operations is not as big as ours was four years ago. It may be something like half as big as ours then was. This is consistent with the facts known to us. It has not been proven by them, by any means.

This sounds comfortably reassuring. It sounds as though the job of keeping ahead were being satisfactorily accomplished. But in order to assay what it means, we have to know something of what it is that they are four years behind,

how fast the situation is likely to change, and what it means to be half as big as we are.

When Hiroshima was bombed there was a single plane. There was no air opposition. We flew straight in at medium height, at rather low speed, over the city of Hiroshima; we dropped one bomb with an energy release the equivalent of about fifteen thousand tons of TNT. It killed more than seventy thousand people and produced a comparable number of casualties; it largely destroyed a medium-sized city. That we had in mind. But we also had in mind, and we said, that it was not a question of one bomb. It would become a question of ten, and then one hundred, and then a thousand, and then ten thousand, and then maybe one hundred thousand. We knew—or, rather, we did not know, but we had very good reason to think—that it was not a question of ten thousand tons but of one hundred thousand and then a million tons, and then ten million tons and then maybe one hundred million tons.

We knew that these munitions could be adapted, not merely to a slow medium bomber operating where we had almost complete air supremacy, but to methods of delivery more modern, more flexible, harder to intercept, and more suitable for combat as it might be encountered today.

Today all of this is in train. It is my opinion that we should all know—not precisely, but quantitatively and, above all, authoritatively—where we stand in these matters; that we should all have a good idea of how rapidly the situation has changed, and of where we may stand, let us say, three, four, or five years ahead, which is about as far as one can see. I shall revert to the reasons why I think it important that we all know of these matters. I cannot write of them.

What I can say is this: I have never discussed these prospects candidly with any responsible group, whether scientists or statesmen, whether citizens or officers of the Government, with any group that could steadily look at the facts, that did not come away with a great sense of anxiety and somberness at what they saw. The very least we can say is that, looking ten years ahead, it is likely to be small comfort that the Soviet Union is four years behind us, and small comfort that they are only about half as big as we are. The very least we can conclude is that our twenty-thousandth bomb, useful as it may be in filling the vast munitions pipelines of a great war, will not in any deep strategic sense offset their two-

thousandth. The very least we can say is that, as Mr. Gordon Dean has emphasized, there will come a time when, even from the narrowest technical point of view, the art of delivery and the art of defense will have a much higher military relevance than supremacy in the atomic munitions field itself.

There are other aspects of the arms race; though they may be well-known, they are worth mentioning. We developed the atomic bomb under the stimulus of the fear that the Germans might be at it. We deliberated at length on the use of the bomb against Japan; indeed it was Colonel Stimson who initiated and presided over these thorough deliberations. We decided that it should be used. We have greatly developed and greatly increased our atomic activities. This growth, though natural technically, is not inevitable. If the Congress had appropriated no money, it would not have occurred. We have made our decision to push our stockpiles and the power of our weapons. We have from the first maintained that we should be free to use these weapons; and it is generally known we plan to use them. It is also generally known that one ingredient of this plan is a rather rigid commitment to their use in a very massive, initial, unremitting strategic assault on the enemy.

This arms race has other characteristics. There has been relatively little done to secure our defense against the atom; and in the far more tragic and difficult problem of defending our Allies in Europe still less has been done. This does not promise to be an easy problem.

Atomic weapons are not just one element of an arsenal that we hope may deter the Soviet Government, or just one of the means we think of for putting an end to a war, once started. It is, perhaps, almost the only military measure that anyone has in mind to prevent, let us say, a great battle in Europe from being a continuing, agonizing, large-scale Korea. It is the only military instrument which brings the Soviet Union and the United States into contact—a most uncomfortable and dangerous contact— with one another.

Atomic weapons, as everyone knows, have been incorporated in the plans for the defense of Europe. They have been developed for many tactical military uses, as in the anti-submarine campaign, the air campaign, and the ground campaign in the European theater; and these potential applications continue to ramify and multiply. Yet the Europeans are rather in ignorance what these

weapons are, how many there may be, how they will be used and what they will do. It thus needs to be remarked, as we shall need to remark again, that for Europe the atomic weapon is both a much needed hope of effective defense and a terrible immediate peril, greater even than for this country.

These are some of the peculiarities of this arms race, marked for us by a very great rigidity of policy, and a terrifyingly rapid accumulation, probably on both sides, of a deadly munition. When we think of the terms in which we in this country tend to talk of the future, the somberness with which thoughtful men leave a discussion of the subject is not wholly understandable. There are two things that everyone would like to see happen; but few people, if any, confidently believe that they will happen soon. One is a prompt, a happily prompt reform or collapse of the enemy. One is a regulation of armaments as part of a general political settlement—an acceptable, hopeful, honorable and humane settlement to which we could be a party.

There is nothing repugnant in these prospects; but they may not appear to be very likely in the near future. Most of us, and almost all Europeans, appear to regard the outbreak of war in this near future as a disaster. Thus the prevailing view is that we are probably faced with a long period of cold war in which conflict, tension and armaments are to be with us. The trouble then is just this: during this period the atomic clock ticks faster and faster. We may anticipate a state of affairs in which two Great Powers will each be in a position to put an end to the civilization and life of the other, though not without risking its own. We may be likened to two scorpions in a bottle, each capable of killing the other, but only at the risk of his own life.

This prospect does not tend to make for serenity; and the basic fact that needs to be communicated is that the time in which this will happen is short, compared to the time in which reasonable men may have some confidence in a reasonable amelioration or even alteration of the great political troubles of our time.

In this prospect, surely, we shall need all the help and wisdom and resourcefulness we can muster. This, in all probability, is a very tough fix. There are three things we need to remember, three things that are very sharp. It is perilous to forget any one of them. One is the hostility and the power of the Soviet. Another is the touch of weakness—the need for unity, the need for some

stability, the need for armed strength on the part of our friends in the Free World. And the third is the increasing peril of the atom. The problem is straightforward, if not easy, if we forget the last. It is easy if we forget the first. It is hard if we remember all three. But they are all there.

We need the greatest attainable freedom of action. We need strength to be able to ask whether our plans for the use of the atom are, all things considered, right or wrong. We need the freedom of action necessary—and we do not have it today—to be able to negotiate, should an opportunity for that at some future time appear.

Much will be needed to bring us this freedom of action. Some of it we cannot write about, because it has not occurred to us. Some we cannot write about because it would not be proper for anything but official discussion. An example may be the question of whether, under what circumstances, in what manner, and with what purpose to communicate with the Soviet Government on this and related problems.

But there are three reforms which seem so obvious, so important, so sure to be salutary that I should like to discuss them briefly. One has to do with making available to ourselves, in this tough time, the inherent resources of a country like ours and a government like ours. These resources are not available today. The second has to do with making available the resources of a coalition of governments, bound together in an alliance, yet at the moment foreclosed from discussing one of the principal factors that affects the destiny of the alliance and of all its members. The third has to do with taking measures to put off, to moderate, to reduce the dangers of which we have spoken. I shall deal with each of these.

The first is candor—candor on the part of the officials of the United States Government to the officials, the representatives, the people of their country. We do not operate well when the important facts, the essential conditions, which limit and determine our choices are unknown. We do not operate well when they are known, in secrecy and in fear, only to a few men.

The general account of the atomic arms race that has been outlined here can, of course, be found in the public press, together with a great deal of detailed

information, some true, and much largely false. This mass of published rumor, fact, press release and speculation could yield, upon analysis, a fairly solid core of truth; but as it stands, it is not the truth. The consequences of such ignorance may seem obvious; but we may recall two examples that illustrate well what they are.

It must be disturbing that an ex-President of the United States, who has been briefed on what we know about the Soviet atomic capability, can publicly call in doubt all the conclusions from the evidence. Perhaps this was primarily because it was all so secret that it could not be talked about, or thought about, or understood. It must be shocking when this doubt, so recently expressed, is compounded by two men, one of them a most distinguished scientist, who headed one of the great projects of the Manhattan District during the war, and one of them a brilliant officer, who was in over-all charge of the Manhattan District. These two men are not now employed by any agency of the Government concerned with these questions; therefore they did not have access to the evidence. Thus their advice is unavailing, their public counsel wrong.

A second example may illustrate further. A high officer of the Air Defense Command said—and this only a few months ago, in a most serious discussion of measures for the continental defense of the United States—that it was our policy to attempt to protect our striking force, but that it was not really our policy to attempt to protect this country, for that is so big a job that it would interfere with our retaliatory capabilities. Such follies can occur only when even the men who know the facts can find no one to talk to about them, when the facts are too secret for discussion, and thus for thought.

The political vitality of our country largely derives from two sources. One is the interplay, the conflict of opinion and debate, in many diverse and complex agencies, legislative and executive, which contribute to the making of policy. The other is a public opinion which is based on confidence that it knows the truth.

Today public opinion cannot exist in this field. No responsible person will hazard an opinion in a field where he believes that there is somebody else who knows the truth, and where he believes that he does not know it. It is true that there are and always will be, as long as we live in danger of war, secrets that it is important to keep secret, at least for an appropriate period, if not for all time; some of



these, and important ones, are in the field of atomic energy. But knowledge of the characteristics and probable effects of our atomic weapons, of—in rough terms—the numbers available, and of the changes that are likely to occur within the next years, this is not among the things to be kept secret. Nor is our general estimate of where the enemy stands.

Many arguments have been advanced against making public this basic information. Some of these arguments had merit in times past. One is that we might be giving vital information to the enemy. My own view is that the enemy has this information. It is available to anyone who will trouble to make an intelligence analysis of what has been published. Private citizens do not do this; but we must expect that the enemy does. It is largely available by other means as well. It is also my view that it is good for the peace of the world if the enemy knows these basic facts—very good indeed, and very dangerous if he does not.

There is another source of worry—that public knowledge of the situation might induce in this country a mood of despair, or a too ready acceptance of what is lightheartedly called preventive war. I believe that until we have looked this tiger in the eye, we shall be in the worst of all possible dangers, which is that we may back into him. More generally, I do not think a country like ours can in any real sense survive if we are afraid of our people.

As a first step, but a great one, we need the courage and the wisdom to make public at least what, in all reason, the enemy must now know: to describe in rough but authoritative and quantitative terms what the atomic armaments race is. It is not enough to say, as our government so often has, that we have made “substantial progress.” When the American people are responsibly informed, we may not have solved, but we shall have a new freedom to face, some of the tough problems that are before us.

There is also need for candor in our dealings with at least our major allies. The Japanese are exposed to atomic bombardment; and it may be very hard to develop adequate counter-measures. Space, that happy asset of the United States, is not an asset for Japan. It is not an asset for France. It is not an asset for England. There are in existence methods of delivery of atomic weapons which present an intractable problem of interception, and which are relevant for the small distances that characterize Europe. It will be some time at least before they

are relevant for intercontinental delivery. These countries will one day feel a terrible pinch, when the U.S.S.R. chooses to remind them of what it can do, and do very easily—not without suffering, but in a way that the Europeans themselves can little deter or deflect.

There have been arguments for technical collaboration with the United Kingdom and Canada; these have often appeared persuasive. There have been arguments for military collaboration with the NATO governments, and with the responsible commanders involved. General Bradley and General Collins both have spoken of this need, partly in order to explain to our allies that an atomic bomb will not do all things—that it has certain capabilities but it is not the whole answer. This is surely a precondition for effective planning, and for the successful defense of Europe.

Yet there are much more general reasons. We and our allies are in this long struggle together. What we do will affect the destiny of Europe; what is done there will affect ours; and we cannot operate wisely if a large half of the problem we have in common is not discussed in common. This does not mean that we should tie our hands. It means that we should inform and consult. This could make a healthy and perhaps very great change in our relations with Europe.

It is not clear that the situation even in the Far East would be wholly unaffected. It is troublesome to read that a principal reason that we should not use atomic weapons in Korea is that our allies would not like it. We need not argue here either that it is right or that it is wrong to use them there. In either case, our decisions should rest on far firmer ground than that other governments, who know less than we about the matter, should hold a different view than ours. It would be proper that the Japanese and the British and the many other governments immediately involved have a notion of what the issues really are.

Once, clearly, the problem of proper candor at home is faced—the problem of a more reasonable behavior toward our own people and our representatives and officials with regard to the atom—then the problem of dealing with our allies will be less troublesome. For it is pretty much the same information, the same rough set of facts, that both our people and our allies need to have and to understand.

The third point may seem even more obvious. I do not believe –though of course we cannot today be certain–that we can take measures for the defense of our people, our lives, our institutions, our cities, which will in any real sense be a permanent solution to the problem of the atom. But that is no reason for not doing a little better than we are now doing.

The current view, as is well known, is not very optimistic. Not long ago General Vandenberg estimated that we might, with luck, intercept 20 or 30 percent of an enemy attack. That is not very reassuring, when one looks at numbers and casualties and at what it takes to destroy the heart and life of our country. For some months now, a highly-qualified panel, under the chairmanship of Dr. Mervin Kelly, appointed by Secretary Lovett and reporting now to Secretary Wilson, has studied the complex technical problems of continental defense. There are many technical developments that have not yet been applied in this field, and that could well be helpful. They are natural but substantial developments in munitions, in aircraft and in missiles, and in procedures for obtaining and analyzing information. Above all, there is the challenging problem of the effective use of space; there is space between the Soviet Union and the United States. This panel, it would appear, has been oppressed and troubled by the same over-all oppression which any group always finds when it touches seriously any part of the problem of the atom. Yet there is no doubt that it will recommend sensible ways in which we can proceed to try to defend our lives and our country.

Such measures will inevitably have many diverse meanings. They will mean, first of all, some delay in the imminence of the threat. They will mean a disincentive—a defensive deterrent—to the Soviet Union. They will mean that the time when the Soviet Union can be confident of destroying the productive power of America will be somewhat further off—very much further off than if we did nothing. They will mean, even to our allies, who are much more exposed and probably cannot be well defended, that the continued existence of a real and strong America will be a solid certainty which should discourage the outbreak of war.

A more effective defense could even be of great relevance should the time come for serious discussion of the regulation of armaments. There will have been by then a vast accumulation of materials for atomic weapons, and a troublesome margin of uncertainty with regard to its accounting—very troublesome indeed if we still live with vestiges of the suspicion, hostility and secretiveness of the world of

today. This will call for a very broad and robust regulation of armaments, in which existing forces and weapons are of a wholly different order than those required for the destruction of one great nation by another, in which steps of evasion will be either far too vast to conceal or far too small to have, in view of then existing measures of defense, a decisive strategic effect. Defense and regulation may thus be necessary complements. And here, too, all that we do effectively to contribute to our own immunity will be helpful in giving us some measure of an increased freedom of action.

These are three paths that we may take. None of them is a wholly new suggestion. They have, over the long years, been discussed; but they have not been acted on. In my opinion they have not, in any deep sense, been generally understood. We need to be clear that there will not be many great atomic wars for us, nor for our institutions. It is important that there not be one. We need to liberate our own great resources, to shape our destiny.

[i] "The Challenge to Americans," by Henry L. Stimson. Foreign Affairs, October 1947.

Source: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/united-states/1953-07-01/atomic-weapons-and-american-policy?cid=int-an2&pgtype=hpg&region=br1>

# **Reckoning United Nations By Baber Ali**

## **Bhatti**

Whether in Syria, Bosnia, Kashmir, or Palestine, people are dying in millions. Series of sufferings, lynchings, and shootings are a routine course of action in these countries. The major powers, in pursuit of their grand designs, keep on nipping the weaker nations by killing thousands of innocents.

Aerial bombardments are modus operandi tools in pursuit of required objectives. Neo-imperialistic policies from the US and Russia -supervising wars for their very own interests- against all odds are gradually becoming chief state policies.

The United Nations (UN), while witnessing these wretched situations, is centering the short and long-term development goals, thereby parting this world a functioning and conterminous ground for major powers to carry their lethal plays. The UN is withering away when it comes to measuring its mandate and influence within the realm of international security.

Ironically, UN was established to ensure and preserve peace, globally. However, when insights of all wars are assessed, UN -from the very beginning- barely found its role to evade and culminate wars. The Korean War spanning three years ended when the parties decided to end it. Similarly, the longest Vietnam War ended when the US decided to pull out of the country. The Arab-Israel War and other Middle Eastern wars met their end with the diffusing interests of warring parties. Cumulatively, the UN could not influence those wars to bring peace but performed meagerly to resolve nominal conflicts with no desirable implications in favour of peace.

International security and peace was the primary agenda when the League of Nations was proposed. After its failure and losing millions of lives in the Second World War, the formulation of the UN was proposed to avert the scourge of war. However, instead of averting wars and savings lives, UN performed considerably in other domains.

Kashmir being a nuclear flashpoint in the heart of South Asia is a perpetual hanging sword that may potentially lead to nuclear catastrophe. The Kashmir

dispute is pending before the UN and has not been addressed since the last seven decades. In the same way, the Palestine dispute linked with the entire Middle East is seething since decades, and stability is oscillating in the region, once again; UN could not spot itself anywhere.

UN acquiesced Trump's declaration of moving the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem, a move that consternated the whole world. A mere statement condemning this act by the most powerful organization was not adequate to foil such a plan. Consequently, the US attempted to materialise this declaration in the face of severe resistance from Palestinians. The height of resistance can be gauged from the circulated picture of a crippled Palestinian boy throwing a stone towards Israeli forces; to his fortune, he later took a bullet and was martyred.

Israeli forces continued their barbaric treatment and slayed more than 60 Palestinians causing severe injuries to hundreds. From its very inception, Israel has always disrespected human rights and set on to kill and torture Palestinians but never forestalled on any front. Absurdly, the ceremony marking the opening of the US embassy in Jerusalem included Ivanka Trump. As she attended with a content smile, Israeli forces only a few kilometers away were maiming Palestinian demonstrators.

Unfortunately, UN -reiterating the past- opted to circumvent the situation as has been successfully done in the case of Kashmir, Syria and Bosnia. In the security arena, UN was never seen wielding its influence, power and mandate, or playing any substantial role to resolve the conflicts in time against the will of warring parties.

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Muslim countries with more than 50 seats in UN are also maintainan appalling silence. The Muslim world seems genuinely divided, not only along sectarian lines, but also by worldviews, governance structures, cultural affinities, and particularly their geopolitical interests. Moreover, the muted response of Muslim states within UN and outside is more shocking. After usual condemnations of the

brutal massacre of Palestinians, many Arab states wontedly turn their focus on countering Iranian influence in the region rather than on backing the Palestinians. Cold Muslim hearts must be denounced while condemning the US and Israel.

Undeniably, the UN is successfully carrying other developments projects across the world. However, this is abysmally needed when the primary desire and need of the people is to live, and to live in peace. Collectively, if the UN, with such a heavy mandate, fails to formulate and execute anti-war policies, its own survival would be at stake.

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# **Syrian Conflict | Editorial**

There are many actors to blame for the humanitarian disaster that has befallen Syria since the outbreak of the civil war in 2011, starting, of course, with Syrian President Bashar al-Assad, whose brutal response to the rebellion against his rule precipitated the crisis. The problem has been multiplied, though, by the cynical interventions of global and regional powers – especially the US. In an interview given to Russia Today on Thursday, Assad laid down the gauntlet to the US calling on it to immediately withdraw its military presence in the country. This is something that the US should do regardless of whether it is demanded by Assad since its constant bombing of the country has done nothing to weaken Assad but has only caused a massive loss of lives and empowered militant groups like the IS. Assad did hint that he is considering opening negotiations with the Syrian Democratic Forces – a US-backed Kurdish group that is one of the few rebels to still occupy significant territory. A negotiated settlement or even a temporary ceasefire would be the ideal solution to at least bring a pause to this ruinous war – although past experiences tell us that no side in this multi-faceted war is open to compromise.

The situation in Syria is complicated further by the military presence of Russia and Iran. The decisive shift in favour of Assad in the civil war can be traced to the intervention of Russia and it is considering expanding its footprint in the country even further. A meeting between the defence ministers of Russia and Iran, which was followed by a phone conversation between Vladimir Putin and Benjamin Netanyahu, led to a Russian proposal to deploy Russian military police in areas close to the Israeli border. Israel's hope is to prevent Iran – which is its public enemy – from entrenching itself further in Syria. There are also fears that having Russia and the US on opposite sides in the civil war could spark a conflict between the two largest nuclear powers in the world – something Assad alluded to in his interview. There are no easy solutions in Syria, especially when all the countries involved are willing to allow tens of thousands more to die in the pursuit of power. But any settlement must begin by reducing foreign intervention in a country that has been destroyed by power politics.

Source: <https://www.thenews.com.pk/print/326080-syrian-conflict>



# **Nobel Prize For Trump? By Farrukh Khan**

## **Pitafi**

“North Korean Leader Kim Jong-un just stated that the ‘nuclear button is on his desk at all times.’ Will someone from his depleted and food-starved regime please inform him that I too have a nuclear button, but it is a much bigger & more powerful one than his, and my button works!” Thus tweeted Donald Trump on January 2nd, 2018. Many policy wonks dubbed it a dangerous brinkmanship. But as if that was not enough more was soon to come.

On January 13th the residents of Hawaii received a chilling emergency alert notification on the cell phones. “BALLISTIC MISSILE THREAT INBOUND TO HAWAII. SEEK IMMEDIATE SHELTER. THIS IS NOT A DRILL,” it read. It took the authorities in the US state 38 minutes to inform the residents that there was no missile inbounds. Donald Trump was playing golf at the time. And the world was unaware of how close it had come to a nuclear conflict.

On June 12th Donald J Trump and Kim Jong-un are slated to meet at Capella Hotel on Singapore’s Sentosa Island. This meeting between America’s impulsive and unpredictable president and young and the equally volatile leader of North Korea is expected to take place at around 6am Pakistan Standard Time. While the administration in Washington, DC, tries to manage expectations, some big development is expected from the summit. In a remarkable gesture North Korea has already dismantled its nuclear test site in a pompous ceremony. This is the same country that until a few months ago was test-firing missiles left right and centre.

A lot of water has flown under the bridge since then. The leaders of the two Koreas have met more than once. Kim has met the Chinese president twice. Mike Pompeo, the former CIA director and now the US secretary of state, is said to have put a lot of effort in making the meeting between Trump and Kim possible. Now that we know the meeting will indeed take place can we be confident that something as big as the denuclearisation of the peninsula may finally materialise? Judging by the astonishing turn of events that seems a distinct possibility. North Korea has remained pariah of the international order for a long time. The Seth Rogen starrer The Interview was correct on one count at

least: This isolation has caused immense poverty in the country and the North Korea of today may want it to end.

If that is the expectation, no matter how far-fetched, from the summit, what is the expectation of Trump supporters in the United States? They made it clear in a recent rally held at Michigan sports complex. Speaking on the occasion when Trump broached the subject of peace between the two Koreas his audience erupted into chants of 'Nobel, Nobel'. Wait, what? Nobel Peace Prize for Trump?

If you have been viewing Trump's policies through the prism of American media this must make even less sense. Trump has often been accused of being a racist, a bigot, anti-Muslim, anti-Semite among many other things. On occasions he has acted in a fashion that lends credence to such rumours. On other he has not. If you truly want to know who Trump is, you need to piece together the bits of insights and clues about his personality from various sources. Such insights are scattered all over the place in the shape of his shows, references in books written before he decided to run for public office and his interviews given during those times. When you look at the profile that emerges you realise he is nothing more or less than a crafty businessman. Of course, your choices and the company you keep matters when you are in power and cannot be divorced from the reality. But for a businessman-turned-politician that also reflects on his perception of his audience, his client. Trump thinks he was elected to shake things up; to bring just enough mad touch to the system that things start lining up. And that is what he has been doing.

I often recommend Marc Fisher and Michael Kranish's *Trump Revealed*, to my friends and audience. It is an authoritative work. And while there are weak moments in the story where you feel all your fears about the man are about to be confirmed, there are others where you see a vulnerable and often well-intentioned person trying to do the right thing for the people who matter to him. His own ghost-written book *Trump: The Art of the Deal* is quite illuminating. So is the content of *The Apprentice*, the show he hosted for a long time.

But there is one passage in Michael Wolff's *Fire and Fury* that probably defines him the best: "Trump was not a politician who could parse factions of support and opprobrium; he was a salesman who needed to make a sale. "I won. I am the winner. I am not the loser," he repeated, incredulously, like a mantra. Bannon

described Trump as a simple machine. The On switch was full of flattery, the Off switch full of calumny. The flattery was dripping, slavish, cast in ultimate superlatives, and entirely disconnected from reality: so-and-so was the best, the most incredible, the ne plus ultra, the eternal. The calumny was angry, bitter, resentful, ever a casting out and closing of the iron door. This was the nature of Trump's particular salesmanship. His strategic belief was that there was no reason not to heap excessive puffery on a prospect. But if the prospect was ruled out as a buyer, there was no reason not to heap scorn and lawsuits on him or her. After all, if they don't respond to sucking up, they might respond to piling on."

When seen in the light of this passage the North Korean summit gamble becomes so simple. Kim is the potential buyer. Denuclearisation and stabilisation of the Korean Peninsula is the sale. And the Nobel Prize, by way of the acknowledgment the ultimate prize. If Kim plays nicely, he may also be able to get some piece of that action. Of course, failure is also an option. But somehow Trump seems eerily close to both his goals.

Is there a lesson somewhere in here? I think there is. Trump thrives on the old system of reward and punishment. When he does something wrong, censure him. When he does something right, reward him. He is the blunt instrument of diplomacy that seems to be working. If he wins now, there is a chance that the desire to make new records may lead him to the resolution of Kashmir and Palestinian disputes as well. Imagine the scope of such possibilities. We are already talking about the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula which is no mean feat. Here's to fresh starts, impossible feats of diplomacy and prizes.

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Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1729324/6-nobel-prize-trump/>

# **Saving South Asia From a Water War? By** **Syed Qamar Afzal Rizvi**

THE unilateral inception/operation of Kishanganga Dam by the Indian prime minister in the Indian occupied Kashmir is reflective of Indian refractoriness regarding expanding its water reservoirs without taking Pakistan into confidence. By ignoring the stipulations laid down in the Indus Water Treaty (IWT), the Indian premier seems to have created more confusion while undermining the IWT water mechanism established between the two states for the last 58 years. According to the Foreign Office, "Pakistan believes that the inauguration of the project without the resolution of the dispute is tantamount to violation of the IWT. True, to prevent a water war between the two nuclear South Asian States, seems a real peace audacity test for the Modi government. "This region cannot only become self-sufficient in power but also produce for other regions of the country. Keeping that in mind we have been working on various projects here for the past four years," Modi said. Pakistan has maintained that the dam violates a World Bank-mediated treaty on the sharing of the Indus River and its tributaries upon which 80 per cent of its irrigated agriculture depends.

The Kishanganga Hydroelectric Plant is an \$864 million dam which is part of a run-of-the-river hydroelectric scheme that is designed to divert water from the Kishanganga River to a power plant in the Jhelum River basin. It is located 5 km (3 mi) north of Bandipore in Jammu and Kashmir, India and will have an installed capacity of 330 MW. Construction on the project began in 2007 and was expected to be complete in 2016. Construction on the dam was temporarily halted by The Hague's Permanent Court of Arbitration (CoA) in October 2011 due to Pakistan's protest of its effect on the flow of the Kishanganga River (called the Neelum River in Pakistan). In February 2013, the CoA ruled that India could divert all the water leaving a minimum amount of water to the downstream of the dam on Kishanganga River for the purpose of environmental flows. The court also ruled that India was under an obligation to "construct and operate" the Kishanganga dam in such a way that it "maintains a minimum flow of water in the river". The minimum flow was fixed at 9cumecs, a unit of flow equal to one cubic metre of water per second.

India declared that it was lowering the height of the dam from the planned 98m to 37m and resumed construction at full swing. Pakistan, however, collected evidence to prove that India was violating the treaty as well as the court's verdict. In August 2016, Pakistan asked the World Bank to appoint a court of arbitration to review the designs of Kishanganga and another project on the Chenab, called Ratle. India rejected the suggestion, saying that Pakistan's objections were technical in nature and that the matter should be decided by a neutral expert. Pakistan solicited that a decision by a technical expert was non-binding and India would be under no obligation to implement the expert's recommendation. Subsequently, the World Bank, on the technical grounds, paused the judicial process.

The Kishanganga River, upon entering Pakistani territory is recognized as Neelum River that originates from Indian occupied Kashmir, and flows through the Gurez Valley to join Jhelum River near Muzaffarabad, at Domail, in Azad Jammu Kashmir. The construction of Kishanganga Dam is also in violation of Article III (4) of the Indus Water Treaty, which places an obligation or restriction on India not to construct any similar projects on western rivers, that is, on Indus, Chenab and Jhelum. Also, the construction of Kishanganga project will adversely affect the operational capacity of Neelum-Jhelum project. In accordance with Article III(2) of Indus Water Treaty, India is also prohibited from developing any human made obstructions that shall have or may cause a change in the volume of the natural flow of western rivers.

India is the upstream country and has built a few dams along the sharing rivers. Pakistan feels threatened by some of the dams and disputed this. Fairly speaking, the concept of Kishanganga Dam is itself is a blatant violation of the Indus Waters Treaty 1960, which has forced Pakistan to approach the International Court of Arbitration. The crux of the debate is that legally India is exploiting this technical edge that being an upstream country India can construct a dam. But New Delhi deliberately escapes to its bounden obligation that operation of such a dam or water reservoir should not affect the usage dynamics of the down- stream country, like Pakistan. In this backdrop, India has grossly violated the IWT. Without entering into the IWT framework, India can't make a water reservoir.

“The Indus Waters Treaty is a profoundly important international agreement that provides an essential cooperative framework for India and Pakistan to address current and future challenges of effective water management to meet human needs and achieve development goals,” the World Bank said last week. The WB has shown its own technical limitations to further intervene into the matter. An insight into the customary water laws , a human right approach to trans-boundary rivers sharing in South Asia is an emerging synergy need. Melting of Himalayan glaciers due to climate change, increased pollution, growing urbanization, extraction, and depletion of groundwater have contributed to the decreased access to water for the people of South Asia. India’s unilateral violations have added fuel to an ill-fated South Asian citizenry. The application of public trust doctrine is an inevitable need in South Asia. For the benefit of their people, Pakistan and India could coordinate unilateral development and resolve issues rather than defer them. Yet viability of this peace option-between the two nuclear-armed South Asian neighbours- requires a trust-building atmosphere that is unfortunately missing in them.

— The writer, an independent ‘IR’ researcher-cum-analyst based in Karachi, is a member of European Consortium for Political Research Standing Group on IR, Critical Peace & Conflict Studies.

Source: <https://pakobserver.net/saving-south-asia-from-a-water-war/>

# **Global Peace Index, 2018 | Editorial**

The Global Peace Index (GPI) 2018 has just come out. The findings have confirmed what much of the world knows all too well. Namely, that war does not come cheap. And that over the last decade, this planet that we all call home has become a less peaceful place to live.

As regrettable as this is, no one should be shocked. After all, the world has witnessed the festering of old military conflicts as well as new fronts in regional warfare. The US is involved in many of these. Nations like Yemen have suffered first at the hands of successive CIA drone programmes; from 2002 with the last known hit occurring last year. Today, the country represents a bloody battleground in the ongoing Saudi-Iranian proxy war. The knock-on effects of the British and American war of aggression in Iraq are still felt today. From Libya to Syria.

This is not to lay the blame for the evident deterioration in peace and security exclusively on Washington's shoulders. That would be unfair. But it is to underscore that the GPI identifies the prolonged and ongoing unrest in the Middle East as being an important contributing factor.

Closer to home, it is no coincidence that Pakistan and Afghanistan are the most non-peaceful nations in South Asia. Islamabad ranks regionally at 6; and globally at 151, up one place from the previous year. Kabul comes bottom of the list at number 7, regionally. On a global scale, it scores 162; just one position ahead of Syria which is the most non-peaceful nation of all.

It is hard not to point out that this is the fallout of 17 years of American intervention in Afghanistan. Of course, the Taliban regime was a most repressive one, particularly in terms of women's rights and girls' education. Yet given the brutal chaos that has engulfed the country since its overthrow — which inevitably spilled over to this side of the border — it remains hard to measure discernible progress.

Though there are some. Surprisingly, Afghanistan's terrorism impact score dropped by 9 percent in terms of civilian casualties in 2017. However,

researchers admit this may be linked to the Taliban now controlling greater portions of territory than at any time since 2001. Thereby reducing the 'need' for terrorist attacks. Thereby rendering it a false positive, sadly.

The good news for Pakistan is that violent crime and terrorism impact scores improved — the latter for the fifth year running. The Index explains this as government success in curbing the violent activities of both criminals and militant groups. But as ordinary citizens know only too well, the country's situation has become more precarious over the last year. Not only did the state capitulate to the religious right by way of introducing anti-minority amendments to existing legislation — mainstream political parties contested on equal footing alongside representatives of known terrorist outfits.

Given that the architects of many of the world's conflicts remain unmoved by the risk to life and human potential, they may want to look at this opportunity cost through dollar-tinted spectacles. After all, the Australia-based Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP) that produces the GPI estimated that violence over the last year alone incurred losses of some \$14.8 trillion to the global economy.

There are surely better ways for money to make the world go round. \*

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Source: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/250652/global-peace-index-2018/>



## **Afghan Ceasefire | Editorial**

IN a long, bloody, seemingly endless war, there have been few moments of hope. The major protagonists, including perhaps a large section of the Afghan Taliban, acknowledge that a political settlement is the only realistic path to eventual peace. Yet, all nascent efforts at realising peace in Afghanistan have quickly floundered. The common good and common sense have not been able to prevail until now. But an unexpected announcement of a ceasefire by the Afghan government, followed by a similar ceasefire declaration, with some important caveats, by the Taliban, has once again opened a door to dialogue in the region. Certainly, there is reason to keep expectations in check. Following the Taliban's declaration of a ceasefire over Eid specifically against Afghan forces, there have been a number of attacks. While it is unclear if the latest attacks are the work of the Taliban leadership, splinter factions or the militant Islamic State group, it is clear that the mere possibility of dialogue will not automatically curb violence in Afghanistan.

Nevertheless, it is important that the overtures from both Kabul and the Taliban leadership be recognised as a real opportunity to initiate a peace dialogue. What is particularly important about Kabul's declaration of a short ceasefire is that it appears to have been endorsed or encouraged by the US. With the Taliban having consistently held that dialogue with the US is necessary, but the administration of US President Donald Trump having seemingly rejected talks in favour of military pressure, the possibility of a peaceful settlement in Afghanistan had receded. But supportive comments by US officials regarding the ceasefire and intensive diplomacy with the Afghan government and Pakistan in recent weeks suggest that Kabul may have more space to engage the Taliban in dialogue going forward and the insurgent group's leadership may be encouraged to seek political engagement rather than just wage war on the battlefield.

For Pakistan, the challenge remains the same: encouraging dialogue inside Afghanistan while having Kabul and the US respond to some of Pakistan's legitimate concerns about violence inside Pakistan being planned and coordinated from Afghan soil. Thus far, those dual imperatives have not been managed satisfactorily, and Pakistan has rightly chafed at Afghan and US accusations and demands to do more without meaningful action being taken to

address its legitimate security concerns. But it is highly encouraging that in the latest ceasefire announcements, the state here appears to have been proactive and seemingly used its influence in the service of positive diplomacy. That energy and purpose will help Pakistan because it demonstrates a willingness to participate in peaceful solutions in the region. Further intensive dialogue in the days ahead may help produce more positive developments in the region. A ceasefire, no matter how short to begin with, is an opportunity to achieve major diplomatic breakthroughs.

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Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1413573/afghan-ceasefire>

# American Embassy Shift By Nafisa Hoodbhoy

THE Trump administration's decision to shift the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem last month could not have come at a worse time for the Arab-Israeli conflict. In retrospect, even some Israeli politicians have said that the US should not have shifted their embassy on the anniversary of the 'Nakba' — the period the Palestinians allege their land was forcibly annexed by Israel 70 years ago.

Coming just before the holy month of Ramazan, President Donald Trump's symbolic move triggered massive violence in the overcrowded Gaza Strip — leading Israeli troops to shoot and kill 62 Palestinians, and wound thousands of other demonstrators.

But while the bloodshed in Gaza grabbed world headlines, the images of stone-throwing Palestinians being shot by armed Israelis barely made it on US television.

Zahid Bukhari, who heads the Centre for Islam and Public Policy in Washington D.C., criticises the “power of big money” for the “virtual media blackout”, and the ensuing silence in American public opinion. Bukhari said that with growing Jewish settlements and Israeli check posts, the ‘two-state solution’ no longer seems viable. Instead, he finds Palestinian Muslims rethinking that ‘one state’ may be the way forward, “to challenge Israel the way South Africans contested apartheid”.

Some Palestinians think that ‘one state’ may be the way forward.

Jewish-American Professor Marc Gopin, who heads the Institute for Conflict Analysis and Resolution at George Mason University in Washington D.C., has found similar thinking among moderate Jews. He says that with 20 per cent Israelis being of Arab descent, “good Jews” are talking about a “shared democratic state” that could redistribute the ethnic and religious population and “still accommodate the Jewish and Zionist dream”.

But having worked with Jews and Palestinians in Jerusalem for over 30 years — where bloodshed has plagued generations — Gopin cautions that the state can be viable “only if the ethnic populations guarantee each other’s security”. The Arab-Israeli security debate was rekindled in December 2017, when Trump announced he would move the US embassy from Tel Aviv to Jerusalem — holy to Muslims, Christians and Jews alike.

US presidents have for decades deflected their closest ally Israel’s request to move the embassy to Jerusalem by signing a waiver every six months citing ‘security concerns’.

That changed when Donald Trump got elected president. Middle East observers trace his controversial decision to move the US embassy to Jerusalem to his base of “extremist Jews and Christian Evangelicals”. Their presence was evident at the embassy shifting ceremony in Israel. Trump’s daughter Ivanka and Jewish son-in-law Jared Kushner were special guests at the ceremony, as was Jewish-American casino owner and billionaire Sheldon Adelson.

Remarkably, Adelson became the president’s biggest donor after candidate Trump pledged to move the embassy in front of the American Israel Public Affairs Committee, a powerful Israeli lobby group in Washington.

Trump’s approval ratings have also shot up among Evangelical Christians who believe Israel was created as the result of a ‘biblical prophecy’. Some 80pc of Evangelicals supported Trump’s bid for election in 2016, with their support being critical for his party’s re-election in this November’s mid-term polls.

Republican Party office-bearer in Chicago Talat Rasheed says that the president’s fulfilment of his bold campaign promises, demonstrates his “true leadership qualities”. Rasheed says that if Muslim nations are so distressed by the Trump administration’s decision, they need to come up with a solution. He questions why the Muslim world, including feuding Saudi Arabia and Iran, has failed to resolve the 70-year-old Palestinian problem.

International observers believe that the OIC meeting hosted by Turkey — coming on the heels of the violence the same week in Gaza — gave a ‘psychological boost’ to Palestinians. The final communiqué by presidents and prime ministers

from 57 Muslim countries declared “East Jerusalem as the capital of the State of Palestine”. They also invited the US to rescind its “unlawful decision”, because of the chaos it could ignite in the region.

But as the US presses its thumb on the scale in favour of Israel, Iran intensifies support for Hezbollah in Lebanon and Syria. Iran’s potential to enrich uranium after Trump broke off the Iran nuclear deal is raising alarm in Israel. Palestinians still back Hamas whose designation as a ‘terrorist group’ may split the international community, but also preps the region for war.

Foreign policy observers say that for the US to be a broker in the Arab-Israeli conflict, whether it is for a two-state or a one-state solution, it will have to take a more even-handed position. Absent that, it is feared that the US will lose its leverage on an issue that is at the heart of the Middle East conflict.

The writer is a journalist based in Washington D.C. and author of *Aboard the Democracy Train*, *Pakistan Tracks the Threat Within*.

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Source: <https://www.dawn.com/news/1413574/american-embassy-shift>

# **The US-North Korea Summit By Dr. Ahmad Rashid Malik**

The summit between the United States and North Korea was held in Singapore on 12 June, making a big deal between the two countries for the first time in many years. Denuclearization seems to be on the top side of the agenda by making the summit “historic”. Someone has been expecting quick results while others have been anticipating the development of relations between the two powers through a process.

There might be for the exchange of food, aid, and investment. Pyongyang may not be looking for the American “hamburger” for the exchange of its nuclear weapons too. The former approach might jeopardise the talks. The latter option looks better. A new relationship with the United States is in the offing, and the United States has been expecting a “good feeling” about the much-anticipated summit between the two leaders.

The summit was taken as a great good-will of the United States to come to an Asian land (Singapore) to hold the historic summit with his North Korean counterpart. The summit will make the things clear and not opaque. The Rodong Sinmun of Pyongyang said that It said “broad and in-depth opinions” would be exchanged to “establish a permanent and peaceful regime in the Korean Peninsula and to solve problems that are of common concern, including issues to realise the denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula”.

The role of Singapore is central to conducting parlays between Donald Trump and Kim Jong-un together. The Capella hotel at Sentosa, a popular tourist island, will announce the most dynamic outcome of the meeting.

The arrival of Kim made a dent. He was accompanied by Kim Yong Chol, Ri Su Yong, Vice-Chairmen of the Central Committee of the WPK, and No Kwang Chol, Minister of the People’s Armed Forces. The U.S. delegation consisted of Mike Pompeo, Secretary of State, John Bolton, National Security Adviser, and John Kelly, Chief of Staff. The meeting with the Singaporean Prime Minister Lee Hsien Loong was a welcome one. As a host country, Singapore provided between 20-25 million for the meeting.

The relationship between Trump and Kim had remained tense, and in the past several months both the leaders have exchanged harsh words. Only some time ago North Korea conducted missile tests to threaten the United States. North Korea carried out its sixth nuclear test in September 2017.

Things has just been normalize to some extent and both leaders are now agreed to talks to each other. North Korea developed good relations with South Korea. Kim met with President Moon Jae-In and participated in the Pyeongchang Olympics. The summit looks most unusual in relations with the United States with North Korea .

Durable peace in the region could be the chief aim of Summit that could not be achieved without denuclearisation on the Korean Peninsula. The matter looks high on the American agenda. Would Pyongyang immediately disband its nuclear weapons, is the most pertinent question to be asked. If it happens, then there is no worry, and relations could go in the long run by removing sanctions against North Korea .

Mike Pompeo, the U.S. Secretary of State, said the United States remains “committed to the complete, verifiable, irreversible denuclearisation of the Korean Peninsula.” . . . “The U.S. position remains clear and unchanged.” Optimism and success on both sides will bring enormous benefits to them.

The U.S. side is expecting a “terrific relationship” with Kim. Trump and Kim met for about 90 minutes one-on-one, joined only by interpreters and later for a meeting with their aids. For Trump, the meeting ‘will solve a big problem, a big dilemma’. Kim says there will be challenges ahead but will work with Trump.

Both leaders overcame many obstacles. Mike Pompeo has raised expectations for the summit, saying talks with Pyongyang have moved more quickly than expected. Realistic optimism was in the air. The meeting was direly needed to end nuclear tension on the Korean Peninsula and between the United States and North Korea .

The world has not “waited” so long. Leaders were clear, and they delivered abruptly. The meeting iron-out differences so quickly prevailing for decades. This

is the endgame of the past 70 years of history, and things look ending. De-escalating of tension between the United States and North Korea would be documented. One-on-One meeting was accompanied by translators for a 90 minutes talk.

No doubt the meeting was successful, and it would be bringing new results for the Korean Peninsula for peace and prosperity. The summit must be viewed as a positive moment between the United States and North Korea . The meeting puts both U.S. and North Korea on a diplomatic and peaceful path. Both sides are working toward this end, which seems achievable. If there is a desire for peace, it can be achievable by all accounts and standards.

The writer is Director of the China-Pakistan Study Center at the Institute of Strategic Studies Islamabad. He writes on East Asian affairs.

The relationship between Trump and Kim had remained tense, and in the past several months both the leaders have exchanged harsh words.

Source: <https://nation.com.pk/14-Jun-2018/the-us-north-korea-summit>



# **What “America First” Will Cost Europe By**

## **Jeremy Shapiro**

The new U.S. ambassador to Germany, Richard Grenell, is quickly becoming Europe’s favorite bête noire. He seems to share his boss’ uncanny ability to offend people with a potent combination of professional incompetence and personal arrogance. Within hours of taking up his post in early May, he had tweeted out a demand that Europeans disinvest from Iran, essentially commanding his hosts to heed President Donald Trump’s decision to end the Iranian nuclear deal. Then last week, he gave an interview with Breitbart, a right-wing website that operates in both Europe and the United States, announcing his intention to “empower” conservative parties within Europe. The message to the German government was clear: the new U.S. ambassador intended to back its domestic political opponents.

In combination with a disastrously divisive G-7 meeting last week, these remarks have rekindled fears in Europe that the Trump administration will seek to stoke the populist wave that is shaking European politics. European establishment politicians fear that the United States’ support for their illiberal opponents will give these groups ever more strength in their struggles against Brussels. But the problem for Europe is not an American campaign to empower European populists; it is that the United States no longer sees the value in having a strategic vision for Europe at all.

### AMERICA THE SELF-INTERESTED

European fears about Trumpian interference in European domestic politics have a legitimate basis. Early in the administration, Steve Bannon, Trump’s chief strategist and former executive chairman of Breitbart, seemed intent on empowering populists as he reached out to anti-establishment politicians in Europe and as Breitbart established outlets in Europe. But then Bannon was unceremoniously ejected from the White House, and the Trump administration seemed to drift toward a more conventional Republican foreign policy. In the first year of the Trump administration, populist European leaders, such as Hungary’s Viktor Orban, saw Trump as a potential weapon in their struggle with the EU establishment and were disappointed by his lack of support.

Grenell's remarks do not signal, however, the Trump administration's return to Bannonomism. The American ambassador to Germany does not make European policy and there remain a welter of contradictory views from more senior U.S. officials that visit Europe, many of whom insist that the United States is still committed to its traditional European partners. Indeed, in the midst of the Grenell flap, Trump's assistant secretary of state for Europe, A. Wess Mitchell, gave a speech recommitting the United States to the defense of eastern and southern Europe (even as his boss tweeted out his view that NATO is a rip-off for the American taxpayer.)

The only thing this cacophony of conflicting voices really shows is that the Trump administration doesn't have a strategic or ideological purpose in Europe and probably doesn't want one. Overall, the Trump administration's European policy seems less a vision of a populist internationale than a residual of Trump's efforts to put America first and of his domestic political needs. His foreign policy priorities are trade, immigration, and terrorism. Europe is only interesting to the extent that it matters for those issues. His policy toward NATO is driven more by his views on trade than by an idea of European security. His approach to Russia seems propelled by the scandal over Russian interference in the U.S. election more than by any idea of how to protect Europe or manage the Russian threat.

As Thomas Wright of Brookings has noted, "With rogue ambassadors, a president who praises Vladimir Putin, a bureaucracy that supports NATO, and an ongoing trade war, nobody really understands Trump's policy on Europe." This probably includes Trump himself, who has elevated inconsistency in foreign policy to an art form.

The Trump administration doesn't have a strategic or ideological purpose in Europe and probably doesn't want one.

But even if the Trump administration's approach to Europe is too confused to constitute a strategic vision, his policies can still make Europe's internal woes much worse. After all, the United States is a presence in European domestic politics, whether it wants to be or not. As the security provider of last resort and the key geopolitical ally for most European states, the United States exerts a certain gravitational pull on Europe regardless of its (lack of) strategic intent.

For 70 years, a critical piece of the American approach to Europe has revolved around European integration. Even if it is not polite to say so, the United States was essential to the development of a Europe unified and strong enough to defend itself and to take its place as the United States' best and strongest ally. Europe is arguably the United States' greatest foreign policy accomplishment. But now the Trump administration has been fairly clear that it has little interest in this project. Trump views the European Union as "worse than China" on trade and little more than a German vehicle for extracting unfair deals from the United States. Trump's administration has paid little attention to the EU except to demand trade concessions from it.

## A TOXIC INTERACTION

It is, alas, surpassingly easy for Washington to destroy what it has created. Nearly every European country depends on the United States for its security and that gives Washington enormous leverage, even as Trump has outraged many European leaders with his policies on trade, climate, and Iran.

Trump's malign neglect of the EU comes at an inopportune moment of weakness for the European project. With the recent installation of a Euroskeptic government in Italy, at least five EU governments (Greece, Hungary, Italy, Poland, and the United Kingdom) are now avowedly anti-Brussels. Across the EU, populists are gaining political strength in part with the message that Brussels is responsible for their problems. Voters in the south blame European monetary policy for a decade of austerity and anemic growth; voters in the east blame European immigration policies for threatening their identity and independence. And, of course, there is the United Kingdom, which is trying to get out of the EU altogether. All of this threatens to make the EU ungovernable, particularly if the European Parliamentary election next year delivers what Mark Leonard has called "a self-hating parliament"—that is, a parliament whose majority wants to secure its own abolition.

Supporters of the EU have hardly given up the struggle. France and Germany are at the center of a broad and ambitious effort to reinvigorate the European project and demonstrate its worth to voters. They are seeking to launch new European defense initiatives to demonstrate that Europe can protect its citizens

and manage immigration. They are seeking to reform eurozone governance to make the euro better able to promote prosperity and stability. And they are looking for a formula to rein in the most illiberal tendencies of EU governments to show that the EU remains committed to democracy and protecting human rights.

the Trump administration's European policy seems less a vision of a populist internationale than a residual of Trump's efforts to put America first and of his domestic political needs.

All of these initiatives face considerable internal obstacles and their fate is far from certain. The integrationists would under normal circumstances get U.S. support, at least behind the scenes. But in the Trump administration they are hardly noticed. So even as the EU is struggling to maintain its cohesion, the Trump administration is, according to Reuters, sending diplomats to the EU's most recalcitrant members in the east to break European unity on the Iran nuclear deal. The Trump administration has already peeled off Romania and the Czech Republic from the European consensus, which opposed Trump's decision to move the U.S. embassy to Jerusalem, supposedly in return for assurances of U.S. support in those countries' struggles against Brussels.

Populists in Europe now seem to understand that, although they won't get American support just for acting like European Trumps, they can get support in their internal struggle if they appeal to U.S. priorities. The new Italian prime minister, Giuseppe Conte, for example, was the only leader at the G-7 meeting in Canada to support Trump's call to include Russia, and he was rewarded by a Trump tweet praising his election and inviting him to the White House.

Of course, previous U.S. administrations at times succumbed to the temptation of trying to divide Europe when it suited. But they also valued European unity and ultimately sought to limit the damage they did to the overall process of European integration. After President George W. Bush successfully divided Europe over Iraq in 2003, for example, he began his second term with a symbolic visit to EU headquarters in Brussels to send a message that the United States still stood behind European integration.

By contrast, the Trump administration's stance of indifference to European integration and hostility to the EU's trade policy gives hope to populists

throughout Europe that they can and will have the support of the United States even in struggles that threaten the integrity of EU. It is this toxic interaction between the Trump administration's strategic indifference to Europe and the populists' effort to undermine the EU that threatens the United States' most enduring strategic accomplishment in Europe.

Source: <https://www.foreignaffairs.com/articles/europe/2018-06-12/what-america-first-will-cost-europe?cid=int-lea&pgtype=hpg>

# **UN Report On Kashmir | Editorial**

India with its occupation of Kashmir is not only abusing the valley itself, but also the rights of the Kashmiri people. And this abuse is in continuation for the past seven decades. Despite using the brute force, Indian forces are struggling hard to conquer the people of Kashmir, who through resistance have penned down the history of valour and courage. It is the perpetual struggle of Kashmiris against Indian aggression and occupation that the United Nations human rights chief on Thursday called for investigating the abuses in Kashmir.

The chief, Zeid Ra'ad Al Hussein, wants the Human Rights Council to form a Commission of Inquiry (COI) to carry out an independent international investigation into allegations of human rights violations in Kashmir. It is encouraging to see that the UN has shown its concern over India's violation of human rights in the colonised territories of Kashmir. The request of human rights chief –after it has published its report on status of human rights in the valley of Kashmir– to constitute a COI is indication of the fact that UN has the knowledge of how India is trying to curtail the dissent against its illegal occupation of the valley through worst kinds of human rights violations. While the first-ever report is a probe on alleged rights violations by both India and Pakistan in the disputed valley, the statement is very harsh on and critical of India that allows its forces to violate people's rights with impunity.

The report is the result of remote monitoring of the region for almost two and half years when both sides declined Zeid's wish for unconditional access to Kashmir. Although the report details the account of Indian abuses in the valley, the chief asked India not to repeat examples of excessive use of force, when Mr Zeid should have appealed to the international community to play its role in forcing India to quit the region.

The recently published report highlights a wide range of human rights violations in Indian Administered Kashmir ranging from lack of access to justice to sexual violence to torture to enforced disappearances to arbitrary arrests and detention to name few among many. Moreover, the UN report also criticizes the constitutional and legal structures that Indian government has put in place to provide legal protection to its soldiers from the legal system of India. It is about

time to constitute a COI over the situation of human rights in Kashmir. And the COI's findings should serve the purpose of the first step in decolonising the valley and granting the people their inherent right of self-determination.

Source: <https://nation.com.pk/15-Jun-2018/un-report-on-kashmir>

# **SCO-From Shanghai to Qingdao By S M**

## **Hali**

The Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO), which just concluded its summit at the eve of 17 years of its formation in China's progressive metropolis Qingdao, appears to have come of age. The Shanghai spirit continues to guide the SCO member states, which now include Pakistan and India as well. The need to establish cooperation institutions has been reiterated as well. It was heartening to note that the host chairing the moot, President Xi Jinping, reminded the participants of the SCO charter and the treaty on Long-Term Good-Neighbourliness, Friendship and Cooperation between the member states of the SCO, which has forged a constructive partnership featuring non-alliance, non-confrontation and not targeting any third party. In doing so, Xi Jinping reiterated that the SCO has achieved a major breakthrough in the theories and practices of international relations, created a new model for regional cooperation, and made new contribution to peace and development in the region.

The 'Shanghai spirit', which is a creative vision initiated and followed through by the SCO, champions mutual trust, mutual benefit, equality, consultation, respect for diversity of civilizations and pursuit of common development. It transcends outdated concepts such as clash of civilizations, Cold War and zero-sum mentality. Thus, while enumerating its achievements, it is imperative to note that the SCO has opened a new page in the history of international relations and gained increasing endorsement from the international community.

SCO has enunciated the need for shared security, but denounced the concept of ensuring one's own security while compromising the security of others. A remarkable aspect of SCO, which has been highlighted through personal example, is championing equality, mutual learning, dialogue and inclusiveness between civilizations. President Xi has demonstrated the importance of overcoming cultural misunderstanding and clashes through exchanges, mutual learning and coexistence. Projects like the BRICS and Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) as well as the massive Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) are examples here. AIIB has made it possible for nations with weak economies and poor infrastructure to break the begging bowl and learn to stand on their own feet by investing in infrastructure.



It has been touted that the media has shrunk the world to a “global village” but now it is being demonstrated that in the twenty first century, the New Silk Road is bringing the world even closer, shrinking distances and enabling nations to rise to their true potential through sharing and cooperation.

Interestingly, while different members of the SCO may pursue variant paths of development, by reiterating their understanding and respect of each other’s choice of development paths and accommodating each other’s core interests and major concerns, the path to success has been ensured

The journey of the SCO commenced with the Shanghai Spirit seventeen years ago but now demonstrates signs of fruition with the Qingdao Declaration, which provides the outline for the implementation of the treaty on long-term good-neighbourliness, friendship and cooperation. Interestingly, while different members of the SCO may pursue variant paths of development, by reiterating their understanding and respect of each other’s choice of development paths and accommodating each other’s core interests and major concerns, the path to success has been ensured.

The contemporary world is plagued with numerous challenges. Terrorism, extremism and separatism have been identified as three evil forces which must to be combated through a unified approach. This resolve was emphasized for the implementation of the 2019-2021 program of cooperation to meet the challenges head on by conducting the “Peace Mission” and other joint counter-terrorism exercises, and enhance cooperation on defence, law enforcement and information security.

It was also resolved that a powerful engine to achieve common development and prosperity must be constructed through heightening complementarity of respective development strategies. This will continue to advance cooperation under the principle of delivering shared benefits through extensive consultation and joint contribution, accelerate regional trade facilitation, and step up the implementation of the Agreement on International Road Transport Facilitation.

The time is ripe for forging closer ties through cultural and people-to-people exchanges. The Occident appears to have lost the focus on environment

protection, but the SCO's resolve to actively implement the outline for environmental protection cooperation has ushered a ray of new hope.

Providing the opportunities of cooperation in education, science and technology, culture, tourism, health, disaster relief and media; China has taken the lead by committing that it will provide 3,000 training opportunities of human resource development for SCO member states to enhance public understanding of and support for the SCO family.

The need to expand partnership networks of the international cooperation was also acknowledged. By intensifying exchanges and cooperation with SCO observer states, dialogue partners, and other countries in the region, as well as enhancing partnerships with the United Nations and other international and regional organisations, the SCO can contribute its share to resolving hotspot issues and improving global governance.

Thus the 18th Meeting of the Council of Heads of Member States of SCO can be deemed a success for reverberating the Shanghai spirit and adding to it the Qingdao impetus.

Delaying the merger till the very end of the outgoing national and provincial assemblies' tenure has left some gaping holes

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Source: <https://dailytimes.com.pk/254131/sco-from-shanghai-to-qingdao/>

# **Donald Trump Upends The Global Order By** **Shahid Javed Burki**

The 2018 annual meeting of the Group of 7 was held in Canada at a resort near Quebec City. The two-day meeting concluded on June 9, with President Trump departing early to begin his journey to Singapore where he was scheduled to meet Kim Jong Un, the North Korean president. Before he took the flight, it was announced that the summit had been a success and the leaders had signed a joint statement. Not so, said the American president in a series of tweets he sent out from his plane. Not only that, he tweeted insults aimed at other G7 leadership, in particular the host of the summit, Canadian Prime Minister Justin Trudeau. He called him “very dishonest and very weak.” What provoked the presidential ire? It was seen coming for several months, from the time Trump moved into the White House in January 2017. Trump had figured that there was a large segment of the American population that believed that the much-lauded process of ‘globalisation’ had done them a great deal of harm.

For a bit more than 40 years, from 1944 to 1995, the world leadership was engaged in constructing a global order that would ensure fair play for all countries and people. The Bretton Woods conference held at a resort in New Hampshire, United States, set the process in motion. The process concluded half a century later with the establishment of the World Trade Organisation in 1995 following the signing of a trade agreement in Marrakesh, Morocco. There were three basic planks on which the global order was constructed. First, no country, no matter its size and power, would dominate the system. Second, decisions made would be taken by all participating countries working together. Third, the global order would cover several aspects of life. These included economic and social behaviour, matters pertaining to politics and protection of what were regarded as human rights.

Since it would be complicated to house all these concerns in one institution, a number of separate entities would be created to watch over them. This led to the establishment of such institutions as the United Nations system, the International Monetary Fund, the World Bank and the associated regional banks, and finally the World Trade Organisation.

The effort begun in 1944 with the Bretton Woods conference dealt with a relatively simple world. Two European nations, Britain and France, controlled much of the world, governing dozens of colonies in Africa and Asia. Their eventual withdrawal resulted in the independence of scores of countries. The world became diverse and complicated. While the old order had produced peace and prosperity for the globe, it did not do away with crises. These occurred periodically. How to respond to them? Some thinkers in the developing world, including Pakistan's Mahbubul Haq, advanced the notion of the New International Economic Order (NIEO). The NIEO was too radical a move to be accommodated by the major players in the system. They came up with the creation of number of country groups. A group of seven large industrial and democratic nations began to meet annually to review the global situation and agree on collective action. The G7 included, in alphabetic order, Canada, France, Germany, Italy, Japan, the United Kingdom and the United States. Once the Soviet Union collapsed and the successor state of Russia seemed to be moving towards democracy and liberal capitalism, it was admitted into this club and G7 became G8. However, in 2014, Russia was expelled when it used military force to annex the Crimean Peninsula from Ukraine. This was a clear violation of one of the established norms of international behaviour: that force would not be used to bring about changes in national boundaries.

Not having made much progress with the NIEO idea, developing countries came together and formed their own grouping, the Group of 77. The G77 had all developing countries as members, not counting those that were under the control of or allied with the Soviet Union. But it made little sense to have separate groups of rich and poor nations, the G7 and G77. A select group of developing nations joined the rich countries to form the Group of 20. The G20 for a time played an important role. At a meeting held in London in 2007 while the world was faced with a debt crisis, the G20 agreed to provide additional capital to the IMF to rescue those states that were faced with extreme distress. During his first visit to Asia in November 2009, Barack Obama, the newly-installed president of the United States, suggested close cooperation with China which was then the second-largest economy in the world. He seemed to be suggesting a kind of G2 which would take major decisions in global matters with details to be worked out by the G20. To Obama's tidy mind, a hierarchical system of global governance made a great deal of sense. But Trump, his successor, had put 'America First' in all global affairs.

There were immediate reactions to Trump's blowup at Quebec from the political and policy world. "Trump is readier to give a pass to countries that pose a real threat to Western values and security than to America's traditional allies," said Peter Westmacott, a former British ambassador to Washington. His reference, of course, was to the soft corner Trump had for Russia and its president, Vladimir Putin. On his way to Quebec, Trump had suggested that Russia should be admitted once again to the rich-countries' club and the G7 should become G8 again. "If there is a method to madness on the part of the American president, it is currently well hidden," said British Foreign Secretary Boris Johnson. With these moves, Trump has destroyed the work done over a period of 70 years, leaving all countries to fend for themselves.

Published in The Express Tribune, June 19th, 2018.

Source: <https://tribune.com.pk/story/1736943/6-donald-trump-upends-global-order/>

# **NSG membership — India can't have its cake and eat it too**

## **By Sonia Naz**

Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) is the group of states that prevent nuclear proliferation by controlling export materials, technology and equipment that can be used to make nuclear weapons. The NSG was found in 1974, in response to Indian nuclear tests. India clearly violated Canadian supplied research and nuclear fuel cycle to make Plutonium. The formation of the NSG was the result of Indian violation of peaceful use of nuclear material for military purposes.

India has been granted a special NSG waiver by the US and has been enjoying a special status since 2008, getting preferential treatment for its case and application for the NSG membership due to its strong bond with US. In fact, the US wants a strong alliance with India to counter China's growing influence in the South Asian region. But even though India gained the full support of the Obama administration in 2010, the recent attitude of NSG member states and changing trends of non-proliferation indicate that it would not be so easy for India to get NSG membership.

The US' exceptional treatment towards Indian membership was debated extensively in the international media before the 2016 NSG Plenary meeting. The debate highlighted that special treatment given to one state would undermine the credibility of non-proliferation regimes. Ever since India signed a nuclear deal with the US, few congressmen seem concerned due to Indian noncompliance of nuclear related promises. After this deal, Pakistan also warned the US that this coalition would intensify the arms race in South Asia.

Despite support from the US, India's proposal for NSG membership failed to get a favourable response in the Seoul NSG plenary meeting of 2016. Nonetheless, Indian Premier Narendra Modi is trying to remove these obstacles with the help of the US, because it would allow New Delhi to trade in nuclear materials with the rest of the world.

US wants a strong alliance with India to counter China's growing influence in South Asia. But the recent attitude of NSG member states and changing trends

of non-proliferation indicate that it will not be so easy for India to get NSG membership

India claimed that “Indian participation in the NSG would strengthen the international efforts to stop the proliferation of nuclear weapons”. The country looked hopeful about its prospects for membership after becoming a member of the Missile Technology Control Regime (MTCR) on June 7, 2016. After getting MTCR membership India proclaims to extend support to China’s membership into MTCR and it hopes that in return, China will support India in its application for the NSG membership.

Pakistan has also been aspiring to get NSG membership and has sent an application in this regard, coupled with diplomatic efforts to get maximum support from the international community on its case. Pakistan stands for a non-discriminatory stance towards the non-NPT nuclear weapons states for their entry into the NSG. It will enable them to carry out civil nuclear trade.

Pakistan on its part welcomed the nuclear security initiative in 2009 by Obama and took several practical steps to make its nuclear weapons more secure. It also ratified the Convention on Physical Protection of Nuclear Material Amendment in 2016, and has been following the UNSC Resolution 1540. The amendment was about the physical protection of nuclear material during international transport and storage. Pakistan is trying to ensure its nuclear security by establishing a centre of excellence and training and education centres.

It is interesting to know that the world community is polarised about India and Pakistan’s case. While France, the United Kingdom, Switzerland, and Mexico, are supporting India, China, New Zealand, and South Africa are opposing Indian membership. According to them, NSG 48 members are signatories of the NPT, whereas India is not a signatory of the NPT. Membership of the NPT is a necessary qualification to gain membership of the NSG.

India promised in 2008 that it would take certain measures of non-proliferation in exchange of NSG waiver, but it has not separated its civilian and military reactors and neither has it signed the Nuclear Comprehensive Test-Ban Treaty (CTBT). Its non-adherent attitude has weakened its case for the membership of NSG,

resultantly many NSG group members showed reservations over its candidacy for the NSG.

India and Pakistan are capable of producing highly enriched uranium and plutonium for civil and military purposes and they can easily assist developing states in advancing their nuclear infrastructures and technology. Both states are non-NPT member states, which would make it hard for them to get NSG membership in the upcoming 28th plenary meeting. Even in the last plenary meeting, the same issue resulted in a stalemate on India and Pakistan's case.

Even though the US always favours India, this time it appears that US support will not be help enough because ultimately it all boils down to the credibility of the NSG, which should not be compromised.

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# **Kim Jong Un Visits Beijing After Trump Summit**

North Korean leader Kim Jong Un has visited China for the third time this year, seeking a relaxation of sanctions in the latest flurry of diplomacy following this month's historic summit with US President Donald Trump.

A police-escorted motorcade carried the reclusive Mr Kim along Beijing's central artery, Chang'an Avenue, on Tuesday to kick off a visit that China's official Xinhua news agency said would last for two days. The announcement was a departure from protocol, as Beijing usually waits until after North Korean leaders have left to acknowledge their visits.

The trip is viewed as a chance for Mr Kim to brief Chinese leaders on the Singapore summit on June 12, which was the first such meeting between sitting leaders of the US and North Korea.

The summit's commitments for North Korea to denuclearise in return for a reduction in joint military exercises by the US and South Korea are in line with a proposal first floated a year ago as a Sino-Russian blueprint to defuse growing tensions on the Korean peninsula.

The Pentagon on Monday said it had suspended planning for "Freedom Guardian", a large-scale war exercise with South Korea that had been scheduled for August. Pentagon spokesperson Dana White said the US had made no decision about subsequent military exercises with South Korean forces. North Korea has long considered such exercises as a provocation.

The meeting also offers Mr Kim the chance to press for resumed trade with his isolated country's top economic partner. "North Korea surely hopes for a quick resolution in lifting sanctions," said regional expert Jin Canrong of Renmin University in Beijing.

The Chinese foreign ministry said last week that the United Nations should consider lifting sanctions imposed to dissuade North Korea from its programme of nuclear weapons development, calling the sanctions "a means, not an end".

In the town of Hunchun, where the Chinese, Russian and North Korean borders meet, locals were optimistic that trade would soon revive. “After the summit, everything changed. Business is much better and there are more traders from foreign countries coming here,” said Lyuba, a businesswoman who provides translators for Russian and Korean visitors. She declined to give her last name.

About two dozen trucks were lined up on the Chinese side of the border. Drivers said many more would have attempted the crossing before the sanctions were imposed.

“The most urgent thing for North Korea is to shake the current sanctions framework. Mr Kim will ask [Chinese President Xi Jinping] to relax its participation in international sanctions against Pyongyang,” said Kim Hyun-wook, professor at Korea National Diplomatic Academy. “Mr Xi is likely to accept Mr Kim’s demand, given the ongoing trade war between Beijing and Washington.”

Nicolas Bonner, a British resident of Beijing whose travel agency specialises in bringing tourists to North Korea, said he had seen a fall in purchases of luxury goods in North Korea this winter, as Chinese efforts affected both the state-owned and private economies. “This time I am sure he is looking for some kind of investment because Kim Jong Un needs that,” he said.

Twitter: @HornbyLucy

Source: <https://www.ft.com/content/6d1c8cb8-736a-11e8-aa31-31da4279a601>

# **Palestine: A tale of plight, sorrow and hope**

**By Aminah Mohsin**

Countless times have I tried to pen down my feelings for Palestinians and describe their plight using the limited list of words known to me, but English language has a very limited number of synonyms and expressions to describe affliction, feebleness, and despair.

The first time my conscious was made aware of their struggle was on the demise of Yasser Arafat back in 2004. It has been 14 years now and not a year has passed without decimation of Palestinians. When the only interest of the world with these humans is to treat them as numbers in terms of injured and killed and when the whole big planet has failed to acknowledge Nakba as forceful expulsion of Palestinians from their homes and, thus, an indelible example of tyranny and injustice in history of mankind, what else can be expected?

Bezons, a municipality near Paris, has recently named a street after 'Nakba' which, as reported in The Times of Israel, has been declared as "false declaration, shockingly irresponsible and dangerous" by the president of the CRIF umbrella group of French Jewish communities. The question is that what history has this naming of a street distorted? The reality is and will remain to be that the term commemorates the exodus of 760,000 Palestinians as a result of the 1948 war.

It has been a decade since the imposition of Israeli blockade on Gaza that has cost thousands of Palestinians their lives. Among the latest victims is Razan Najjar, a 21-year-old volunteer paramedic who was fatally shot in the chest by Israeli troops with her arms raised to show she was unarmed while trying to aid the injured Palestinians near Israel's border fence with Gaza. Two other colleagues of hers were also shot in the legs while they were standing away from the protestors preparing for the next round of helping injured civilians. They were shot despite wearing white vests with clear indicators showing they were medical personnel.

Gaza's unceasing isolation has wrecked its economy, exhausted its resources, reduced its population to destitution and left the area without sufficient electricity

The Israeli army spokesperson verified through a tweet: “Nothing was carried out uncontrolled; everything was accurate and measured, and we know where every bullet landed.” Even if they are unaware of each and every bullet’s final destination let us remind them that these bullets landed in bodies of 126 Palestinian adult civilians, two first aid providers, three journalists, and many children. Those who were suffocated to death from toxic gas inhalation in Gaza protest crackdown, including an 8-month-old baby girl identified as Laila Anwar Ghandour, are registered in separate figures.

“When we got back home, the baby stopped crying and I thought she was asleep,” her grandmother Heyam Omar sobbed. “I took her to the children’s hospital and the doctor told me she was martyred.” When it was time to take her to her small grave, Laila’s mother refused to hand over her lifeless body. “Let her stay with me, it is too early for her to go.”

The degree of helplessness shown by these victims is an apt portrayal of most of the casualties... and the real situation – risen hands, display of being unarmed, markers of being innocuous, innocent faces, petrified eyes, sealed lips, but hearts seeking a ray of hope. The hope of seeing an end to this decades-long conflict. The hope of seeing a new beginning. The hope of living at least one day breathing in air filled with freedom.

But the sight to discern hope from wishful thinking seems to blur with the amount of lies Israeli officials spread following such events to justify and conceal the heinous crimes they commit.

In Razan’s case, a well-trained Israeli sniper’s shot was claimed to be unintentional, she was falsely accused to be associated with Hamas, and her interview to a news channel was misquoted. While she had said “I am a human shield to save those who are injured”, the propagandists chopped the sentence and shifted the entire focus towards “human shield”.

In Laila’s case, Haaretz found it most convenient to shift the entire burden of her death on a pre-existing medical condition and reported that her death had nothing to do with tear gas.

With 120 votes in favour, the United Nations General Assembly has recently condemned Israel for excessive use of force against Palestinians civilians and requested the Secretary General Antonio Guterres to recommend an “international mechanism” for occupied territory. This shows that the world is not dead yet. This proves that all the aforementioned sacrifices along with many more have been finally acknowledged.

“The nature of this resolution clearly demonstrates that politics is driving the day. It is totally one-sided. It makes not one mention of the Hamas terrorists who routinely initiate the violence in Gaza,” Nikki Haley, the US Ambassador to the United Nations, told the General Assembly before the vote. But why are the opponents of this resolution disremembering the fact that most of the protestors were undoubtedly unarmed and Israeli indubitably used excessive force against them?

While fatal and wounded casualties are, unfortunately, a definitive barometer to gauge the extent of destruction and degree of calamity, certain indicators remain silent until it is time to explode.

Gaza’s unceasing isolation has wrecked its economy, exhausted its resources, reduced its population to destitution and left the area without sufficient electricity, health and education services.

Living under air, land and sea siege also implies the pressure of earning on breadwinners. With approximately 60 per cent of the population being unemployed, current conditions are not in the favour of providing children with physical and mental health. As reported by Save the Children organisation, 95 per cent of 150 children reported hyperactivity, depression and aggression with over 290,000 children in Gaza awaiting psycho-social support. Just imagine for a brief moment witnessing 11 years of siege and three wars since 2008. Hearing noise of bombings, seeing towns being transformed into huge rubble, weeping for the loved ones who were turned into corpses and not having anywhere to go for distraction and learning is not easy. These children have been burdened with more they can bear.

In Yasser Arafat’s words, “Whoever stands by a just cause cannot possibly be called a terrorist”. Thus before getting into the Hamas-Fatah dispute and being

subdued under the influence of the superpowers, one must realise the geostrategic importance of the land which Zionist claim to be the State of Israel and its native denizens declare to be the State of Palestine. Quoting the Palestine Liberation Organisation's former chief again, "Palestine is the cement that holds the Arab world together, or it is the explosive that blows it apart". The choice is ours.

Source : <https://www.pakistantoday.com.pk/2018/06/21/palestine-a-tale-of-plight-sorrow-and-hope/>

# **US Prepares for Trump-Putin Summit as Bolton Visits Moscow**

The White House has begun preparations for a possible summit between US president Donald Trump and Russian president Vladimir Putin, a meeting the Kremlin has pursued since Mr Trump took office 17 months ago.

John Bolton, Mr Trump's national security adviser, "will meet with US allies in London and Rome to discuss national security issues, and travel to Moscow to discuss a potential meeting between Presidents Trump and Putin," said Garrett Marquis, National Security Council spokesman, in a tweet on Wednesday.

The Kremlin had earlier confirmed a report by Interfax, the Russian news agency, that Mr Bolton was expected in Moscow.

Mr Trump is due to visit Europe for the Nato summit on July 11-12 and to go on to visit the UK on July 13.

Russian officials have previously mentioned Austria, Finland, Slovenia and Iceland as potential host countries for a summit with Mr Trump.

The Kremlin had said a meeting before the Nato summit was not planned and Mr Putin was unlikely to travel out of Russia on the eve of the World Cup final in Moscow on July 15.

Mr Trump and Mr Putin met twice on the sidelines of the G20 summit in Hamburg in July last year, but those relatively short encounters fell far short of the Kremlin's wishes for building a relationship.

Moscow has sought a full bilateral summit to create chemistry between the leaders since before Mr Trump's arrival in office in January 2017.

Kremlin aides have said the ideal scenario was for the first such summit to be arranged in a third country without strong anti-Russian inclinations, preferably in Europe. Officials have previously mentioned Austria, Finland, Slovenia and Iceland as potential host countries.

Moscow's ambitions have been continually frustrated by the uproar in Washington about its alleged collusion with the Trump campaign, which Mr Trump has always denied, and by the fallout over Russia's aggressive policies in countries ranging from Ukraine to Syria. In April the Trump administration imposed the US's most stringent sanctions on Russia to date.

But Mr Trump has repeatedly shown interest in engaging Mr Putin. During a phone call this year, he invited the Russian president to the White House. At the G7 summit in Canada this month, he suggested the group of industrial countries should once again invite Russia, which it had excluded after Moscow annexed Crimea from Ukraine in 2014.

Source: <https://www.ft.com/content/6e67a3a2-7539-11e8-aa31-31da4279a601>



# **With US Closing its Doors to the World, China is Happy to Step in as the New superpower By Wahab Butt**

It is becoming increasingly apparent that the previously followed world order is now changing. The post-Cold War world is gone. 'The end of history', turns out, was not the end after all and the 'New World Order' is now old. We are stepping in a new era, with of course, old players but new directions.

After the disintegration of the Soviet Union, the world was the United States' oyster. The world was dominated by a single superpower. One that acted as a self-proclaimed global police officer, who was duty bound to spread their values of democracy, liberalism, and human rights around the world, at least in theory.

History has shown us that whenever a nation is in trouble they tend to isolate themselves from the world. The US economy is in danger of overheating and exploding in a financial crisis yet again; it has not fully recovered from the last crisis. It's not doing well in Afghanistan. New militant organisations emerge every few years and the War on Terror does not seem to end. However, what it did do was make the public xenophobic and they chose a populist leader, which happens every time.

On the other hand, in the past three decades China has experienced tremendous growth. According to the World Bank, between 1981 and 2008, 600 million people have been elevated poverty. The country has also become the largest economy by purchasing power parity according to the International Monetary Fund. Now that they are doing better, the dragon wants to mingle with the world. They want to integrate, link, and maybe ultimately incorporate countries (emphasis on the 'maybe').

Many people, especially Pakistanis, look forward to the fall of the Western civilisation and rise of the middle kingdom. We now live in a westernised world; it is capitalistic, unfair and hosts a liberal world order full of double standards. But what will an easternised world look like?

Since President Trump came to office, we are reminded time and again that the US shall follow a realist policy of pure national interest. This is evident from Trump's, what I like to call, 'Pull-out diplomacy'. The list is quite long but the latest use of this fine tactic was seen when Ambassador to the United Nations Nikki Haley announced that the US is pulling out of the United Nations Human Rights Council to, let's be real, please Israel. By shifting their embassy to Jerusalem, the country has shown that they are no longer a neutral arbitrator in that region's conflict. Be it international relations, trade or climate change, it is clear that the US no longer wants to be the leader or the watchdog.

President Xi Jinping is eager to fill this vacuum. Last year, the Chinese leader formally announced China's ambition to become the next superpower. They are rapidly increasing their military at home, abroad, showing leadership at international forums, and even trying to tackle climate change.

The crucial element of this ambition is the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). It is the biggest infrastructure project in modern history, spanning over 60 countries; it aims to reshape global trade with China at its centre — a new world order.

The Chinese realise that in the globalised 21st century, this is the new great game. Good thing our friendship is higher than mountains and sweeter than honey. So sweet that we never ask, "so what's happening in China?"

China is a neo-communist state with a one-party system and after President Xi eliminated the two-term policy, he is most likely to be president until he is alive. China has banned all social media, does not tolerate dissent and tries to micromanage the public.

Now taking a step further, the government is assigning every Chinese citizen a social credit score. A fluctuating Orwellian rating system based on citizen behaviour. According to a report, Xi's crackdown on human rights is 'the worst since Tiananmen square' with intense crackdowns on Christianity and Islam. Christians have been told by the government to take down images of Jesus and hang portraits of President Xi instead! The Uyghur Muslims of Xinjiang live under despotic surveillance and cruelty with over 800,000 stuck in re-education or concentration camps. Most of these prisoners are guilty of praying or holding the Quran in public.

Many people, especially in Pakistan, look forward to the fall of western civilisation and rise of the middle kingdom. Most of them think about it monetarily and strategically. We now live in a westernised world; it is capitalistic, unfair and hosts a liberal world order full of double standards. But what will an easternised world look like?

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# **Xiplomacy: President Xi's Foreign Policy By** **Khurram Minhas**

Over the past five years, Chinese President Xi Jinping has visited many parts of the world. From Asia to Europe, Africa to Oceania, and the Americas. And Xi's diplomacy has been increasing Chinese influence and promoting bilateral and multilateral economic cooperation. Since President Xi took over, China has contributed 30 percent to the world's economic growth. He has embarked upon extensive overseas visits, as well as invited several heads of states to China. Undoubtedly, China's current foreign policy has been revolving around President Xi's personality and vision. He has laid down several principles of foreign policy for China that have set a trajectory for the country's economic growth and increased political stature around the world.

Shared developments for mankind and robust infrastructure developments are major foreign policy principles from Xi. He announced the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) in 2013. In the course of five years, the BRI has moved from concept to action and from vision to reality. It has become a global project with the potential to benefit almost two thirds of mankind.

Many multilateral and bilateral economic corridors are currently under progress. China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and China-Myanmar Economic Corridor (CMEC) are two successful examples of Xi's vision. Currently, the Belt and Road Forum is one of the biggest events in the international arena to attract dozens of heads of states and hundreds of officials delegated from more than 140 countries.

Reforming the global governance system without competing with the existing global financial players is another norm introduced by President Xi's diplomacy. Over the years, he has emphasised for improvement in existing global governance institutions and offered Chinese expertise a chance to enhance the potential of those institutions. Many new financial institutions, particularly Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB) have been established in order to increase the pace of development projects.

President Xi has been convincing world leaders that Chinese desires from the world and contributions to the world are equally important

Since 2016, Chinese currency has been enjoying the status of Special Drawing Rights (SDR) in International Monetary Fund (IMF), which is a great success of Xi's diplomacy. Xi's emphasis on South-to-South regional cooperation has made him famous in developing countries. Strengthening the multilateral forums, particularly Brazil-Russia-India-China-South Africa (BRICS) and Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO) remained one of his top priorities during last five years.

President Xi has been convincing world leaders that Chinese desires from the world and contributions to the world are equally important for the prosperity of mankind. People-to-people exchanges are one of the core principles of his diplomacy.

Chinese people can travel all around the world with ease due to Xi's efforts. China has 'mutual visa-free travel' with 131 countries. Currently, Chinese ordinary passport holders can travel to 64 countries without a visa or by securing a visa on arrival. It doesn't mean that President Xi is following a submissive and naïve foreign policy. In his address at the 95th CPC Founding Anniversary on July 1, 2016, he stated that, "Chinese people do not believe in evil, nor are we afraid of it, we do not make troubles nor are we afraid of it. No country should ever expect that China will compromise on its core interests and its sovereignty."

Chinese citizens in conflict zones, such as Yemen, Nepal and South Sudan have been rescued. In early 2015, President Xi ordered Chinese warships to rescue more than 600 stranded Chinese citizens from Yemen. Moreover, citizens of 15 countries were also evacuated from Yemen during this mega operation.

After Xi's commitment in 2015, at Peacekeeping Leaders' Summit in New York, China increased its role in UN Peacekeeping Missions. According to the official website of the UN Peacekeeping Mission, China is currently contributing more than 10 percent to the peacekeeping budget.

Xi's vision is increasingly being shared by world leaders and the public at large. Many countries have broken protocol to welcome him as a state guest. China,

under his leadership, is leading, uniting, and inspiring the world. Xi's inclusive diplomacy has increased China's soft power manifold.

More than six million copies of his book on Governance of China have been sold in 21 languages in more than 150 countries. With his charismatic personality, clear and attractive vision for a prosperous world, inclusiveness and peaceful development, Xi has changed the course of Chinese diplomacy and transformed it into Xiplomacy.

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# **A Trump Foreign Policy By : Dimitri K. Simes**

With the right mix of hard and soft power coupled with skillful diplomacy, Trump can still achieve major successes.

AFTER A YEAR and a half in office, Donald Trump's foreign policy appears poised for success, though some major challenges in approach and execution remain. While still a work in progress, the president's approach already reflects some commendable and much needed changes, genuinely putting America first and making foes and friends alike take American positions more seriously.

America's international conduct has become noticeably more muscular, relying on a significant increase in the military budget and a demonstrable willingness to use force. This is particularly true in Syria; Trump's red lines are more credible than Obama's, and when Trump threatens to use military force, few are ready to gamble that the American president is bluffing. Indeed, when the president has decided that important U.S. interests are at stake, he has been prepared to go further than his predecessor Barack Obama. Limited but psychologically effective air strikes against Syria, as well as the decision to supply Ukraine with Javelin anti-tank missiles (which Obama avoided due to fears of escalating the conflict there), show that Trump is willing to use military force not only as a last resort, but as a legitimate and essential tool of American foreign policy. This offers the United States an important advantage in dealing with adversaries like Iran and North Korea. As a result, each is less certain that America will give up on its core objectives if it fails to get what it wants through economic and military pressure.

But there is a lot to worry about too. So far, the administration has struggled to complement appropriate pressure with equally creative diplomacy. Moreover, the president and other key players in his administration often act and speaks inconsistently. Notwithstanding a formal National Security Strategy released in December 2017, the administration continues to lack a coherent strategic framework that defines national security priorities. To be more precise, the administration has yet to define American priorities in a serious analytical manner and has acted as if the United States can escape hard choices and the risks of potentially costly unintended consequences.

Paradoxically, while many governments increasingly appear to view the United States as a formidable superpower that they cannot easily cross or ignore, many of the same governments see the administration as erratic, unable to evaluate situations objectively, and prone to personalizing relations with foreign leaders and countries—even in dealing with other major powers. To these governments, the United States seems capricious and offers few tangible incentives for accommodating American preferences. This is an obstacle for Trump in accomplishing his international objectives.

It is fair to give the president credit for delivering, or working to deliver, on many of his electoral promises, something that is reportedly a source of pride for Trump. As a candidate, Donald Trump said that he would take a tougher stance on illegal immigration, demand more beneficial trade arrangements from other nations, downplay the struggle against climate change, and avoid regime change and meddling in the internal politics of other states.

While there is still no sign of a Mexico-financed border wall and Trump's vigorous calls for concessions from American trading partners have yet to demonstrate significant results, the president has stayed on course despite the numerous domestic and international obstacles. Trump has forced the outside world to take him seriously. Other nations, including major powers such as the European Union, China, Russia, and even North Korea and Iran, have appeared ready to display some flexibility. In the case of Russia, while Obama's sanctions succeeded in causing indignation among the Russian people, and particularly among the elites, Trump's more far-reaching sanctions—zeroing in on key public companies and top Putin-friendly tycoons—are beginning to disturb Moscow and to curtail its earlier snide dismissal of U.S. and Western pressure. At a minimum, Trump's willingness to impose new sanctions discourages Russia from risking escalation with the United States in Syria or Ukraine.

One of the most intriguing aspects of the Trump campaign's foreign policy rhetoric was its fresh and unorthodox attitude towards America's national security priorities. Candidate Trump was not sophisticated about international affairs and struggled to present well-formulated alternatives to America's conventional foreign policy approaches. Yet he did have a business leader's intuitive practical sense in looking at the world as it relates to America's national interests.



Throughout the campaign, he raised valuable questions without necessarily offering thoughtful answers about alternative national security strategies for the United States. Trump started by questioning conventional assumptions about America's allies and adversaries and seeing neither category as wholly self-evident, unlike the establishment, whose cliches he refused to repeat. Instead, he asked what America's allies were doing for the United States and what U.S. alliances cost. As far as adversaries are concerned, he began asking some obvious but rare questions about which countries present significant problems for the United States and which pose lesser problems that might be amenable to resolution.

Source : <http://nationalinterest.org/feature/trump-foreign-policy-26312>