

General

The Centre for land Warfare Studies organised a seminar on "Situation in Pakistan and Implications for India" on 07 July 2011 at the Manekshaw Centre. The seminar was chaired by Shri Satish Chandra, former Deputy NSA and the speakers were AVM Kapil Kak (Retd), Prof C Raja Mohan, Mr Rana Banerji and Capt (IN) Alok Bansal. Brig Gurmeet Kanwal (Retd), Director CLAWS, presented Dr Mohan Guruswamy's presentation on the subject. Selected officers from the armed forces, diplomats, members of the academic community and Pakistan scholars participated in the seminar.

Shri Satish Chandra

In his opening remarks, the chairman stated that Pakistan was going through turbulent times. The recent incident at Mehran naval base and the killing of Salim Shehzad are extremely worrisome and reflect the tumultuous situation in Pakistan. This seminar is an occasion to develop a snapshot of Pakistan and analyse the political situation. The deliberations should also take into account the internal politics of the country. It is important to question the impact of the withdrawal of MQM on PPP, the civil-military relations, the state of Pakistan's institutions like the media, judiciary etc. Pakistan is suffering from 20 per cent inflation and has had a growth rate of almost 2% in the last two years. The main aspects of Pakistan's foreign policy include its relations with India, US and China. Let us deliberate upon the current situation in Pakistan and its implications for India.

AVM Kapil Kak (Retd)

Pakistan is in a state of turmoil and moving closer to becoming a failed state. The spread of terrorism in Pakistan would affect India's security adversely. Afghanistan has also been passing through turmoil and chaos and this is affecting India. China too is a part of the problem rather than a solution.

The killing of Osama Bin Laden in the heart of Pakistan has further exposed its role in supporting and nurturing terrorism. It reflects the dual nature of the country as a victim and supporter of terrorism. The increase in terrorism attacks post Op Neptune Spear further highlights the degree of radicalisation inside Pakistani society and the threat posed by terrorist groups. The attack on PNS Mehran is a worrying sign not only for Pakistan but for India as well. It exposes the degree of terrorist penetration within Pakistan's Armed Forces. It is believed that some Pakistan Navy personnel from inside the naval air station in Karachi supported the attack. The killing of Salim Shaizad, the Karachi based journalist allegedly at the behest of the ISI even further exposes the culpability of state institutions with the terrorist groups. This is a worrying sign as it raises questions over the safety and security of the country's Nuclear arsenal. Pakistan's nuclear assets are widely held secure by the Strategic Plans Division.

However, possibilities of terrorists acquiring radioactive material for detonation RDDs or dirty bombs exist, though the possibilities are quite low at the moment. Nevertheless, the global community including India must prepare for meeting this eventuality.

India's military presence in Afghanistan needs to be carefully debated because such a move has wider ramifications. India's surgical strikes inside Pakistan may escalate the conflict and complicate the regional security scenario. Such strikes are likely to be met with a similar response from Pakistan and lead to a limited war. Conventional options are not the answer to terrorist strikes. India must develop its covert capabilities including Special Forces capabilities to meet the sub-conventional threat from Pakistan. India should adopt a long-term policy and revamp its internal security. India should also overhaul its counter-terrorism strategy in addition to providing good training to its forces. India needs to have a strong military to deter enemies and have more options in Mumbai-like scenarios. The military modernisation and complete overhaul of the military budget and acquisitions are required. India needs a multi-pronged strategy to combat terrorism but India's security lies in a friendly relationship with Pakistan as we cannot change our neighbours. Pakistan Army's involvement in the nation's polity should be reduced. There should be a healthy relationship between civil society and security forces

Prof C Raja Mohan

Pakistan is one of the few countries where the external dimension of the country is intrinsically connected to its internal dimension. One should be cautious about accepting Pakistan's gloom and doom at face value. In 1991, the term 'failed state' was hyphenated with Pakistan, but it still continued to muddle through and even transformed itself into a nuclear country. Pakistan will continue to survive even in the future primarily because of the geopolitical location. The Pakistan Army has successfully exploited the country's location for decades and this practice would continue unabated. Clearly, Pakistan is too important to fail. The Western forces would always try to retain a reasonable control over its territory. The main question is that how to manage the badlands between the Indus and the Hindukush. FATA cannot be controlled for long and would always remain turbulent.

The footprints of a strong Sino-Pak nexus are also visible in Afghanistan. The US would retain some capacity to hit their targets specifically in terms of drone strikes and this would be pursued further in some or the other form post-2014. The future would depend on how much pressure can the US apply to "fix" Pakistan. Post-Laden, the Sino-Pak cooperation is rising but Pakistan's assumption that China would replace US and bail it out monetarily has been dashed recently. Though the role of Saudi Arabia does not usually earn a lot of mention, but its role would be crucial for determining the future course of Pakistan. The focus today is not India but Afghanistan. The central issue of

dealing with Afghanistan is keeping Pakistan pre-occupied. It is important for India to engage Pakistan but such a process should be undertaken without any high expectations. It is ironic but if Pakistan does not side with US even after receiving billions of dollars in aid, then why would it thaw its relations with India, an arch rival? It is also important for us to cooperate with the US in dealing with Pakistan.

With regard to Afghanistan, there are numerous analysts talking about a regional solution. While there can be nothing better than regional diplomacy as a framework of engagement, one needs to realise that everything may not always go right. Not talking to the Taliban is India's folly as it is a principal actor in shaping the future of Pakistan. We need to focus on the kind of security cooperation India is interested in, when discussing Afghanistan. Is it going to be training or supply of non-lethal weapons?

Periodically stating that Pakistan is a failed state will not help in the security matters at large because even though North Korea is considered a rogue state, South Korea is equally vulnerable.

Mr Rana Banerji

Post Osama and PNS Mehran incidents and in light of Kayani – Pasha understanding, the credibility of the ISI and Pak Army has weakened considerably in the eyes of the public. During the Corps Commanders Conference on 09 Jun 11, there was no mention of India or a threat from India. It only talked of some quarters trying to run down the US – Pak political relations and the relations of the political executive with the ISI and the Pak Army. A hint was given about a US ordained Pak Military coup. However the possibilities of a Colonel's coup are very low.

Since the return of the Indian foreign secretary from Pakistan, there seems to be a view that there is a change in the Pakistani mindset; however, this mindset change may at best be temporary.

There is a need to analyse the succession order and situation that would prevail when four Generals and General Kayani retire. There have been speculations, as to whether Gen Kayani would choose to continue in uniform or would he hang his uniform and seek presidency.

The US thinks that the bumping off of Salim Shahzad was a Pakistan Government organised killing and this has strained the US – Pakistan relations.

In view of the fact that the political executive is weak and a number of enquiries by the sitting judges of the judiciary are underway; the Chief Justice assumes greater salience and the fact that Chief Justice Iftikhar Chowdhury is a hard liner, a maverick and is not an Islamic radical needs to be kept in mind. The JE and PPP have rallied in support of

the Army. In a situation akin to 'Nura Kushti', political dalliances go on between PPP and MQM, and the PPP and PMLQ which have been erstwhile opponents. There is talk of fixing greater responsibility by Gen Kiyani and getting the Army back to the barracks.

In times to come, will Nawaz Sharif be comfortable as PM with Zardari? Does the Pak Army have an inclination to back a one man horse in Imran Khan? As Nawaz has a popularity rating of 63 per cent and Imran of 68 per cent.

With one Brigadier and four other officers being arrested for having Hizbul Teherik leanings, the pace of Islamisation within the Army is being dealt with by a 'carrot and stick' approach.

Sushant Sarin in Vivekananda International Foundation brief has stated that there are three possible outcomes for Pakistan. These are – Clean up, Two boats (Pak Army continues with its dual policies) and Fast Drift (into a religious fanatic Pak state). Of these according to him first two have a higher probability.

Pakistan is likely to muddle through the difficult economic situation of 60 per cent debt despite its higher defence expenditure.

Pakistan's relations will continue to be governed by its fears of Indian hegemony, fear of hostility, Kashmir issue, a myth factor that Americans are anti Indian due to weak Indian polity, its quest for stability on the Western border with a view to orchestrate strategic depth, the provision of a conservative support from China, the uncontrolled armed groups within Pakistan and concerns for Nuclear safety.

In light of the above India should keep engaging Pakistan and downplay the media bashing of Pakistan. A feeling of complacency should at all costs be avoided. There is an essential need to check the powerbroker concept.

Capt (IN) Alok Bansal

Pakistan has been going through tumultuous times; the manner in which Salman Taseer, the governor of Punjab was assassinated by his own body guard shows the level of erosion of state authority in Pakistan. The fact that the assassin could empty two magazines, without any of the other guards firing at him shows the level of rot. Consequent treatment of the assassin indicates as if state has ceded its sole right to use force.

Growing radicalism in Pakistan is nothing but a natural manifestation of flawed ideology of exclusion that was propounded by the creators of Pakistan. If Muslims of Indian sub-continent could not live with Hindus, then the next logical question was - who is a Muslim? Different sectarian interpretation brought to fore various chasms within the society. There was also a division on what should be the role of religion in the state.

The idea of Pakistan was not very popular in the region that constitutes Pakistan today; consequently, successive Pakistani governments have propagated the idea of an all inclusive Islamic identity with the aim of subsuming ethnic identities. Accordingly the establishment helped the religious political parties to grow especially in the Pakhtoon belt. Soviet intervention gave further fillip to radicalisation. Creation of Taliban, 9/11 and subsequent 'War on Terror' all contributed to further radicalisation of the society. Having been established on the basis of religion, it has always been difficult for the state to deemphasise Islam from governance.

The problems that Pakistan face can broadly be grouped under four heads, viz. sectarianism, assertion of ethnic identity by various ethnic groups, economic crisis and Talibanisation. All four are linked, and all four have their genesis in the flawed ideology of Pakistan. The country for long has been held together by Army, Islam and Animus towards India. However, Islam is no longer a unifying factor as there are differences over its place in the society as well as the version. Different sects as well as sub sects within the same sect have been fighting one another violently and hence religion is no longer a unifying force in Pakistan. Similarly the animus towards India has also been coming down with the opening up of the air waves.

As Pakistanis view Indian electronic media, they realise that Indians are not demons as they were made out to be. As a result the usage of the India bogey to keep Pakistan united is unlikely to work in future.

Eventually it boils down to the state being kept together by the Pakistan Army. However, Talibanisation has created fissures within the Army and the 'only institution that worked' in Pakistan is showing signs of erosion. Number of officers, JCOs and ORs were court martialled for refusing to fight Taliban and their sympathisers. Number of their closeted supporters is likely to be much higher. The attack on PNS Mehran like almost every other attack on defence establishment bore clear signs of insider collusion and possible participation.

Journalist, Saleem Shehzad was eliminated for openly stating that a number of Al Qaeda and Taliban sympathisers were present within the Pakistani Armed Forces. Arrest of a serving Brigadier and other officers for links with Hizb-ut-Tehrir only proves this fact.

The erosion of Pakistani Army could lead to 'Lebanonisation' of Pakistan, where internal actors could interact independently with one another as well as with external powers. If Taliban becomes Pakistan's Hezbolla, it would create problems for India. Hence Lebanonisation of Pakistan is not India's interest, a neat Balkanisation may be!!!

Dr Mohan Guruswamy

Pakistan's economy is likely to grow at the slowest pace in South Asia in the next three years with the forecast of real GDP growth rate of 3.7 percent for Pakistan in 2009-10, 3.0 percent in 2010-11 and 4.0 percent in 2011-12. In comparison, India according to Global Economic Prospects would be the fastest growing economy in the region with a real GDP growth of 6 per cent in 2009-10, 7.5 per cent in 2009-10 and 8 per cent in 2010-12. This means that the Indian GDP growth is forecast to be 2.5 times higher than Pakistan in 2010-11 and two times higher in 2011-12. The Economic Intelligence Unit forecasts 2.7 percent growth for the year ending mid-2010, which puts Pakistan somewhere between a failing state and just muddling through.

Pakistan is more urbanised with a larger middle class than India as percent of population. Much of Pakistan's capital city looks like a rich Los Angeles suburb. Shiny sport utility vehicles purr down gated driveways. Elegant multi-story homes are tended by servants. Laundry is never hung out to dry. According to Jahangir Tareen, a businessman and Member of Parliament who is trying to put taxes on the public agenda, "Taxes are the Achilles' heel of Pakistani politicians." Out of more than 170 million Pakistanis, fewer than 2 percent pay income tax, making Pakistan's revenue from taxes among the lowest in the world, a notch below Sierra Leone's as a ratio of tax to gross domestic product.

Pakistan is suffering a loss of 64 percent in income tax, 48 percent in customs, and 45 percent in sales tax. Translated into hard cash, it means that for each Rs 100 actually due from a typical Pakistani business, the government collects only Rs 36.

Dr Aqdas Ali Kazmi, former Joint Chief Economist (Macro), Planning & Development Division, Government of Pakistan, in his paper 'Tax Policy and Resource Mobilization in Pakistan' estimates that 70 percent part of economy consists of 36 percent pure black economy, 18 percent exempted economy, 9 percent illegal economy, 4.5 percent unrecorded economy, and 2.5 percent informal or unreported economy.

There is increased pessimism among the common Pakistani regarding their future thinking that their condition will only worsen. Over the last thirty years, income inequality in Pakistan followed an uneven pattern and became widened. The share of the poorest 20 percent in total income decreased during this period while the share of the richest 20 percent increased.

Narcotics trade is a critical contributor. Nearly 93 percent of the opium in the world market originate from Afghanistan. The bulk of the Afghan heroin is processed in and exported from Pakistan. This amounts to an export value of about \$64 billion, with a quarter being earned by opium farmers and the rest going to district officials, insurgents, warlords and drug traffickers. This alone is worth over \$6-10 billion each year to Pakistan.

There is a continuing debate over whether Pakistan is a 'failing' and 'flailing' state. Its wild northern reaches remain host to various branches of the Pakistani Taliban and to al Qaeda, while other militant groups make gains closer to urban areas. More than 3 million Pakistani civilians were displaced by "counterinsurgency" operations in 2009 -- the largest single movement of people since the Rwandan genocide.

Zardari's government is unable to gain any measure of civilian control over a nuclear-armed military obsessed with planning for a war with India, or an intelligence service that stands accused of abetting the Afghan Taliban. The Foreign Policy magazine rates it 10th in the index of failed states.

Significantly, Pakistan's defense budget by contrast is ranked 35th in the world and at \$4.8 billion accounted for 2.6 percent of its GDP in 2009. In contrast to India's planned defence expenditures, Pakistan's entire 2009-10 budget amounts to little over \$30 billion.

Given Pakistan's often precarious macro-economic position, the economic situation in the next few years could have a direct bearing on political stability. The question remains, where will the money come from after the US withdraws from Afghanistan and loses interest in Pakistan?