



# CLAWS SEMINAR REPORT

AUGUST 2015

SEMINAR REPORT # 5

## Pakistan Situation, Trends And Implications For India

The ever increasing incidents of terrorist attacks, sectarian and ethnic violence pose a threat to Pakistan's sovereignty and internal security situation. The state of Pakistani economy continues to be weak and survive on huge foreign aid. While the armed forces stand as a bulwark against the emerging centrifugal forces, growing religious and ethnic fissures within the forces do not bode well for the country. Thus to gain a meaningful insight into Pakistan's internal dynamics and external policies, Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) conducted a seminar on 16 July 2015. The panel for the seminar comprised of:-

- Dr Rajiv Kumar, Senior Fellow at CPR
- Dr Savita Pande, Professor at JNU
- Lt Gen Vinod Bhatia, PVSM, AVSM, SM, Former DG MO (Retd)
- Mr Rana Banerji, Distinguished Fellow at IPCS
- Mr Sushant Sareen, Senior Fellow, VIF

### EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

- Political, societal and economic fault lines continue to ail Pakistan.
- Pakistan's economy is weak and is sustained by foreign aid and expat remittances.
- On-going military operations have temporarily improved the security situation.
- Strengthening political institutions and civil society, judicial and counter terrorism initiatives project an optimistic picture of future of Pakistan.
- Nature of Pakistan state and its existing internal dynamics mandate India to be watchful and cautious.

The Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS), New Delhi, is an autonomous think tank dealing with contemporary issues of national security and conceptual aspects of land warfare, including conventional and sub-conventional conflicts and terrorism. CLAWS conducts research that is futuristic in outlook and policy-oriented in approach.

Subjects for the discussions were:-

- Fault lines in Pakistan.
- Economic Appraisal of Pakistan
- Security Apparatus of Pakistan
- Emergence of Stable Pakistan - An Appraisal
- Decline of Pakistan - Evaluation of Situation
- Implications for India

### ❖ **Fault lines in Pakistan**

The fault lines in Pakistan can be divided into the number of subsets as: -

- **Political and Security Fault lines**
  - Civil-military & centre-state relations.
  - Executive versus judiciary.
  - Home grown terrorism.
- **Societal Fault Lines**
  - Rich - poor divide.
  - Ethnic conflicts, Punjabis-Baluchi and Pakhtuns-Sindhis etc.
  - Sectarian divide Shia-Sunni, Sunni – Ahmediya's, Deobandi – Barevali's and minorities.
- **Economic Fault Lines**
  - Fragile state of economy due to low growth rate, balance of payment, fiscal deficit and poor tax to GDP ratio.
- **Political and Security Fault lines**

In June 2013 the first successful political transition from one civil government to another raised hopes of international community of a stable political landscape in Pakistan. However, overtime the internal

situation became restive and gradually the power started shifting from the civil dispensation to the Army. Pakistan Muslim League Nawaz (PMLN) with majority in the National Assembly gave good performance but some of the actions of PMLN leader like Khwaja Mohammad Asif and PM himself angered the military patrons. Nawaz Sharif's visit to India, pursuing Gen Musharraf's case and talks with Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) triggered tension between civil-military leadership leading to political instability and turmoil.

The promulgation of the 18<sup>th</sup> <sup>1</sup> amendment denied President the power to dissolve the Parliament unilaterally thus giving greater autonomy to the prime minister and provincial governments, in turn diluted the authority of military dictators.

### • Societal Fault Lines

The ethnic conflicts continue to afflict Pakistan. The dominance of the Punjabi's, rift between Pakhtuns, Baluch, mohajir's and Sindhis have further widened resulting in increased violence. Sectarian attacks on Shias, Ismailis, Ahmedia's and minorities in Sindh, Punjab and Baluchistan continue unabated. Support base for ethnic and sectarian ideologies are spreading all over Pakistan. Pakistan Government has failed to rein in the propagators of violence, by stream lining the formal education system and impede the international funding to various religious seminaries and ethnic groups, which was one of the major focus in National Action Plan.

Political and Societal pressures continue to be exerted on the security forces to stop conduct of operations against the home grown terrorists. Military operation Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan has partially succeeded in curbing terrorist activities but couldn't root out the ideological bases of extremism, as senior leadership managed to escape prior launch of operations. Criminalization of Karachi, separatism and political isolation of Baluchistan, insecure Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Talibanisation of Punjab and Internally Displaced Persons are some of the societal fault lines which continue to trouble Pakistan.

### ❖ Economic Fault Lines

The growth of Pakistan's economy till 1970's was impressive and has created an illusion in mind of some that Pakistan will again be able to compete and surpass India's economy in coming years; the facts are

- The nominal GDP of Pakistan in 2014 grew by nearly 7.5%, however the real GDP growth was only 4.13% for FY 2014.
- The military expenditure of Pakistan remained high at 3% of GDP (USD 8,536.69 mn) in year 2014, adversely impacting allocation to other critical sectors.
- The major chunk of inflow in Pakistan economy is contributed by its diaspora that lives in Middle East and Europe. The total remittances reached to USD 15, 832 mn in the year 2013-14. Besides,

nearly USD 8 billion of foreign aid poured in Pakistan in first seven months of 2015 out of which 65 percent has been given by China.

These facts indicate that Pakistan's economy is largely sustained by aid / loans from international monetary organisations, foreign countries and Pakistani diaspora and very minimal is generated indigenously through revenue collection or taxation. In the near future, China will continue to support Pakistan economically.

### ❖ Pakistan Security Apparatus

The Pakistani security forces have been facing repeated attacks by radical Islamic elements in the country, especially from various splinter groups operating under the umbrella organization of TTP. The TTP and its affiliates carried out assault on bases of frontier Corps in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, attack on Mehran Naval base, abortive AQIS attempt to board the PNS frigate in the Karachi harbour thus posing serious threat to the Pakistani security forces. There have been incidents of growing latent radicalism in the security establishment.

Post Peshawar School attack, Pakistan came up with the National Action Plan (NAP) to tackle the emerging threat of terrorism. Nine military courts (21<sup>st</sup> Amendment<sup>2</sup>) have been established empowering Army to hold speedy trials and punish guilty terrorists; besides civil military hybrid Apex committee's were created and made responsible for overseeing implementation of various aspects of action plan.

During, the Karachi defence expo, Gen Raheel Sharif reiterated that the main threat to Pakistan was from the **supra national forces of disorder** implicitly referring to non- state actors and confirmed his commitment to exterminate them without any discrimination.

Pakistan boasts of a well-armed and trained professional force. Its defence is based on deterrence through nuclear weapons aimed primarily to counter the conventional superiority of its Indian adversary. Over the years Pakistan has enhanced its nuclear capabilities by developing better nuclear devices and delivery systems capable of achieving ranges from 80-100 Kms (Tactical) to 2,400 kms (Strategic). Pakistan's forward deployment of tactical nuclear weapons at the Corps level is primarily aimed at countering India's cold start doctrine and resultantly has reduced the threshold of nuclear weapons use in the subcontinent.

Army continues to maintain its primacy in the affairs of state governance especially on issues concerning foreign policy, military operations and internal security.

### ❖ Pakistan - Evaluation

Analyzing the fault lines in Pakistan, the economy and worsening security situation, the future of Pakistan portend two likely scenarios - a "stable Pakistan" or a "declining Pakistan".

- **Emergence of Stable Pakistan - An Appraisal.** In spite of numerous fault lines, various factors as mentioned under would contribute towards ensuring a reasonably stable Pakistan in the near future:-
  - **Geo strategic Location.** The geographic location of Pakistan ensures its relevance as a major player in international arena and it has been gainfully exploited by Pakistan to obtain political and economic support :
    - Important connect between South and Central Asia.
    - The development of the port of Gwadar and CPEC by China to secure its oil interests has enhanced the economic development in the region and is likely to increase further in the future.
    - Serves as a bridge between Middle Eastern Arab and South Eastern Muslim states of Malaysia and Indonesia.
  - **Political Mandate : 2013**
    - The 2013 elections saw Nawaz Sharif Muslim League come to power with a sizable majority. However a year later, the agitation by Tahirul Qadri and Imran Khan tried to bring the government to a standstill and there were expectations that Army would intervene but eventually that did not happen due to the exposure of Javed Hashmi case. Post Peshawar attack, consensus between the civil military leadership brought political stability in Pakistan.
    - Despite an overarching Army and hostile opposition the PMLN government managed to survive and continue to functions satisfactorily, representing existence of adequate democratic structures and institutions in Pakistan.
  - **Role of Judiciary and Civil Society**
    - There is new found judicial and social activism sweeping across Pakistan.
    - The judiciary, elements of civil society and media are pressurising the Army to come clear on cases of disappearance in Baluchistan and initiate proceedings to revive hearings in the Asghar Khan<sup>3</sup> case.
    - Though Army managed to safeguard Musharraf's position for the time being, but the threat lingers and Army no longer feels immune and invulnerable to the law of the land.

➤ **Counter Terrorism Initiatives**

- Counter insurgency operations under the leadership of Gen Kayani and later Gen Raheel Sharif were undertaken to counter the domestic terror threat. Post Peshawar Army school attack there has been consensus and strong civil society support to tame the local terrorists. The military operation Zarb- e- Azb has been able to partially neutralise TTP and restore certain degree of secure environment in the country.

❖ **Decline of Pakistan - Evaluation of Situation**

➤ **Volatile Economic Situation.**

- In about last eight years, the average growth rate of Pakistan is approximately 2.5 - 3 %. The most immediate problem is energy crisis which is crippling its industry and adversely impacting the economy.
- The foreign reserve of Pakistan is approximately USD 18 Billion. About USD 13 Billion is with the state bank, bulk of which is in terms of loan's from IMF and other international bodies. Balance USD 5 Billion is with the private sector.
- The overall economic picture of Pakistan is grim and distress levels are fairly high with poverty on the rise. In view of the same, the social unrest is likely to rise and it will continue to be a factor of instability and turmoil in Pakistan.

➤ **Terrorism and Security Issues.** The scourge of terrorism which has afflicted Pakistan is primarily ideological and social issue. Islamic terrorism continues to remain the most potent and significant threat to Pakistan's internal security and peace. Besides, other issues like insurgency in Baluchistan, IDP's, sectarian violence, growing influence of radical ISIS, threat of urban ethnic conflict in Karachi etc pose serious challenges for the Pakistani establishment. The Army's high handed approach while dealing with ethno nationalist issues may further aggravate the situation and lead to its resurgence.

➤ **Political Unrest.** The main bane of political unrest in Pakistan is the Army which is not allowing the elected government to rule without interference nor does it wish to own responsibility to singularly govern the state. This diarchy which is also being called as hybrid civil - military relations model is difficult to sustain and has failed to provide effective governance.

## ❖ Implications for India

- India has to engage with Pakistan irrespective of whoever is in power, monitoring carefully the dynamics of shifting power equations between the Army and civilian dispensation. This dilemma has existed since 1947.
- One should expect continued use of asymmetric option by Pakistan in Kashmir & elsewhere and maintaining links with IM sleeper cells and elements of AQIS/IS inside India.
- The appeasement of Pakistan should not be a policy option and India must eschew verbal bellicosity & muscle flexing in its dealings with Pakistan, when required.
- There is a need to enhance homeland security, use of positive/ negative levers to influence strategic calculus, expedite police reforms, better intelligence co-ordination and hone capabilities to undertake covert action.

## Conclusion

Pakistan is standing on the crossroads where he can either continue to follow the current trajectory or transform and undertake processes and decisions to restructure and reform its existing political, judicial, economic and societal fault lines and move towards stability and development. If Pakistan continues on its present course, then as stated by Stephen Cohen “Pakistan could again become its own worst enemy”.

## Notes

- 1 **Amendment XVIII (the Eighteenth Amendment) of the Constitution of Pakistan**, was passed by the National Assembly of Pakistan on April 8, 2010, removing the power of the President of Pakistan to dissolve the Parliament unilaterally, turning Pakistan from a semi-presidential to a parliamentary republic, and renaming North-West Frontier Province to Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The package is expected to counter the sweeping powers amassed by the Presidency under former Presidents General Pervez Musharraf and General Muhammad Zia-ul-Haq and to ease political instability in Pakistan. The amendment bill was passed by the Senate of Pakistan on April 15, 2010 and it became an act of parliament when President Asif Ali Zardari put his signature on the bill on April 19, 2010.
- 2 **Twenty-first Amendment Bill** to the Constitution of Pakistan was passed by both the National Assembly of Pakistan and Senate of Pakistan on January 6, 2015. The Bill amended the Article 175 and the First Schedule of the Constitution. It also has a self-contained sunset clause, which causes the amendments to expire on January 7, 2017. The amendment sought to setup speedy trial Military Courts for offences relating to terrorism, waging of war against Pakistan and prevention of acts threatening the security of Pakistan. The duration of such courts would be two years. The decision to amend the constitution came after the 2014 Peshawar school massacre.

- 3 **Asghar Khan case** is about the allegations that the ISI (Inter Services Intelligence) distributed millions of rupees among politicians to rig the general elections in 1990. Read here <http://tribune.com.pk/story/453773/asghar-khan-case-short-order-full-text/>



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