

Pakistan's Internal Security Dilemma: Strategic Dimension

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Abstract

The paper reflects on Pakistan's complex security situation and the causes of current challenges that Pakistan is facing due to vacillating foreign policies. It also reviews the role of factors that contributed towards the instability of the country. After Soviet invasion of Afghanistan, Pakistan involved in a proxy war and trained Mujahideen to liberate Afghanistan. In 1980's sectarianism floored the state, and since it has rooted in Pakistani society. The country brokered several Post-Soviet peace agreements between different militaristic groups in Afghanistan but in vain. Finally, it recognized Taliban for the cause of peace (though temporary) on its Western border. After 9/11 the country had to reluctantly take a "U" turn on its Afghan policy under immense US pressure. This swing of policy opened a Pandora-box for the country i.e. terrorism, Jihadist, ethnicity, sectarianism, economic and political instability in Pakistan. In this state of affairs corruption, deteriorating law and order situation, political instability and economic fragility, variables of internal security, act as key factors in a peaceful solution of conflicts.

Key Words: Terrorism, Jihadists, Sectarianism, Ethnicity, Militancy, Political Parties, Militant Wings, Economic Instability, Taliban, Dictatorship, Civilian Rule, Democracy

Introduction

In the chaotic global system of the nation-state, armed conflicts are frequent and destructive. In order to survive in the comity of nations, a state has to rely on the self-help for its protection and national security. National security can be understood as a country's capacity to resist external or internal threats to its physical survival or core values (Blanton & Kegley, 2016, p. 450). It can be understood in words of the Farlex dictionary "*the requirement to maintain the survival of the nation-state through the use of economic, military and political power and the exercise of diplomacy.*" Berkowitz and Bock have described National Security as, "*the ability of a nation to protect its internal values from external threats.*" According to Lipmann, "*a nation has security when it does not have to sacrifice its legitimate interests to avoid war, and is able, if challenged, to maintain them by war*". There is no absolute security; it is always relative and

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situational. Still there are some of the pre-requisites of national security i.e. economic stability, promotion of democracy, viable and independent judicial system, uniform education system, vibrant civil society, a clear and constantly updated conception of what constitutes a threat and a clear understanding about how to counter the potential and actual threats by reducing conflict and overcoming the resistance within the national structure (Aziz, 1984, pp. 4–6).

Security in perfect term implies flexibility. Applying this term for national security implies the capacity of a country to shield its core values and investments from inner and outer risks. In contemporary global setting there is barely any state that confronts no risk either inside or outside. Outside risk likewise serves as an impetus for national unity. It, in the meantime, helps the state to turn to some onerous administrations. Survival of the state, in this manner, lies in anticipating and envisioning the danger accurately, decreasing the risk and lastly guarding the state in the event that the emergent risk through different components of national force. National security incorporates both external and internal factors. A perfect national security system is the particular case that adjusts the two objectives. Moreover, this paper is dealing the issues in thematic order and incidences are explained in the context of the themes.

Dimensions of National Security

There are two dimensions of national security i.e. security from external threats as well as from the internal threats. As far as the external security threat to the national security is concerned; since it is not the focus of this paper, therefore, it will be explained only for the general understanding of the readers in a few sentences and then the paper would shift focus to the internal security threats to the national security of a nation. Nations always come into existence through some sort of unifying force may it be geography, ethnicity, language, economy, liberty or ideology. These unifying forces then develop into fundamental values of nations. They exercise and observe these values within their territorial domain. At this stage, elements of national power come into play. These elements like the economy, scientific advancement, military power, and diplomacy etc. are used to ensure national security from external threat.

Internal threats can be explained as those threats coming from within the state and society. These threats can be in the form of a rebellion against the state; such rebellion could be created by inequality among different classes, units, religious, ethnic and linguistic groups in the country. The internal security threat can also be posed by the poor economic conditions of a country where afterward country has to rely on foreign aid, which makes the country accept some demands of the donor state which, at times, can be against the national interests of the receiving state. International Monitoring Fund (IMF) program in Pakistan is an evident example of how our political or military regimes accept the

conditions after having financial aid programs. Political instability can also threaten the very existence of the state from within. Last but not the least terrorist activities by non-state actors, at times, become a genuine threat to the internal security of the state.

When states are threatened from within, it becomes very difficult to identify the enemy, which is normally from amongst its own citizens. In this scenario, the target of the non-state actors are civilians, law enforcement agencies, and armed forces personnel in the first stage, and attacks on the law enforcement agencies and armed forces installations follow the suit. The aim of all these acts, usually, is to weaken the state from within to make it unable to defend itself in case of a foreign aggression against the country or to coerce it to do what the non-state actors want it to.

Pakistan's Internal Security Dilemma: Historical Perspective

With the Soviet Invasion of Afghanistan Pakistan was posed with one of the most serious policy options of its history. It had either to accept the Soviet Intervention in Afghanistan and wait for the Red Army to approach Pakistan after conquering Afghanistan or it had to choose the USA and Saudi Arabia as allies against the Soviet Union (USSR).

The issue of Pakhtunistan, some Pashtuns living on the Pakistani side of Durand Line demanding for a merger with Afghanistan, was one of the major concerns which pushed Pakistan into the Capitalist Block. Pakistan did not commit its troops openly in the Afghan Jihad, 1979. The result of this strategic slip-up was that civilians were equipped and trained to fight for the political interests of Pakistan, in the name of Islam. This indoctrination and training of the groups and individuals were compatible with the national interest of the country, defeating the Soviet Union in Afghanistan before it reaches to Pakistan, only until September 11, 2001. Since Al-Qaida and its leadership was not only against the US and the West it was also critical of the policies of the Kingdom of Saudi Arabia (KSA); therefore, Pakistan, keeping in view its cordial relations with the KSA in particular and the US in general, changed its Afghan policy and decided to ally with the USA and KSA against Al-Qaida and Taliban in Afghanistan. The policy of the state was changed under the slogan of "Pakistan first", however, these zealous, Islamized, well equipped and highly trained groups and the individual could not digest that fact. They adopted a policy of "wait and see" until they were convinced that Pakistan military was genuinely fighting against them. Thus, they turned their guns towards Pakistan. In other words, they also raised a slogan of "Pakistan first", but in this case, its meaning was changed altogether. In the former case, it meant saving Pakistan first as a primary motive, while it was contrary in the latter case.

Military as a disciplined institution, after a rigorous process, can change policy under compulsion of national interest. Nevertheless, the presence of armed civilians, particularly when they would have been mobilized and trained with the help of an ideology, makes it quite difficult. In case of Pakistan, the Islamic ideology was used for this purpose. Civilians were trained to fight against the enemy for the cause of Islam and not worldly interests during the Soviet-Afghan War, 1979. While in the minds of the military and political establishment, it was purely a matter of national interest.

During all these times, 1979 till 2001, the establishment was confident of its abilities to mold the minds of the people in any direction they like. On the other hand, thousands of seminaries (Madrassas) were established, to impart religious education to the youth. However, in those seminaries, most of the religious teachers would have limited knowledge of Islam and the contemporary world but they would still interpret Islamic doctrines, particularly the Jihadi doctrine for their devotees and the young ones. This is the main reason that we see a difference of opinion and goals among these militant groups as well all claiming they are fighting for the cause of Islam. It was in this backdrop that Pakistan decided under its national interest to change its Afghan policy in 2001. The escalation in militancy and terrorist activities in the country after 2001 till date is a direct consequence of our own policies adopted under two different regimes i.e. General Zia-Ul-Haq and General Musharraf. Both these policies were conflicting and contradictory to each other. General Zia-Ul-Haq prepared and pitched a whole generation of fighters in the country to avert the threat of Soviet Union in Afghanistan, while General Musharraf, in order, to achieve Pakistan's national interests in a different international and regional context could not foresee the shattering effect of shift in Pakistan's support for Taliban regime in Afghanistan.

The economic crisis, switching from democracy to dictatorship and vice versa, incompetence of civilian leadership, with little or no ability to formulate policies on important matters including international relations, and sectarian violence etc., the country has been found resisting all these elements of instability. Despite state of Pakistan has survived against such opposing forces originating from the inside it is still passing through one of the hardest times of its history right now ("Pakistan 'fighting for survival,'" 2009).

Pakistan under General Musharraf

In 1999, the military took control of the government and the civilian government was overthrown (Khan, 2009), soon the international community started criticizing the country piercingly and urged to restore genuine democracy (Kronstadt, 2006). Since Musharraf was a military man and there was no civilian government in the country at the time when the US was attacked on

September 11, 2001, therefore; a smooth “U” turn on the Afghan policy was taken under immense international pressure(Hussain, 2005).

This policy shift was partial because of Saudi and US pressure on Pakistan, but it had manifold motives behind. When General Musharraf came to power the country was under US sanctions due to 1998 nuclear tests, therefore, Pakistan was in dire need of international support. The events of 9/11 made the US dependent on Pakistan to go after the Taliban and Al-Qaida. Therefore, Pakistan, as well as the US, needed each other to get their interests achieved(Kronstadt, 2006). Thus, 9/11 provided an opportunity to the General to achieve this objective and sustain the country's economy through US economic support, which he successfully did for quite some time.

One of the main motives of General Musharraf to back out from the conventional Afghan policy was his military background. In his opinion, if Pakistan refused logistic and intelligence support to the US, India would in no time extend the same and then Pakistan would be in an odd state of affairs against the latter; because in such a scenario India would have the support of the sole superpower against Pakistan. Since right after 9/11, the then US president George W. Bush coined a phrase of “either with us or against us” he categorically asked the nations of the world to extend cooperation to the US in its intended “War against Terrorism” or else, those not standing with the US as allies, would be taken as the allies of the opposite cluster(Ajami, 2007). In the meantime the Indian government convened a meeting on 15th September 2001 in which all parties except the Communist Party of India gave suggestions to the then Prime Minister Vajpayee to extend all-outsupport to the US in order to level scores with Pakistan and put an end to the Kashmir resistance, morally backed by Pakistan(“Joint Statement Between U.S. and India,” 2001).

It was in the backdrop of such personal, regional and international perspectives that General Musharraf changed the Afghan Policy after 9/11 and decided to be with the US rather than against it. The shift in Afghan policy remained successful for Pakistan till 2007 as Pakistan did not face the brunt of terrorism and extremism till the Lal Masjid Operation in 2007. The Law and order situation in the country rapidly deteriorated after the Lal Masjid Operation when different militant groups decided to formulate Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). Nobody at that time knew that what, apparently, was a well thought over and wise decision, the Lal Masjid Operation, would engulf the state in its fold to such an extent that it would put its own integrity at stake.

Unstable Governments and Devising Policy Frameworks

In the 2002 parliamentary elections of Pakistan, the religious alliance known as Muttahida Majlis-i-Amal (MMA) emerged as the third largest party in the

National Assembly elections after Pakistan Muslim League (Q) and Pakistan People's Party Parliamentarian (PPPP). A coalition government was, however, set up with Mir Zafarullah Khan Jamali, the candidate of PML (Q) as the Prime Minister of Pakistan with the help of Mutahida Quomi Movement (MQM) ("Zafarullah Khan Jamali | 21st Prime Minister of Pakistan," 2004). Thus, the parliament under Musharraf in 2002 was the first of its sort where no major party, either PPP or PML (N), could make the government.

As a result of 2002 elections, a weak government was formed; instead of diverting its focus on the solutions of problems, through able policymakers, the country was facing, the government was merely struggling for its own survival. It was in this state of affairs that for the first time in the history of Pakistan the parliament completed its five years term.

The PPPP led by Asif Ali Zardari completed its term in the parliament and government and its rule was not different from that of the PML Q, it too had to remove Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani and replace with Raja Pervez Ashraf. Most of the times the PPPP government was found engulfed in issues with the Judiciary. In 2013, PML (N) led government was formed however it is heading forward with numerous hiccups. The most talked about negotiation process with the Taliban has been put to an end due to the conflicting interest of State, the military, and the Taliban. In a nutshell; the political parties so far could not provide able leadership to address the issues and problems of masses and make them rid of terrorism and lawlessness.

The schism between Civil Society, Military and Political Parties

Civil society, military, and political parties are the most important components of a vibrant and progressive society, but the directions of these three gears of a society are contradictory to each other in Pakistan. 9/11 has exposed the fault lines in the societal structure of the country. Traditionally the military, civil society, and political parties used to act in unison, it was only during and after the Afghan Jihad that theso-called, civil society started voicing its concerns mildly over the indulgence of Pakistan military establishment in the state of affairs across its western border.

Relations between PML (N) under the leadership of Nawaz Sharif deteriorated with the military during the second term of Nawaz government in 1998 over the Kargil issue. These relations suffered a severe blow after the military coup of 12 October 1999 against the PML (N) government. After the 2002 parliamentary elections this, already strained, relationship was pushed to an advanced level of stress; because, what PML(N) thought, of the role of military establishment in carving out a new faction of Pakistan Muslim League known as Pakistan Muslim League (Qaid-e-Azam Group) PML (Q); it mostly comprised of members PML (N).

At the same time, the government and military establishment came under sharp criticism from the civil society and the lawyers due to its dictatorial policies. There were many reasons for that but a few most important would be discussed here. The civil society wanted the government to take strong measures against the extremist elements in the country; in their opinion, the government was playing a double game with its western allies. On one hand, it was pretending to be a close ally of the US in the War against Terrorism while on the other it was protecting and supporting the Taliban elements in the country (Niazi, 2010). They were/are critical for Pakistan's "Strategic Depth Policy" in Afghanistan. This term was coined by General Aslam Baig in 1980s, from that point forward global media is utilizing this expression profoundly and referring to it as a strategy by which Pakistan wants to control Afghanistan ("Gathering Storm," 2007).

The division between civil society, military and political parties was widened with the passage of time. This difference is not only among the civil society and the government or military but at the same time, the civil society has differences with religious parties and ethnic parties as well. Some of the religious and ethnic political parties such as Jamat-e-Islami and MQM have militant wings which are bringing them to vivid criticism by the civil society. In this triad of difference each party; May it be civil society, government, military or the ethnic/religious parties, has differences with the other two on key policy issues of the state. For instance, the violation of Pakistan's sovereignty on May 02, 2011 by the US to kill Osama Bin Laden made the schism very evident. The civil society was criticizing the military of not knowing about the presence of Bin-Laden so close to the Military Training Academy, the military was criticizing the US for violating the sovereignty of Pakistan and not taking ISI and Pakistan military into confidence before conducting that operation (Crilly, 2011).

With this, the differences and divergence among these three major elements of Pakistani society, the societal structure is without any doubt, divided between conflicting sections. Each of the three thinks it knows the most about the interests of Pakistan and considers the views of other two unimportant.

Flawed Education System

One major aspect of the internal problems in Pakistan is the fragmented and highly divided education system in the country. Apparently, there are four kinds of educational institutions in Pakistan i.e. government-run schools, private schools affiliated to "Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education", private schools affiliated with the UK based education system and the religious seminaries (Madrassas). Depending on the financial condition of a family, a section of the society sends their children to the government-run schools where the teaching quality is not up to the mark. Still, a large number of population

send their children to the private schools affiliated with the “Boards of Intermediate and Secondary Education” while many others prefer to send their children to private schools affiliated with the UK based education system. Due to the scarcity of resources for children education and a dearth of public and private sector schools a large number of people prefer to send their children to religious schools (Madrassas).

These different types of institutions produce different types of students. The ones educated by Madrassas consider those educated in government-run/private schools aliens to the spirit of Islam. While the ones educated in private and government-run schools consider Madrassas ‘student’s extremists. Additionally, those educated in the private schools have better chances of getting into the government offices. Moreover, those educated in private schools affiliated with UK based education system have more chances in acquiring key positions in public and private sector job market. Furthermore, students graduated from Madrassas of one particular school of thought, more often, consider the followers of another school of thought as non-Muslims. Thus the education system in Pakistan is at the same time producing youth with altogether different, at times antagonistic, perspectives about each other; deepening the fault lines in Pakistani society.

Violence Rules the Country

Pakistan is an ideological country and founded on the Islamic ideology (Jaffrelot, 2004, p. 2). It is situated in an important geo-strategic location. As discussed earlier, the course of events in the region over the past four decades has had its negative impact on the state. It fought against a superpower, Soviet Union, in Afghanistan with the support of the US and Saudi Arabia.

Political and religious problems were never tried to be solved through negotiation and exchange of ideas. To counter PPP in the province of Sindh, MQM was formed; a faction of the party later on developed into armed wing of the party and throughout 1980’s and early 1990’s a reign of terror ran into the veins of Karachi. The role of MQM now being questioned openly due to visible proof of its involvement in target killing i.e. the confession of Solat Mirza, a convicted criminal affiliated with MQM, on electronic media unveiled that the top leadership of MQM is involved in such heinous crimes (Dawn, 2015). During the same era, sectarian violence also made its way into Pakistani society. Along with these violent groups, a breed of Jihadists, under compelling circumstances, also grew due to Pakistan’s engagement in Afghanistan against the Soviet Union.

To summarize the above we can say that before September 11, 2001, there were two kinds of militant groups in Pakistan, i.e. sectarian groups and anti-USSR. After the Soviet withdrawal, these groups and individuals remained

involved in power struggle in the war-shattered country. With the swing of Pakistan foreign policy towards Afghanistan, these militant groups, like any other sector or group, could not remain remote to the implications of 9/11.

Most of the people living in the Tribal belt of Pakistan have family ties with people in Afghanistan. Pakistan was fighting against the occupying forces of the USSR along with these people for that reason it could acquire chock-a-block support and cooperation of the tribal people. However, after 9/11, rightly though, Pakistan chose to be on the side “with us” and did not choose “against us” in the history-making statement of the then US President Bush “Either with us or against us”(Kronstadt, 2006). The dilemma with Pakistan was, and it still is, that on the one hand, it could not satisfy the US, after sacrificing thousands of soldiers, and the US and its policymakers still think that Pakistan could not fulfill its obligations as an ally in the war against terrorism, while on the other armed forces are the most hated and disdained among the jihadists and militants after 9/11.

Tehreek-I-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) is a Jihad Induced anti-Pakistan militant group. It comprises many other groups like Al-Qaida, Tehrik-i-Nifaaaz-i-Shariat-i-Muhammadi (TNSM) and some factions of the Punjabi Taliban (Kronstadt, 2006). An altogether different dimension of anti-Pakistan militancy is also going on in the province of Baluchistan, It could be called as secessionist militancy, the major groups fighting there against the security forces are known as Baluchistan Liberation Army (BLA) and Baluchistan Republican Army (BRA). It is widely believed that insurgency in Baluchistan is fueled by regional and international actors present in Afghanistan i.e. India. The difference between these two types of anti-Pakistan militant groups is that the Jihad induced groups want a change in the foreign policy of Pakistan while the secessionists in Baluchistan want complete independence from Pakistan and they want to establish a separate state of Baluchistan.

The anti-Pakistan Jihadi militants were first formed when Pakistan started military operations in South Waziristan Agency in 2002. Acts of militancy sporadically began in the country the more our military carried out operations against the militants the more these acts were committed against the state and its respected institutions. As briefly discussed earlier; in December 2007, about 13 groups were united under the leadership of Baitullah Mehsud to form the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan. Among the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan's stated objectives is resistance against the Pakistani state, enforcement of their interpretation of “*Sharia*” and a plan to unite against NATO-led forces in Afghanistan. It is the last objective of the TTP, which is of immense concern for the allied forces in Afghanistan. Resultantly, the US impressed upon Pakistan to do more against these militants, Pakistan did “do more” and the militants retaliated with growing intensity of violence against the state and its law

enforcement and security agencies, apparently with support from international actors stationed in Afghanistan.

The Lal-Masjid operation in Islamabad proved to be the stimulus for militancy in Pakistan. Since then militancy in Pakistan has gained new vigor, in the aftermath of the 2007 siege of Lal Masjid, Fazlullah's forces and Baitullah Mehsud's Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) formed an alliance (Sial, 2007). Fazlullah and his army reportedly received orders from Mehsud. The acts of violence against the state and security forces were increased manifold.

In the meantime, writ of the state in the district of Swat was shattered, Taliban ruled over the area under the command of Fazlullah (Roggio, 2007). Therefore, in 2009, the military had to take action against the militants in Swat to rid the area of Taliban ("Cabinet endorses military action in Swat," 2009). The country witnessed one of the massive internal displacements of its history since independence from British India in 1947. In 2010 the number of Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) exceeded the number of registered Afghan refugees for the first time since 1979. Most of the IDPs have returned to their homes but still, a large number are living with the same displaced status, which further aggravates the security situation.

At the same time, the acts of sectarian violence also increased in the country. Kurram Agency and the southern district of the province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa along with some areas of the Punjab and Baluchistan are hubs of sectarian violence where it can strike any time all over the year. In the Islamic month of Muharram, sectarian violence can strike anywhere all over the country.

It is this state of affairs that the security agencies of the country faced a new wave of violence, when on 02 May 2011 Osama Bin Laden was found and Killed in Abbottabad. The killing of the Top leader of Al-Qaida stimulated a new wave of violence against the country (Rehman, Haque, & Popalzai, 2011). On one hand, the security establishment was trying to justify its position to the world about Bin-Laden (Porter, 2011) and on the other, the armed forces and the law enforcement agencies came under severe attacks from the militants (Gall & Schmitt, 2011). Countless attacks on the security agencies and armed forces have been launched since then. These attacks resulted in the killing of many law enforcement agencies and armed forces personnel (AFP, 2011; Dawn.com, 2011).

An attack on the Jinnah International Airport Karachi is vivid example of the ability of TTP to launch an attack anywhere in the country they want (Reuters, 2014). In December 2012, a similar kind of attack was launched on Bacha Khan International Airport Peshawar (Ahmad, 2012). Similar kind of attack was carried out on Pakistan Naval Base Mehran in Karachi. All these attacks demonstrate the ability, planning, control, command and accuracy of militants which cannot be attained without the support international actors from across the border, conversely it exhibits the exhaustion and unpreparedness of the security forces ("Pakistan military base attacked by Islamist militants | World news | The

Guardian,” 2011). Over the period of time after 2001, the pattern of attacks on the security forces showed one thing very clearly that anti-State militants were getting highly equipped and well trained while over the course of the years the Pakistani security forces could not adapt their tactics to counter these anti-state forces (Gall & Schmitt, 2011). The attack on Karachi Airport, as mentioned above, on June 8, 2014, proved that militants were getting stronger with the help of international actors who wanted to hit military installations and infrastructure in Pakistan to make it weak. It was very easy for them to reach anywhere in the country and create chaos (Craig, 2014). Moreover, right after the attack and cleanup of the airport, another attack took place in which, paramilitary personnel was attacked (Walsh & Masood, 2014).

However, the attack on Army Public School (APS) in Peshawar on December 16, 2014, exhibit another dimension; rather than hitting the military installations and highly guarded civilian installations the militants chose a soft target and slaughtered innocent and helpless children. No need to mention that it was a deplorable act and it shows the meanness and savagery of extremists; however, it also shows that the militants have lost their ability to hit military installations and highly guarded civilian infrastructure such as Airports; thus, they have resorted to choosing soft targets.

Analysis

Pakistan has got everything that one can think of. The need of the hour is that the ruling elite re-prioritize its preferences in the light of needs of its populace. More focus should be given to incorporate impoverished and marginalized parts of the country into the political and economic mainstream.

Most Pakistanis are passionate Muslims and not radical. In spite of the fact that religious extremism has done a lot of damage to our general public and nation, it, however, has an extremely tight base. Society everywhere despises religious extremism and devotion and has amplified wholehearted backing to governments, dead set, to check this danger. Resilience accordingly, is profoundly established in general masses.

One of the explanations behind the spread of sectarianism in Pakistan was the extensive scale of unemployment and accessibility of displeased youth as prepared, resolute volunteers to sectarian and Jihadi organizations. Under the current environment when the economy has started to hint at the change there is a replenished trust that our children will now be not as promptly accessible to these so-called religious organizations.

Uptillnow, the Pakistani masses were divided to back military in its operations against foreign and home grown militants. However, with the incidence of APS Peshawar massacre political government, Pakistan Army and

the general public are on the same page; they all want to cleanse Pakistani society of the menace of terrorism which might have the potential to bring about the desired result.

As the saying goes “there is nothing impossible on the face of the earth,” therefore, Pakistan still has a bright chance to survive and become a viable and progressive country. Mostly the leadership of the country emerges from among the landlords, industrialists, and military. The landlords do not allow genuine land reforms. Likewise, industrialists have always devised policies to protect their interests and increase profit margins. Although, economic progress has been made under military rule in the country, however, the needs of the common man have been ignored in this process altogether.

Corruption is flowing, like blood, in the socio-economic fabric of the country. The parasite of corruption has weakened the economy of the country to the point of bankruptcy. The spending of successive post 2002 political governments against its GDP earning is on all-time high. Earning daily livelihood for an ordinary person is a big achievement in this state of affairs.

Recommendations

Remedial measures are of two kinds; one is short-term and the other long-term. In short-term, the country should ensure strict punishment for the corrupt elements without any discrimination. The rate of inflation should be checked upon to give relief to the ordinary man in the country. Because poverty is a fertile ground for militancy, unemployed, poor young boys and girls are a potential asset for the militants, which they can recruit and cash with ease. Therefore, any effort to give economic relief to the masses all over the country horizontally would be in-fact, an effort to reduce militancy.

Military operations inside the country have made its own people turn into anti-state elements. Any halt in these operations has mostly been reciprocated by a halt in the terrorist activities against the state. This is evident from the fact when the democratic government was formed in the country in 2008 and the direction of the foreign policy of the country was still not clear to the TTP, as the PPP had raised the slogan during its election campaign to review President Musharraf's policies in War against Terror. But, militants just expected the policy to be changed soon, so they halted attacks on the state for just under a month soon after the elections of 2008. As soon as the direction was made clear by the course of events, militancy against the state resumed. The same phenomenon repeated itself when the Nawaz led PML (N) government expressed its will for peace talks with Taliban. The situation deteriorated only when military operation in North Waziristan began. The Taliban has restarted targeting state institutions i.e. an attack Karachi International Airport. However, with the announcement of a return date for the dislocated population of North Waziristan

Agency one can be optimistic that the era of peace is returning to the country, provided the military and the general masses remain as vigilant against extremists as it has been in past couple of months particularly after the APS attack.

In the long term, politicians should come up with practical example that they are not corrupt and can rule the country efficiently so that Pakistan Army get rid of its political responsibilities and is spared for its professional responsibility alone.

The vital economic resources of the country i.e. agriculture, minerals, and (skilled) manpower should be fully used for the benefit of the country in collaboration with technologically advanced and trusted friends of Pakistan such as China, Turkey, and Malaysia.

Pakistan should rely more on its neighbors i.e. China, India, Iran, and Afghanistan for economic prosperity rather than its western allies because history tells us that neighbors' interests are the same as far as economic prosperity and peace in the region is concerned. Therefore, North America Free Trade Association (NAFTA), Association of Southeast Asian Nations (ASEAN) and European Union (EU) are some of the success stories of economic prosperity through regional cooperation and integration.

Last but not the least; Pakistan should devise a comprehensive and uniform education policy for the whole country horizontally as well as vertically. Under this policy education, from grass root to the highest level should be made completely free of cost and compulsory for all, till graduation, grade 14. As a portion of the population of the country is deeply religious; therefore, it would be easily provoked against any measures to secularize the education system in the country. One of the main reasons for a large number of religious schools in the country is the inadequacy of religious education in the regular education system of the country. In order to counter the effect of conventional religious schools, a comprehensive scheme of education is needed where along with contemporary disciplines adequate religious education should also be given to Muslim students and ethics to the non-Muslims. A mutually agreed upon interpretation of the Quran and Hadith, by involving clerics from all schools of thought through the in-depth consultation process, be made part of the syllabi from first grade till graduation-grade 14. All major books of Hadith and complete translation and the mutually agreed upon interpretation of Quran and Hadith should be made part of this scheme of education over the course of fourteen academic years.

This scheme of education will serve some of the following purposes, which include; emancipation of religion from the monopoly of half learned-clergy. Right now, this clergy is in control of the religious affairs of the common person. Secondly, it will enlighten the common man about the real and comprehensive message of Islam; in turn, he would then be able to easily avoid

the maligned interpretation of religion and religious text if ever encountered. Lastly, the vast majority of the country, particularly the poor, would then start sending their children to the government-run schools rather than religious school, because most of them send their children to the religious schools in view of the fact that education is free of cost over there.

Conclusion

The task ahead of the country, which is on the verge of becoming a failed state (Fair, 2010) is gargantuan. However, the strength of sincere and zealous efforts should never be ruled out. It is the responsibility of the government, military and political establishment and the masses to push the horizons of their minds for a solution to the problems the country is facing at the moment. The task for the Pakistani nation to survive can be easily achieved through political will and mass mobilization to back and enforce that will. A number of steps have been mentioned in this paper, which can be of some value to the betterment of the state but still, there are loads more to be done. The country should re-prioritize all the issues in its domestic and foreign affairs. Its policymakers should come out of the boxes they are living in, to get the first-hand knowledge of the realities on the ground- rather than relying on the second-hand information given to them by their crony juniors- to save the country from the gigantic monster of internal security threats.

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