

Seminar Report

PAKISTAN: THE CHANGING SECURITY DIMENSION



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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

General

The strategic location of Pakistan, a nuclear armed country, makes it impossible to ignore it in the global as well as regional affairs. Today, Pakistan is facing a number of complex issues in the domains of politico-socio-legal, economy, civil society and media. All these problems are more or less interconnected and have major implications on the evolving security dimension in the region. Being its immediate neighbour, it is important for India to understand the changing dynamics of Pakistan for the security environment in the region at large.

Even 73 years after the death of Muhammad Ali Jinnah, the founding father of Pakistan, the Pakistanis are still searching for their “Quaid-e-Azam’s” vision for their country. Muhammad Ali Jinnah wanted Pakistan to be a state for Muslims, rather than an Islamic State. The Pakistani nationalist movement propagated the idea of Muslims as victims, who have been subjected to discrimination and thus rejected the Pakistan Muslim League’s secular vision; hence, shifting the focus towards an Islamic State. Therefore, the famous saying of Ayub Khan is quiet apt, “*Jinnah gave Muslims a country, Ayub Khan gave Pakistan Army a state.*”

Pakistan military took upon itself the role of ‘Guardian’ of the country’s identity, territory and even society. Pakistan’s social, economic, political, legal order, both old as well as new, has been dominated by a triad of Army, Bureaucracy and Feudal Lords, commonly referred to as ‘Establishment’ in earlier times, but now referred to as the ‘Deep State’ or ‘the State within the State’. In fact, it was Pakistan’s ex-Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, who was quoted in the Dawn newspaper of July 12, 2018, when he said that the “Pakistan Army is now a state above the state and not within the state.” Hence, it is this deep state entity that has been guiding the destiny of ‘benighted’ Pakistan since its creation.

In the case of Pakistan, the security concerns have always triumphed over developmental concerns and this has continued even today, wherein, more than half of the budget of Pakistan is allocated to defence, starting from its first budget where 70 percent was allocated for the same portfolio. The current situation remains bleak as Pakistan is grappling with an under-developed and an abysmal state of the economy. Inflation is on the rise. The economic development, if any, remains restricted to the urban areas. There remains political upheaval due to ethnic, social, political, tribal divide, within the country.

Pakistan's ideology and its India-centric activities, in the last five years, are summarised as under:

- Pakistan's ideology towards India has been based on the following:
 - First, the religion card 'Islam'.
 - Two, an anti-India feeling.
 - Three, an obsession with Jammu and Kashmir and its annexation.
- Pakistan has indulged in the following:
 - Firstly, indigenising the insurgency in Kashmir Valley.
 - Secondly, it had tried to promote *Wahhabism* with a view to dilute the Sufi Islam culture prevalent in the valley.
 - Thirdly, and most dangerous, is that they have used religious ideology to radicalise the people, particularly the youth of the Kashmir Valley.

Pakistan continues to support terrorism in a big way. The deep involvement of Pakistan in supporting terrorism can be gauged by the acceptance of the fact by none other than the Pakistan PM himself in his speech at Capitol Hill, in July 2019. In the speech, the PM himself has admitted to the presence of 30,000 to 40,000 armed personnel, i.e. militants operating in Pakistan who have fought in Afghanistan or Kashmir and also the presence of about 40 terror groups operating on Pakistan soil. The impact of terrorism in the South-Asian region and

how Pakistan has been the epicentre of this menace emerges clearly in the Global Terrorism Index 2019 report published by the Institute for Economics and Peace (IEP), Sydney.

The incident of Balakot air strikes in 2019, had brought both the nations very close to 'high escalation' or an 'all-out conflict' against a nuclear backdrop. India's restraint and matured responses earlier to Pakistan's terrorists activities did not get much success, and therefore through Balakot, the main strategy was to convey to Pakistan that India's new normal would be an aggressive retort to any provocation. Another strategic signal that went out was that, India has called out Pakistan's nuclear bogie and reclaimed the conventional space to some extent; though the conventional response will have to be nuanced. Now the use of the Air Force is likely to be very high on the escalation ladder.

The flip side to the Balakot airstrikes is that, our domestic rhetoric has raised high expectations in the country, that next time the government may have to react in a way that may not fit into our strategic calculus. As far as Pakistan is concerned, they are nowhere near being chastened. They met the Indian challenge head-on through broad daylight airstrikes. Pakistan probably got the better of India in perception management, especially with the global audience and probably we need to do better on that score.

On many occasions in the past, India has gone out of its way to extend a hand of friendship to Pakistan, but without much success. One simple answer to this would be, to bring down the Pak Army from the high pedestal. But, that is easier said than done as, despite losing half of Pakistan, they continue as the defenders of faith and the ultimate guarantors of Pak security. This change has to come from within Pakistan. In essence, slowly and surely, India should work to change the negative narrative within Pakistan and then only can one hope for some change in Indo-Pak relations.

Contemporary Politico-Socio-Legal Situation

The abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019, has shocked Pakistan in different ways. It was completely unanticipated by the

Pakistani establishment. The six propositions of Pakistan on its relationship with India have been summarised as follows.

- **First Proposition.** Post abrogation of Article 370, Pakistan reacted as the victim by taking a series of actions. Pakistan explored the entire menu of options it has had over the decades, like the military option, the Jihadi option, the option of economic sanctions and the diplomatic option of reaching out to the world. In the end, it decided to exercise the option of diplomatic and economic actions against India as it downgraded the relationship and banned trade. So far, what has been seen from Imran Khan's various speeches, it is also the rhetoric option. So essentially, Pakistan needs to celebrate special days, its solidarity days and exercise a high decibel rhetoric to compensate for the absence of viable options.
- **Second Proposition.** Pakistan's Army is firmly in control. The Army after 10 years of experience with two civilian governments realised that Nawaz Sharif's government's intentions were not working for the benefit of the Army's long-term goals as well as for Pakistan in the short term. Therefore, they devised "project Imran Khan". It has been a successful project because the army is largely in control of the situation with the Prime Minister under their control. However, when one zooms-in on Pakistan and looks closely at the granular picture, it emerges that this nuanced control of the army is absolute.
- **Third Proposition.** Pakistan's quality is stable despite the appearance of disorder. The third proposition is derived from the fact that the army continues to be the predominant institution. Foreign and security policies are outsourced to the army and the army is in no mood to give control to politicians. There is even talk on the "Boot Model", which is at the top of a national unity government. It means that you have General Bajwa as a constant, but he could change the other economic players and even have a government of national unity, which possibly includes next-generation leaders like Bilawal Bhutto and so on.
- **Fourth Proposition.** Pakistan is not diplomatically isolated. This seems to be a narrative that we hear often in Indian media. Perhaps

its voice is not heard as much as it would like it to be and doesn't get enough traction, but it is not isolated in any sense. Pakistan is obsessed with India in a very systemic way because the whole rationale of the Army's preponderance is based on the existential threat from India.

- **Fifth Proposition.** In terms of its economy, Pakistan is at the weakest moment in its history. The IMF programme is currently a \$6 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) as on July 2019. The IMF programme has adopted some conditionalities on terrorism financing. This is a very tough proposition for Pakistan to manage and the external covert support to terrorism as terrorism financing would be deeply curtailed.
- **Sixth Proposition.** Pakistan judiciary is highlighted to have a history of defiance, but it is actually a 'flash of defiance' and not an institutional opposition of the Judiciary to the institution of Army. The whole debate about the extension of Gen Bajwa from one to six months instead of three years will lead to Gen Bajwa emerging much stronger. Even in the case of Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry, who was instrumental in Musharraf's decline, it was also a personality-based clash of defiance and not an institutional rebellion of the judiciary against the army.

Further, it needs to be understood that Pakistan's Army is not a monolithic army. There are frequent and orchestrated reports about some Corps Commanders rebelling, but they are the rogue elements from the ISI side. None of it can be termed as real moments of defiance. The bottom line is that, the stakes of the army are huge right now and there will be a continuation of the power structures as they exist.

Pakistan's policy on jihad or supportive proxy terror was an error. Though, Imran Khan in his statements has recognised the problem of terrorism in Pakistan and asked for time to fix it; however, despite these statements, Pakistan is not serious about solving this problem.

Pakistan has some shades of grey; there are some areas of ambiguity in the way the army is looking at itself and looking at its role over the next few years. It will be in everybody's interest that Pakistan acts like

a normal country which is not run by military; does not practice proxy terror and it comes out as a normal democracy with normal civilian supremacy.

Contemporary Role of Military in Politics

Military's control over Pakistan's affairs remains complete and comprehensive with virtual surrender of mainstream political forces. The only change is that, the military leadership now prefers to control from behind a 'malleable' civilian facade. In this sense, there is no change in the security dimension for India. However, we need to find new ways to engage and come to terms with this reality.

Though the right to political participation in party-based electoral politics stands restored in Parliament, Pakistan's parliamentary democracy can no longer be called 'fledgling'. However it is still struggling against illiberal and non-democratic forces, severe polarisation and a paucity of civility in political interactions.

The implications of General Bajwa's extension is that he is likely to continue till November 2022 and during this period he will oversee five phases of retirement. This year six Generals will retire and in total 18 Generals will retire before General Bajwa gives up his uniform after three years. This initially caused dismay and dissension within the army.

Primary reasons for internal discord in the army are the allocation of the assignments, duration of these tenures and who commands which corps. This is based on the collegiate consensus of senior Generals who decide on the promotions of Major Generals and is largely based on professionalism. However, the likes and dislikes of the Chief matter a lot, as was seen in the case of previous DG ISI, Lt Gen Rizwan Akhtar, who later opted for voluntary retirement. Another example is of Lt Gen Munir Shah who was dumped in an 'unceremonious manner'.

Pakistan Army's agenda is to maintain a weak democratic government so that it can control the leaders and the country's foreign policy and nuclear policy. It also allows military to enjoy

great perks, privileges and powers, by allocating the major share of financial resources to defence acquisitions. The Army at present also has complete control over the nuclear command which they did not initially have when Pakistan acquired nuclear capacity.

As for constitutional reengineering and the necessity for legalising it, Pakistan Army does not see any need to push so long as its civil society and politicians remain tolerant and fearful. The future of Pakistan is likely to have a strong military and a weak civilian puppet regime, which is likely to remain on the same page and will continue in the future.

Overall, the present dispensation will keep promising milder Islamic values, protection of national sovereignty, partial deference to the ideas of the West and economic constraints. It will work towards managing a renewed strategic partnership with the United States and China. Chinese and Saudi will remain the largest aid providing countries although the relief might be inadequate and temporary for Pakistan.

To improve its conditions, Pakistan needs civilian supremacy and rule of law under constitutional democracy. This goal can be attained more easily if Pakistan's political parties practice internal democracy and do not accept crumbs of power from the military's table.

Judicial Activism

The paradoxical nature of Pakistan's judiciary is highlighted by the Parvez Musharraf case and the death sentence given to him for his second coup in 2007. In one instance, they seemed courageous by implementing the Constitution and upholding the Constitution, but two weeks later, the Lahore High Court said that the judgment was unconstitutional. The reality of Pakistani Judiciary and its activism in terms of taking on the military establishment is not very good. Judicial activism had started in Pakistan based on inspiration from the PIL culture in India. They rediscovered *Suo Moto* powers and the first time that the judiciary really tried to shake down the executive was in 1997. The then Chief Justice Sajad Ali Shah tried to fix Nawaz Sharif on charges of contempt of court. For that very brave effort the judge was

unceremoniously bundled out of the office and by nobody else but his own so-called ‘brother judges’.

Judicial activism really started in right earnest with Iftikhar Choudhry who became Chief Justice in 2006 and remained as Chief Justice for seven years. There were some major judgments which were passed along the way against martial law regimes but the important thing is that all the pathbreaking judgments were passed after the regimes were no longer in power. Nevertheless, the sort of spine that the judiciary showed at the time of Iftikhar Chaudhry sacking, set the stage for judicial activism and in some ways, judicial administration or judiciary playing a role in the administrative function in the state.

Post Iftikhar Chaudhry, most of the successors pretty much remained under the radar screen and did not assert themselves too much, nor did they indulge in too much activism. They were far more circumspect at hand and slipped back into the role of *‘lions under the throne’*. They functioned as the hitmen of the military establishment and the concept of a ‘Judicial Coup’ suddenly entered the Pakistani lexicon. What happened with Yousaf Raza Gillani and with Nawaz Sharif was nothing but a judicial coup which was ordered as per the wishes of the Army.

Judicial activism was taken to ‘absolutely ridiculous extremes’ by Justice Saqib Nisar. He was one of those people who believed in judicial restraint. There were at least 150 *Suo Moto* notices and some were utterly ridiculous.

Individual judges tend to become activists at times even against the establishment. There is no real defiance at the institutional level and it is mostly an individualistic kind of a thing. But, some exceptions in recent years have been there. One of the most significant examples is that of Justice Qazi Faez Isa and two of his judgments; another example is about Islamabad High Court Judge Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui and the third example in recent years which showed judicial activism was that of Peshawar High Court Justice Waqar Ahmed Seth. General Bajwa’s extension judgement, where Justice Khosa kind of suddenly backed off, highlights the entrenched influences which the deep state exercises on the judiciary and that is the reason that all bails are being granted only by the Lahore High Court.

The whole function of judicial independence and that the judiciary is actually going to emerge as a major power centre is not likely to happen in the near future. The reality remains that some individuals might exert themselves, but at an institutional level, they are the '*lions under the throne*'.

Ethnic/Sectarian Problems and Issues

Pakistan is a 'Sunni Sectarian State'. If one looks at the law enforcement agencies, the way the parliament functions and the way the laws have been regulated for a long time, it shows that the Sunni sectarian influence is paramount. Further, because of the 1979–89 experience and the 10 years of Afghan Jihad, the Sunnis have got further radicalised.

There is an opinion that, Islam is not the founding principle of Pakistani state. In fact, Islam divides more than it unites Pakistan. The different denominations within Islam have asserted themselves and it has led to militarisation of different sectarian groups and sectarian denominations thereby creating a problem for Pakistan.

There are a lot of things that have come up during the last 10-12 years which have not been taken into account by analysts. One of them is the rise of the Tehrik-i-Taliban (TTP). They criticise the Pakistani state, the Pakistani Army and also the very concept of Pakistan. They have radicalised themselves in a manner that there's no space for them in Pakistani politics. The TTP has been saying that, only after they dislodge the Pakistan Army, will they rest in peace. They will bring order to Pakistan and will bring Sharia in Pakistan.

The elements of the Sunni-Deobandi and Wahabi are now targeting the Pakistani state. If one looks at the statistics for 2019 published by Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), the casualties inflicted by them were about 229, out of which 208 were on security personnel. So, there is a confrontation that is going on between the Pakistani Army and these elements who were once raised by them.

There is a sense of recognition about this threat but Pakistan has not acted in the right earnest. Its genesis goes back to 1996. In 1996, there was a parliamentary committee report which said that the Jihadi policy is to be rolled back, but they have not been able to do that even today after 23 years. So, this suggests that, there is a feeling that it can be controlled and used against Afghanistan and India.

On the Shia-dominated area in Gilgit-Baltistan, there is lot of enthusiasm in India about their anti-Pakistan sentiments. This is not true. In fact, despite the fact that the Shias have been at the receiving end in Gilgit-Baltistan, they are apparently demanding integration into Pakistan state.

Coming to the ethnic scenario, there were days when the Pashtuns were also opposed to Pakistan. Pakistan continues to suspect that there are some element within them who are still open to the idea of working with India. So in that sense, Pashtun's disaffection is somewhat there, although majority of it has been taken care of by the Pakistani state.

If we look at the Baloch, Sindh, Hazaras, taken together, they account for 2 percent of the Pakistan Army at the moment and there is a lot of dissatisfaction among them.

The Pashtun sentiments have not been there for a long time and have come to fore in the Karachi model in 2014. It has just crystallised into a movement like the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), which is now coming to the fore and Pakistan Army is extremely sensitive about it. India must recognise that the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement is concentrated in Northern Balochistan and FATA areas (Federally Administered Tribal Areas). Pakistan Army is worried that they will be funded by Afghan intelligence in conjunction with Indian, American and Israeli intelligence agencies. If we look at Baloch ethnicity, they are not in favour of the idea of a Pakistani state. But over the years, especially from 2002-2003, when the latest phase of Baloch resistance started, gradually the sense of fatigue seems to have set in and the movement is now petering off. This is both because of lack of adequate external support and because Pakistan Army had decided to go whole hog about quelling their moment. In fact, in 2016 the famous statement

on Balochistan from our side has done the damage. It gave the Pakistan Army the legitimacy to go the whole hog and raze villages after villages, which led to fleeing of the Baloch's armed groups to Iran or in southern Afghanistan. It may now take another decade for them to come back.

As for the 'SINDHI' political aspirations, these were taken care by the rise of the Bhutto family. In Bhutto, they found somebody through whom they could have some share in the power structure of Pakistan, and that wiped off many Sindhi liberation groups. But last year there were four attacks conducted by Sindhu Desh Liberation Army and Sindhu Desh Liberation Front which resulted in about 6-7 casualties. So, at this stage it is unsure as to what is coming up next. The Sindhi nationalist aspiration is down but not entirely out. This would require some support at certain level for this movement to reappear again so as to pose a critical threat to Pakistan.

China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Implications

The geostrategy and the geopolitics of BRI are the geo-economics of the infrastructure wherein, according to the Asian Development Bank report of 2017, Asia will require \$26 trillion dollars from 2016 to 2030, i.e. \$1.7 trillion investment per year to maintain a balanced growth. China, perhaps, is the only country that has the potential to undertake projects of this magnitude. It is opined that the fates of these Asian countries and China are bound to converge. The BRI will, possibly, increase Chinese penetration in these countries and the latter's dependency on it.

The underlying domestic compulsions of China is to conceive a project such as the BRI are:

- China needs to create about 2.3 million jobs by 2020, to replace those lost due to the closing of coal mines—a consequence of growing environmental concerns.
- In East and South China, low cost manufacturing such as textiles, garments and low-end domestic goods have become unviable due to rising affluence standards. China needs to identify relatively less developed areas, particularly its western hinterland, to relocate these industries.

- China is beset by excess industrial capacity and foreign exchange reserves. The BRI is an idle avenue to explore new markets, secure return on investments and safeguard economic growth, while the country makes a quick transition from a low-value export model to a model based on domestic consumption and technologically intensive exports.

China's long term investments in CPEC can be explained in three ways:

- To demonstrate China's attractiveness as a partner.
- To prove that the Chinese development model can be exported.
- To use Pakistan as an element of strategic competition with the United States and India.

CPEC is the most important economic corridor and the flagship project of the BRI due to the following reasons:

- The Economic corridor connects Kashgar in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, an underdeveloped restive region in China, to Gwadar, thereby giving China access to a deep water port. The port would keep its trade and alternative energy lines from the Middle East intact even if the IOR would be bottled up by its adversaries in a conflict scenario. The port in Balochistan province in Pakistan cuts transit time for oil from the Persian Gulf to China from 45 to just 10 days reflecting the geostrategic aspect.
- Further, Gwadar lies at the confluence of the most commercially important regions comprising West Asia, Central Asia and South Asia. Therefore, the economic potential of CPEC is enormous. It gives China an ideal launchpad to develop its western region and also cement better ties with Southern, Central and West Asia.

The risks to CPEC are, Pakistan's strained relations with India and Afghanistan; its fragile internal security situation, support to rabid Islamic terrorist groups and its backlash, weak political structures, mistrust in civil-military relations and a crisis ridden moribund economy makes CPEC an extremely risky project that may result in huge sunk costs for the Chinese.

India's concerns for the CPEC are:

- CPEC violates Indian territorial integrity as it passes through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir (PoK).
- Militarisation of India's neighbourhood heightens India's security concerns as 70 percent of China's arms sales are funnelled into Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar.
- India is also sensitive to the possible security concerns arising out of linking its restive North East to the Yunnan province of China through the BCIM- Economic Corridor.
- The BRI and CPEC will likely lead to increased shipping congestion in the IOR, thereby posing security challenge to Indian shipping and complicating India's Maritime Domain Awareness.

On China's miscalculations and therefore the problems in Pakistan, the situation is that the authorities have fallen behind on payments for electricity from New Chinese Power projects because of long-standing problems of getting Pakistanis to pay their bills.

The CPEC has certainly contributed to the balance of payment crisis. Raw materials are required to construct buildings, bridges and roads, and Pakistan has to bring in all of them from abroad. The same applies to heavy machinery, where Pakistan's imports are set to top \$27 billion by 2021. Pakistan can pay for Chinese machinery with Chinese loans, but unfortunately, these loans are due before the economic gains, that will be used to pay for them are accrued.

In case of a bailout, the US being the largest contributor to the IMF would acquire a significant measure of influence over China's plans in Pakistan. Beijing does have enough sway to ensure that Pakistani authorities reject an international bailout program, but in that case, China would have to shoulder the financial costs all by itself and essentially double down on its high-risk Pakistan bet.

The effect of a strong US-India strategic partnership on China's hegemonic designs can be analysed as under:

- There is a growing potential that China's surge into Pakistan could increase the threat that Pakistan poses to India, particularly if China expands its military position there and if Pakistan does not curtail its use of militant proxies.
- The resulting dynamic could prove a further impetus to a deepening of the US–India partnership in the face of a common threat from China and Pakistan.

It is important to also understand the geo-economics of earth metals. China supplies 95 percent of the world's rare earth metals that constitute most electronic devices. China demonstrated its stranglehold in 2010, when it stopped the supply of these metals to Japan, Europe, and the USA, thereby triggering widespread panic. China is now focusing on marine resources to source these metals and thus focusing on marine scientific research and renewed maritime interests in the Indian Ocean Region.

Role of Media in Pakistan

The media in Pakistan, has over the years developed rather well. From virtually a 'state-owned broadcast sector' at the turn of the century into a 'cacophonous landscape' of dozens of independent news and entertainment channels that relatively vie for public attention.

The media in Pakistan as of today, is in a multifarious crisis of major proportions which is a recent development. The media is much less loved today than it was a decade ago at its peak of popularity, when it flexed its muscles to help political courses to hound out a military dictator from the power. The media also needled out the democratic governance and championed the new Pakistan or *Naya Pakistan* when their spills sparked in the popular imagination, literally helping Imran Khan come to power which has now turned into a mire crisis of credibility.

The steadily growing manipulation of the media by a coursing regulatory regime, driven by political compulsions of the Deep State has stripped the media of its integrity and hence the audiences and influence. The media has become a priority target for the country's deep

state. The Imran Khan government has now created a *Pakistan Media Regulatory Authority* which is intended to mean such restriction.

Pakistan and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)

Pakistan growth model has been based on consumption without the requisite level of investment to the GDP ratio. This in an overall sense means that Pakistan has invested little in evolving a sustainable growth path that would be based on self-sustained manufacturing and industrialisation, resulting in a growth process and growth rates that have been largely unsustainable. Pakistan inevitably has fallen into crisis situation where it has gone to the international organisations for borrowing.

This time, Pakistan's growth path has led to a 'Ballooning Fiscal Deficit' and 'Current Account Deficit' together, known as the 'Twin Deficit Crisis'. The primary causes of this were in terms of revenue under-performance and higher interest payments. The IMF loan, comes in the form of US\$ 6 billion financial aid to reduce economic vulnerabilities which have been created and generate basically a balanced growth path for Pakistan.

Pakistan and IMF have signed 22 agreements for loans since 1958. Interestingly, ten programmes have been signed under poverty reduction, growth trust and the General Resource Account of the IMF and 12 of these have been bailouts. This US\$ 6 billion loan includes an immediate disbursement of US\$ 1 billion to help Pakistan address its immediate balance of payment crisis and then there is an extended period arrangement which will be phased out over the duration of 39 months. This would be subject to four quarterly reviews and four semi-annual reviews requiring Pakistan to undertake fiscal consolidation in order to reduce public debt and undertake revenue reforms while expanding social spending. The road ahead for Pakistan's economy to revive is tough given the kind and the nature of quantum and nature of public debt and the revenue reforms that are required in Pakistan to move to a flexible market-oriented exchange rate system.

Pakistan has also received aids and various kinds of multilateral and bilateral inflows that have come from countries with which it has had good relationship, especially Saudi Arabia.

- From Saudi Arabia, the loans have been in terms of deferred payments as far as oil payments are concerned.
- From UAE, the aid involves US\$ 3.2 billion worth of supplies of deferred payment which is going to contribute to lower imports, besides the 3 billion cash deposits. The three packages including oil and gas imports from Saudi Arabia together covers about 60 percent of the oil and gas import bill for Pakistan.
- Further, the support has been coming from China; but in this case it is important to note that there have been a completion of early harvest CPEC projects and would lead to a decline of foreign direct investment to Pakistan from China, particularly in the power sector. However, there is a possibility of compensation occurring in the construction sector because that is where the Chinese investments continue to flow.

What is it that we really see happening in Pakistan in response to what is desirable and what they need to do perform on account of the IMF loan? As far as the fiscal deficit is concerned, the country has very low sources of revenue and very high non-developmental expenditures. For decades, the Pakistan authorities have not been able to establish effective tax collection practices and currently only one percent of Pakistanis pay their taxes. Notably, the non-developmental expenditure which is really the one that needs to be cut down; but, Pakistan has actually cut down on social expenditure in order to correct their fiscal balances. The possibility of cutting the non-developmental expenditure is bleak as the biggest source of sub-spending of these funds after debt servicing is the military.

There is a new committee that has been set up by Pakistan called the National Development Council to oversee Pakistan's economic growth strategy. This council among the other important functionaries of the government, also includes the Army Chief as its member. The influence that would be exercised by this council on the change in growth, if at

all it does, is to be seen. As per some primary sources this committee actually never meets.

On what economic measures India can take in the present circumstances? There is not much that can be done. As far as capital inflows are concerned, India does not have a huge share in Pakistan's inflow of foreign direct investment. In terms of trade, over the past one year many expressions of displeasure from India's side were sent out to Pakistan on withdrawal of Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status. Does it really impact trade? Well, as far as India and Pakistan are concerned, there is both formal trade as well as informal trade, the latter being much more than the former. Is it a real cost to Pakistan in terms of the formal trade? Well, the formal trade is really a small proportion of their overall trade i.e. 2.95 percent that happens with India.

Pakistan has more trade happening with China i.e. 26 percent, as well as a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with them much to their smugness. They might say that it was signed earlier when the import was less and was not necessarily in favour of Pakistan. Surprisingly, they undertook a revision of the FTA recently in June 2019, only to say that it is now more aligned with Pakistan's interests as well.

Role of the Civil Society and NGOs

The civil society's role in a country like Pakistan is conspicuous or peculiar. CIVICUS defines Pakistan's civil society "as a collection of incoherent voices, conflicting world views and opposing interests characterised by unresolved struggle between the practice and values of free capitalist society and modes of social life between authoritarian legacies and democratic aspirations."

What makes civil society's role in Pakistan more daunting and precarious? It is the wide array of fault lines that exist in the country; there is a secessionist challenge in Balochistan that has persisted for decades, there is ethnic tension, sectarian strife, eminent threat to democracy, gross human rights violations, unemployment and social indicators that have been dismally low.

A relevant question which emerges is, will the civil society ever have a kind of revolt against the state and whether there is any ray of hope? At this point it is really difficult to judge because Pakistan has been through its worst phases of violence and turmoil. Its economy has been in a dire state along with political instability and unaccountability towards a larger section of the people. Despite this, the common people have not really risen and revolted against the system in the manner required. However, there have been few incidents which have taken place in certain constituencies, but there has been a sub-optimal cohesion in these movements. Therefore, it is incorrect to assume that such things will not happen in the future.

The overall space in Pakistan for the NGOs and civil society actors is constrained as they have been allowed only to function in a very limited way within permissible limits which are defined by the state. Nonetheless, the reflective fact is that the military is threatened by its existence.

The current status of the NGOs and civil society in Pakistan is not optimistic, as the state does not want the human rights violations to get exposed via these NGOs. There has been a severe clamp down on the numerous non-governmental entities. Most of the recent clampdown has been on the pretext of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) as Pakistan has been alleged of not doing enough to plug in terror financing. Interestingly, many of these religious outfits which have been involved in money laundering have been registered as NGOs in Pakistan. The actual NGOs find themselves equated with fanatic religious organisations and they are getting weeded out in order to meet Pakistan terror objectives.

These organisations are mostly finding themselves at odds with the regime constituencies. As most of them work for women issues and child welfare and at times it does not suit the extremist agenda which is perpetrated by the fanatic religious groups. The media houses have also been under constant threat. There are regulations for the NGOs that have been effectively used to curtail the activities of these organisations and Media Houses.

On Balochistan, the army and its accomplice are noted to be brutally suppressive of any voice that dissents with the state narrative.

Another important divisive issue between the army and the civil society has emerged in the CPEC, especially in the perpetuated slow down which is happening in the said projects. There are voices in Pakistan which have been questioning the visibility of this project. How much of this discontent which is existing in the Pakistan society is going to really percolate in the popular discourse, needs to be seen considering that the army has a large stake in this upcoming corridor.

NGOs in Pakistan have also been found to be mired in corruption, misappropriation of resources and lacking accountability towards the people and the society they claim they cater to. This is true for the media houses, the political groups, so on and so forth. It is this wedge driven between the people and these NGOs or the civil society groups; and this kind of trust deficit between the people and the NGOs is serving to the benefit of the state.

There are theories floating around which mention that the crackdown against the NGOs is only for public consumption. There are certain 'behind the door reassurances' which are happening between the international NGOs and the state. This is to maintain that kind of external support, which is very critical for Pakistan's frail economic situation.

Role of the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR)

Pakistan has a population of approximately 200 million and they have 161 million smartphone users, and most of them are active on social media portals and accounts. This is due to the Chinese influx of smartphones. Furthermore, they have informed citizenry that Pakistan army leverages while creating a capacity as that of ISPR.

The Pakistan Army is a 'propaganda machinery' and as per Donald Trump's January 1, 2018 tweet, "it has given nothing but lies and deceit." This is where ISPR stands. They are not only fooling the world, they are fooling their own people as well. Today's battle is a 'battle of narratives' and that is why the relevance of ISPR has to be factored in.

ISPR is a 'joint services information management tool' for Pakistan Armed forces predominantly controlled by Pakistan Army. It wields immense authority to manage information flows both for a domestic audience as well as for international opinion building. Till the late 1990s, ISPR was a small setup, playing a very modest role as a media arm of the armed forces. Over the years now, ISPR is a "well resourced, well equipped, well-staffed organisation that is vicious and brutal in character and attitude."

ISPR is led by a Major General and has four verticals under two Brigadiers, one Commodore and one Air Commodore. Each vertical has a special staff from both the services and civilians who are domain specialists. Their likely strength is about 55 service officers and 45 to 50 civilian officers. They also hire a lot of people. They have a total of about 400 persons having a multitude of skill sets which include creative directors, behavioural psychologists, Imams, photographers, audio specialists, speechwriters, animation experts, cartoons & meme creators, mimics, musicians and digital library managers.

ISPR's sponsoring of a series of Jamat-ul-Dawa's social media workshop is well known. In one of the events that happened in October 2018, they operationalised a model for generating 1 lakh contents a day and pushed it into public domain. This is a very difficult task by any government organisation. The ISPR conducts workshops in various colleges for talent hunting. They train over 1000 interns every year and interestingly 60 percent of them are women. ISPR organises frequent competitions for youths as to those whose tweets get retweeted the most. Budget is not a constraint for ISPR.

What does ISPR do? It ensures a wide coverage and perception management of Chief of Army Staff and Pakistan Army. To do this, ISPR creates an immense amount of sensory inputs including messages, social media narratives, movies, books, music and videos. ISPR also monitors and controls all local print-audio-visual media through a Media Control Centre. The legislations are given very little importance hence, there is no real hindrance to the Pakistan Army. Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA) has jurisdiction to impose reasonable restrictions in the interest of religion, integrity and

national security of Pakistan. All books and periodicals are vetted by ISPR, covering anything and everything about Pakistan Armed Forces. ISPR uses and abuses the PEMRA to its advantage. It is important to 'not see' what DG ISPR is doing in Pakistan and instead 'see why' it is doing this, to fetch us the right answers.

What happens to be a war of political-ideological and geostrategic narratives, is being summed up in a self-explanatory and convenient term, 'Fifth Generation Warfare'. The term refers to the use of misinformation and other non-kinetic means such as fake news and propaganda, which is well leveraged by ISPR. ISPR has lakhs of followers acting as trolls, who usually identify themselves as Patriots, Muslims, Pro-Army, Pro-Kashmir and PTI supporter. The trolls operate swarms and act like bullies, collectively attacking through WhatsApp. Each troll with the hierarchy of contacts sends them multiple daily instructions regarding the content to push out. This is how ISPR has been subverting the democratic discourse in Pakistan.

What relationship does ISPR have with ISI and who is more relevant? Social media has added a new dimension to espionage. The roles of ISPR and ISI do overlap in many cases, especially when it comes to subjugating voices critical to the army. Functionally, it can be said that ISI is more external-oriented while ISPR is more internal-oriented; and as per some people, ISI influences foreign media and other influencers including tweeting on the external environment as well. Thus, comparing ISI and ISPR as to which one is more relevant, will be unfair. They together are creating resources for the 'Image Domain of Virtual Societal Warfare'.

With the induction of the new DG from February 1, 2020, ISPR may return to the original mandate of becoming the voice of the Pakistan Military. To counter ISPR, there exists a need for active and sharp interventions, but we need not become ISPR or behave like them. Narratives must be based on our national core values, dignity, credibility and our national character. There is a requirement for a credible structure at the national level and also at the military level, preferably under the Department of Military Affairs. We can take cue from the futuristic organisations and structures of UK 77 Brigade. There is a

need to implement 'S-2 Model', i.e. model 'Structures' and tell inspiring Indian democratic experiences through 'Stories', explaining the virtues of democracy and sublime civilian supremacy, to be read even by the Pakistanis. If this can be done, then Pakistan's behaviour will change for the good.



DETAILED REPORT¹

CLAWS conducted a National Seminar on “Pakistan: The Changing Security Dimension” on February 7, 2020. Important issues highlighted at the Seminar are given in the succeeding paragraphs.

Objective of the Seminar

The objective of the seminar was to carry out an analysis of Pakistan’s various interconnected complex issues of politico-socio-legal, economic, civil society and media, so as to have a better understanding of the evolving security dimensions and its impact on India’s strategic and security related matters.

Conduct

The one-day Seminar was conducted by CLAWS on February 7, 2020 at Ashoka Hall, Manekshaw Centre, New Delhi. The participants were from the three Services—Central Armed Police Forces, leading Think Tanks and academic institutions of the country. The seminar was conducted in two sessions as under:

- **Session I. Contemporary Politico-Socio-Legal Situation.**
 - Contemporary Role of Military in Politics.
 - Judicial Activism?
 - Ethnic/Sectarian Problems and Issues.
- **Session II. Current Economic Situation and Role of Media and Civil Diaspora.**
 - China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Implications.

1. The aspects enumerated as part of this Report are exclusively based on the deliberations by panelists. These do not necessarily conform to the views of the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS) or that of the Indian Army or the Ministry of Defence, Government of India.

- Pakistan and the Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
- Civil Society/NGOs.
- Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR).



INAUGURAL SESSION

Opening Remarks by Lt Gen (Dr.) VK Ahluwalia (Retd)



Plate 1: Lt Gen (Dr.) VK Ahluwalia (Retd), Director CLAWS

Lieutenant General (Dr.) VK Ahluwalia (Retd), Director CLAWS, in his opening remarks set the stage for the seminar by highlighting large number of entwined complex issues in Pakistan, which have major security ramifications for the region.

Highlighting the deep involvement of Pakistan in supporting terrorism, he referred to the speech of Pakistan's PM Imran Khan at Capitol Hill in July 2019, wherein the PM himself admitted to the presence of 30,000 to 40,000 armed personnel, i.e. militants operating in Pakistan who have fought in Afghanistan or Kashmir. In his speech the PM has also admitted to the presence of about 40 terror groups operating on Pakistan soil.

The Director brought out the impact of terrorism in the South-Asian region and how Pakistan has been the epicentre of this menace. West Asia has been declared the least peaceful region of the world, closely followed by South Asia. The major reason for the poor performance of

South Asia was due to the lower ranking of the three countries of this region, viz. Afghanistan(163), Pakistan (153) and India (141).

Elaborating further on the seriousness of the issue, he informed that this region has a 1.9 billion population, which is almost 25 percent population of the world with just 3.5 percent of the world's landmass. The density of people in this area is the highest in any region of the world landmass. With issues like nuclear weapons, nuclear material, nuclear technology and also 30,000 to 40,000 terrorists or militants operating in one country, this area becomes a great security concern not only for India but also for the entire region.

The Director also mentioned about the recent rogue activity of the country wherein, five Pakistani nationals had been caught while smuggling nuclear technology in USA.

The speaker then spoke about Pakistan's obsession and its ideology towards India and its 'India-centric' activities in the last five years.

- Pakistan's ideology towards India has been based on the following:
 - First, the religion card 'Islam'.
 - Two, anti-India feeling.
 - Three, an obsession with Jammu & Kashmir and its annexation.
- Over the last five years, Pakistan has indulged in the following:
 - Firstly, indigenising the insurgency in Kashmir Valley.
 - Secondly, it had tried to promote *Wahhabism* with a view to dilute the Sufi Islam culture of the valley.
 - Thirdly, the most dangerous is that, they have used the religious ideology with a view to radicalise the people, particularly the youth of Kashmir Valley.

To give an idea of the type of support which Pakistan was giving to the terrorists in J&K, the speaker narrated his experience at the LOC when the insurgency was at its peak in 2001-02. According to the South Asian terrorism portal that time there were 2850 militants in

J&K. He informed that all infiltrating terrorists were equipped with the latest weapons and communication sets: AK-47 or AK-56, Kenwood walkie-talkie sets, light portable web equipment and INR 20,000 in cash. Pakistan, the epicentre of terrorism, was providing the latest weapon systems and equipment to the terrorists and this is also one of the reasons for the acute financial crisis that Pakistan faces.

Talking further on the security dimensions, he mentioned that Pakistan has many internal security fault lines like terrorism, insurgency based on ethno-nationalism, sectarian/ethnic violence and even development issues. However, off late it is its economy that has become a major challenge. Explaining further, he said that Pakistan presently has a high debt to service ratio with a very high inflation rate of 7.3 percent in 2019, which is likely to go beyond 10 percent in 2020. The GDP growth rate was just about 3.3 percent last year and is likely to decline to 2.4 to 2.5 percent this year. Along with the fragile economy, Pakistan is saddled with substandard education systems, opaque education in the *Madrasas*, disruptive intervention by the deep state and a prominent role for the non-state actors.

The Director spoke about Pakistan's strengths and weaknesses.

- Pakistan's strengths are:
 - First, its geostrategic location, that it lies at the 'underbelly' of the Central-Asian Republics, has proximity to West Asia, and has inroads into the Indian sub-continent.
 - Second, due to Islam, it continues to draw support from West Asia.
 - Third, it has an 'all-weather friend' in China.
 - Fourth, it has a supportive diaspora.
- The Director again emphasised that Pakistan's biggest weakness is its fragile economy. It has been bailed out 13 times by the International Monetary Fund (IMF) over the last 30 years as a result of its poor performance. In October 2019, it has been placed in the grey list by Financial Action Task Force (FATF) and is expected to remain on the grey list for money laundering and terror financing activities.

Among other issues having implications on the security dimension in the region, the Speaker touched upon the Azadi March by Fazlur Rehman in October-November 2019, which continued for more than three weeks; the protest from the students of Pakistan asking for greater transparency in democracy and the extension given to General Bajwa.

The Director summed up his address by reading the quote from the book ‘Pakistan Army, Society and Security’ by Stephen Cohen which aptly described the Pakistan army, *“There are many armies that guard the borders, there are those that are concerned with protecting their position in the society and then there are those that defended a cause or an idea. The Pakistan Army does all three.”* He concluded by saying that deep state will continue to remain central to all activities in Pakistan.

Keynote Address by Lt Gen AK Singh (Retd)



Plate 2: Lt Gen AK Singh (Retd)
Former Lt Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands

Lt Gen AK Singh (Retd) brought out that India’s understanding of Pakistan has become quite stereotyped and India should move beyond

the age-old understanding about its neighbour. There is a need to change the narrative within Pakistan. He narrated that how 20 years ago, he was asked by his DGMO to concentrate on Pakistan for the next five to seven years and not bother about China; India is still focusing on Pakistan and on the other hand China is moving ahead.

He brought out that since its inception Pakistan has been simply obsessed with India, like ‘the neglected twin’. For it, India has always been the other and had to be reacted against. He quoted Shahid Amin, former diplomat of Pakistan, *“It is high time the country became ruthlessly realistic about its limitations and priorities. First and foremost, Pakistan’s survival must precede everything else, including our attachment to the Kashmir cause. So, there are voices, however insignificant which are speaking the truth. Secondly, it has to be understood that our economy is our weakest point, and has to be given priority over any other concentration”* (1999).

Even 20 years later, Pakistan continues to remain in denial and pays a huge price. Its economy is in dire straits and is caught between ‘the devil and the deep sea’. Despite being in dire straits, it refuses to prioritise its population’s welfare over the ‘unrealistic’ obsession for its uniform. He pointed out that for Pakistan, human development comes a distinct second as the bulk of National Energy has remained focused on checkmating India. The problem is that Pakistan’s elite don’t think so and all predictions of its economy failing in the future has not come true as the World Bank or somebody else has always come to help them out. He gave the example of Bangladesh, which in a short span of just 40 years has overtaken its parent body Pakistan, both in development and economic issues.

The speaker pointed out that, in addition to ethnic and sectarian problems that are openly rampant in Pakistani society, insurgencies in Balochistan, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa and Gilgit-Baltistan have emerged from ethnic division, which adds to the instability within Pakistan.

Within a span of two decades (1999 to now), India and Pakistan have clashed on at least four major occasions and a number of minor

clashes where the stakes were very high. Starting with Kargil (1999) (which turned into a limited war); the Parliament attack in December 2001 which was followed by the Indian Army mobilisation for Op Parakaram (2001/02); terror strikes in Mumbai (2008); and the suicide attack at Pulwama (2019) which was followed by the airstrikes at Balakot (2019). The air strikes had brought both the nations very close to high escalation or an 'all-out conflict against a nuclear backdrop'. India's restraint and matured responses earlier did not get much success and therefore with Balakot airstrikes it has tried to bring in a new aggressive norm.

He pointed out that on many occasions in the past, India has gone out of its way to extend a hand of friendship to Pakistan, but without much success. Therefore, the key question is what needs to be done to make Pakistan change perception? He suggested that one simple answer to this would be to get the Pak army off the high pedestal. But that is easier said than done as despite losing half of Pakistan, they continue to be the defenders of faith and the ultimate guarantors of Pak security. In his view, the change has to come from within Pakistan.

Pak society is nudged by major international powers like USA. China also remains a complicating factor. In essence, slowly and surely India should work to change the negative narrative within Pakistan and then only can one can hope for some change in Indo-Pak relations.

On Pulwama-Balakot episode, he said that it got both the countries very close to conflict. This incident and other such episodes in the past raised serious questions about strategic signalling, about crisis management and about escalation control. Through Balakot, the main strategy was to convey to Pakistan that India's new normal would be an aggressive retort to any provocation. The message went out loud and clear and henceforth Pakistan cannot remain unmindful of India's concern. Another strategic signal that went out was that India, has called out Pakistan's nuclear bogie and reclaimed the conventional space to some extent; though the conventional response will have to be nuanced. The flip side to it is that our

domestic rhetoric has raised expectations so high in the country, that next time the government may have to react in a way that may not fit into our strategic calculus. As far as Pakistan is concerned, they are nowhere near being chastened. They met the Indian challenge head-on through broad daylight airstrikes. Explaining further, he said that India struck on February 26, and Pakistan struck back in force on February 27. He said that this aggressiveness within Pakistan was confirmed to him by one of the participants in a track 2 diplomacy between India and Pakistan that took place in January 2020 in Bangkok. As per this seasoned diplomat, he has never seen Pakistan so aggressive as they were this time, both the civil and the uniform. The speaker stated that post-Balakot, Pakistan probably got the better of India in perception management, especially with the global audience and suggested that we need to do better on that score. He underlined that if one analyses Kargil, along with Balakot, it seems that both countries signalled quite clearly that they are not ready to escalate beyond a point.

On the use of the Air Force he said that it is likely to be very high on the escalation ladder. Normally when a country uses the Air Force, the retort is normally expected on your airfields as that is the best way to put down the Opposite Devils.

The speaker concluded by saying that India should also like to seriously consider its defence allocations over the years and analyse that whether they are adequately equipped to face the monumental adversities that the country may face. He argued that it may make all of us feel good to talk about retaking PoK, but this won't be possible with less than 1.5 percent allocation of GDP towards defence.

SESSION I: CONTEMPORARY POLITICO-SOCIO-LEGAL SITUATION

Opening Remarks by Chairperson Sh. Ajay Bisaria



Plate 3: Sh. Ajay Bisaria
Former High Commissioner of India to Pakistan

In the opening remarks, the chair highlighted how the abrogation of Article 370 on August 5, 2019, has shocked Pakistan in different ways. It was completely unanticipated by the Pakistani establishment. If one sees the trajectory of the relationship especially in this century, India is seen as the victim of terrorism and it has reacted diplomatically to incidents/events, whether it was Kargil in 1999 or the attack on Parliament in 2001 or the 2008 Mumbai incident, or even the recent incidents of Uri and Pathankot. Essentially India was being the victim and it was its response to defend itself.

The speaker gave six propositions of Pakistan on its relationship with India.

- **First Proposition.** Post abrogation of Article 370, Pakistan was annoyed by something that India had done. They reacted as the victim by taking a series of actions. Pakistan explored the entire menu of options it has had over the decades, like the military

option, the Jihadi option, the option of economic sanctions and the diplomatic option of reaching out to the world. In the end, it decided to rule out the military option and exercise the option of diplomatic and economic actions against India as it downgraded the relationship and banned trade. So far, and what has been seen from Imran Khan's various speeches, it is the rhetoric option. So essentially, Pakistan needs to celebrate special days, its solidarity days and exercise a high decibel rhetoric to compensate for the absence of viable options.

- **Second Proposition.** Pakistan's Army is firmly in control. If one looks at the broader history of Pakistan, the Army's preponderance has been interrupted by basically some kind of protective civilian rule or the civilians being in the front office with the army remaining in the back office and the position has never been reversed. But from 1958-71, it was Ayub Khan and then Yahya Khan; then it was 'Zia years' from 1978-88; and from 1999 to 2008 it was the 'Musharraf period'. From 2018 is what Husain Haqqani has called the 'Non-Coup' Coup. So, essentially the Army after 10 years of experience with two civilian governments realised that Nawaz Sharif's government's intentions were not working for the benefit of the Army's long term goals as well as for Pakistan in the short term. Therefore, they devised "project Imran Khan". It has been a successful project because you have the army completely in control or it is largely in control of the situation with the Prime Minister under their control. However, when one zooms-in on Pakistan and looks closely at the granular picture, it will appreciate that this nuanced control of the army is absolute. Basically, the army through its various arms tries to rein in the political parties, the judiciary, the media and the civil society. We see that political parties are currently spineless. The Pakistan Muslim League (PMLN) and Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), the two competing political configurations in Pakistan are spineless because they've done Boston deal bargains with the army and because Nawaz Sharif had to go to London for his treatment, Zardari was also negotiating a position for himself. So one party, the Pakistan Tehreek-e-Insaf (PTI) is in control and the others are completely on the back foot. The speaker highlighted that the media in Pakistan is managed and controlled completely

by the ISI. Civil society is active on social media. So, both the media and civil society do express flashes of defiance in terms of their presence on social media. The speaker also highlighted the protests of PTM and the Balochis that essentially, according to him, demonstrate that while the army does have a preponderance but it is not fully in control of every institution.

- **Third Proposition.** Pakistan's quality is stable despite the appearance of disorder. The third proposition is derived from the first proposition that the army continues to be the predominant institution. Foreign and security policies are outsourced to the army and the army is in no mood to give control to politicians. There is even talk on the Boot Model, which is at the top of a national unity government. It means that you have Bajwa as a constant, but he could change the other economic players and even have a government of national unity, which possibly includes next-generation leaders like Bilawal Bhutto and so on.
- **Fourth Proposition.** Pakistan is not diplomatically isolated. This seems to be a narrative that we hear often in Indian media. Perhaps its voice is not heard as much as it would like it to be and doesn't get enough traction, but it is not isolated in any sense. Pakistan is obsessed with India in a very systemic way because the whole rationale of the Army's preponderance is based on the existential threat from India. Pakistan relies on three different godfathers, which support Pakistan for different reasons:
 - First is the US, which depend on it for the Afghanistan peace process and ambiguous elections. Pakistan has been supportive of the peace process in releasing various Taliban leaders, like the foreign minister of Taliban, and in controlling many of the Taliban leadership.
 - China is a very critical element. When one looks at Pakistan internally, it needs to be sensitive to what China is doing. China sees Pakistan as a vassal state, it also sees Pakistan as the laboratory where BRI is being experimented with CPEC. China's initial investment was \$64 billion and then \$46 billion; and at the moment it is tapped at \$32 billion dollars.

In a broader strategic sense, this was a relationship that was a strategic partnership and military alliance but now it has become a relationship of abject economic dependence.

- Third is Saudi Arabia. It is not just the leadership of the Ummah for which Pakistan is frequently dealing with Saudi Arabia, but also for various other strategic reasons and the strong army-to-army contacts.
- **Fifth Proposition.** In terms of its economy Pakistan is at the weakest moment in its history. The IMF program is currently a \$6 billion Extended Fund Facility (EFF) as on July 2019. The interesting thing is that the IMF program has adopted some conditionalities on terrorism financing. This makes it a very tough proposition for Pakistan to manage it as the external covert support to terrorism and terrorism financing would be deeply curtailed. He explained '*Naya Pakistan*' as a company with the Army as its Board of Directors. The chairman of this board is Gen Bajwa with Imran Khan as the M.D., who was hired in 2018 to fix the economy. The boards can change managing directors if they don't deliver. The chief operating officer (COO) of this organisation is DG ISI, who is extremely important to Pakistan in determining the dependence or the behaviour of the judiciary, the civilian politicians and others. They have dossiers and videos with them which are periodically leaked in the media.
- **Sixth Proposition.** The judiciary is highlighted to have a history of defiance, but it is actually a 'flash of defiance'. It was not an institutional opposition of the Judiciary to the institution of Army. He highlighted the example of Justice Khossa, who retired on December 20, 2019. He has been instrumental in the whole debate about the extension of Gen Bajwa from one to six months instead of three years which will lead to Gen Bajwa emerging much stronger. The case of Chief Justice Iftikhar Chaudhry who was instrumental in Musharraf's decline when the lawyers had come out on the streets, was also a flash of defiance and did not change the power equation between these institutions on the ground. It was a personality-based clash of defiance and not an institutional rebellion of the judiciary against the army.

Further, it needs to be understood that Pakistan's Army is not a monolithic army. There may be moments of unhappiness for people who are overlooked for promotion, but not essentially any kind of rebellion. The bottom line is that, the stakes of the army are huge right now and there will be a continuation of the power structures as they exist.

Pakistan's policy on jihad or supportive proxy terror was an error. Though, Imran Khan in his statements has recognised the problem of terrorism in Pakistan and asked for time to fix it; however, despite these statements, Pakistan is not serious about solving this problem. Post-Article 370, there have been reports of 65 terrorists infiltrating from across the border.

Pakistan has some shades of grey; there are some areas of ambiguity in the way the army is looking at itself and looking at its role over the next few years. It will be in everybody's interest that Pakistan acts like a normal country which is not run by military, does not practice proxy terror and it comes out as a normal democracy with normal civilian supremacy.

Contemporary Role of Military in Politics by Sh. Rana Banerji



Plate 4: Sh. Rana Banerji
Former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat

The speaker, Sh. Rana Banerji highlighted that the military's control over Pakistan's affairs remains complete and comprehensive with virtual surrender of mainstream political forces. The only change is that, the military leadership now prefers to control from behind a 'malleable' civilian facade. In this sense, there is no change in the security dimension for India. However, we need to find new ways to engage and come to terms with this reality. Though the right to political participation in party-based electoral politics stands restored in Parliament, Pakistan's parliamentary democracy can no longer be called 'fledgling'. It is still struggling against illiberal and non-democratic forces, severe polarisation and a paucity of civility in political interactions.

The insecurity of partition and the inadequate distribution of military assets, enabled the military to cast itself in the role of a supreme defender of the country. It had all the ideology, integrity and sovereignty and used the crutch of conservative *Islam*, *Imam* or belief, *Taqwa* (the fear of Allah) and *Jihad*.

There was also a feeling of contempt among the civilians which grew due to the delays in constitution-making. This feeling has persisted till today. The only civilian politician who originally stemmed from the patronage of the army but gradually distanced himself over three terms of Prime Ministership was Nawaz Sharif. Even he could not save himself from the Army's apron strings over the Panama cases.

After the Dawn leaks of October 2016 when the Panama cases came up, the army got two investigators, one from the MI and the other from the ISI to investigate the allegations against the corruption of the Nawaz family; this is how in 2018 elections this news was out. PM Imran has tried his best to show that he is not a selected Prime Minister, but to little effect. Then the extension of General Bajwa in August 2019 is self-explanatory and a spanner in the works was thrown by the Chief Justice.

The implications of General Bajwa's extension are that, he is likely to continue till November 2022 and during this period he will oversee five phases of retirement. This year six Generals will retire and in total 18 Generals will retire before General Bajwa gives up his uniform after

three years. This initially caused the dismay and dissension within the army, especially Lieutenant General Sarfarz Sartar, who would have been the senior-most General if General Bajwa would have retired on time. He had been a Military Attaché in India for a long time and was not very highly regarded by the journalist fraternity who dealt with the army issues. However, later he had become a favourite of General Rahil Sharif who just before retiring had sent him to command the Corp in Multan. General Bajwa apparently did not like him. So within two months of being the Corp Commander in Multan, he was eased out as Chairman of the Strategic Plans Division and remained there till his retirement when he was superseded by General Nadine Raza who was made the chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff.

The primary reasons for internal discord in the army are the allocation of the assignments, duration of these tenures and who commands which corps. This is based on the collegiate consensus of senior Generals who decide on the promotions of Major Generals and is largely based on professionalism, but the likes and dislikes of the Chief matter a lot. Few examples are:

- **Case of Rizwan Akhtar.** He was the previous DG ISI under General Rahil Sharif. He was earlier DG Pak rangers in Sindh and had played a very effective role in demolishing the preponderance of the MQM in Karachi politics, literally dismantling the party and was therefore awarded the appointment of DG ISI. He also claimed credit for the case of the arrest or abduction of Khulbhusan Yadav. But despite this, as soon as General Bajwa became the Chief, he was shunted out and sent as the chairman of the National Defence University. After a year he opted for voluntary retirement because he did not see any future for himself as long as General Bajwa was the Chief.
- **Case of Munir Shah.** He had worked under General Bajwa when he was the Corps Commander at Rawalpindi. He had worked as the Director, Force Commander Northern Areas, and then General Bajwa brought him in first as DG MI, and then as DG ISI. Due to some developments, it was as DG ISI that General Bajwa shifted him as Corps Commander at Gujranwala and Lieutenant General Faiz Hamid was appointed in his place. So, these cases have created

some dissension in the army against General Bajwa where he has dumped his once erstwhile favourites in an unceremonious manner.

The judgement in the Musharraf case has helped General Bajwa to overcome this resentment of the Generals because there was a feeling that no civilian judiciary could treat an Army General with such contempt. The judgement of General Musharraf actually helped General Bajwa to deal with the simmering discontent within the army and emerge more or less on top of the situation. Earlier the succession in military, depended heavily on one's links with prominent Punjab politicians, but this has changed now as there is a political lightweight at the helm. So how this plays out in the future and who succeeds General Bajwa in 2022 will be an open question.

Pakistan Army's agenda is to maintain a weak democratic government, so that it can control the leaders and country's foreign policy and nuclear policy. The other benefit of a weak democratic government is that, it allows military to enjoy great perks, privileges and powers, by allocating the major share of financial resources for defence acquisitions. The Army at present has complete control over the nuclear command and control authority which they did not initially have when Pakistan acquired nuclear capacity. At that time, it was more with the scientists such as Dr. AQ Khan. However, as soon as the news of Pakistani scientists helping Libya, North Korea and Iran to develop nuclear capabilities emerged, the army took control of the nuclear policy. This led to the emergence of the Nuclear Tsar in General Khalid Kidwai who then wrote his famous benchmarks of how or when the clashes with India would draw a nuclear repurposing from Pakistan.

The speaker disagreed with the view that Balakot has called off the nuclear bluff of Pakistan. If it had, then the Pakistan Army would not be using these asymmetric threats. The reliance on non-state actors is an enduring part of Pakistan's strategy to secure foreign policy objectives as has been pointed out by the American academic Christine Fair in her new book, *Lashkar-e-Taiba* and also her previous book *Fighting to the End*.

As for constitutional reengineering and the necessity for legalising it, the Pakistan Army does not see any need to push so long as its civil society

and politicians remain tolerant and fearful. So, the situation in Pakistan today is that, parts of the state that exercise power, exercise it in a manner that does not conform to law. If one looks at the media control, the way the bloggers have been picked up in Pakistan and then released quietly, nobody created a hue and cry and all is quietly accepted. So herein lies the problem with the experiment that Pakistan is running, as neither the party with power nor that which has the responsibility can be held accountable. It is a vicious cycle and Pakistan has come full circle a few times. The future of Pakistan is likely to have a ‘strong military and a weak civilian puppet regime’, which is likely to remain on the same page and will continue.

Overall, the present dispensation will keep promising milder Islamic values, protection of national sovereignty, partial deference to the ideas of the West and economic constraints. It will work towards managing a renewed strategic partnership with the United States and China. Chinese and Saudi Arabia will remain the largest aid-providing countries, although the relief might be inadequate and temporary for Pakistan. To improve its conditions Pakistan needs civilian supremacy and rule of law under constitutional democracy. This goal can be attained more easily if Pakistan’s political parties practices internal democracy and do not accept crumbs of power from the military’s table.

Judicial Activism by Mr. Sushant Sareen



Plate 5: Mr. Sushant Sareen, Senior Fellow, ORF

The Speaker, Mr. Sushant Sareen, suggested that there is a need to rethink as to how we should look at Pakistan. It is a fact, that Pakistan is our neighbour but if we keep talking about it, it only shows the kind of leverage it has over us. As far as the negative perceptions or the negative narratives in Pakistan are concerned, we have tried virtually everything over the last 70 years and nothing seems to have worked.

India needs to recognise the reality that, there is a ‘congenital defect’ in Pakistan. We keep talking about peace and love between both the countries and one can keep on talking about it but, we need to prepare for a long-term conflict. India should formulate a long-term strategy towards Pakistan spread over 50 to 100 years. If we are not willing to put in that kind of investment then the old cliché that “Pakistan is obsessed with India and India is obsessed with itself” will remain true.

The paradoxical nature of Pakistan’s judiciary is highlighted by Musharraf’s case and the death sentence given to him for his second coup in 2007. In one instance they seemed courageous by implementing the Constitution and upholding the Constitution, but two weeks later, the Lahore High Court said that the judgment is unconstitutional. The reality of the Pakistani Judiciary and its activism in terms of taking on the military establishment is not very good. In the famous missing person’s case and during the course of the hearing, the judge was asked to pass certain strictures against the ISI, to which the judge had replied that, “You know, last time we tried to do something like that, they sacked the whole judiciary. And it’s taken us a couple of years coming back. So please don’t ask me.” This statement explains the power equations as far as the judiciary is concerned.

The Judicial Activism had started in Pakistan based on inspiration from the PIL culture in India. They rediscovered *Suo Moto* powers and the first time that the judiciary really tried to shake down the executive was in 1997. The then Chief Justice Sajad Ali Shah tried to fix Nawaz Sharif on charges of contempt of court. For his brave effort, the judge was unceremoniously bundled out of the office by nobody else but his own so-called ‘brother judges’ who ganged up against him and ruled that he was unfit to be the Chief Justice. At that point in time, Nawaz Sharif had moved his party’s troopers (private soldiers) to storm the

Supreme Court and the judges virtually had to run for their lives. The Chief Justice then had reached out to General Jahangir Karamat, who kind of washed his hands off the whole affair.

It is the power equations that determine the role that the judiciary plays at various points in time. It is also illustrative of the role of personalities in determining the outcome and the political situation and circumstances at that point in time, or at any point in time.

Apart from the personality of the then Army chief, the political realities of the time were different, as during that time Nawaz Sharif was virtually unstoppable and unassailable. A year later when he went into the nuclear test in retaliation to Indian tests, he couldn't be held answerable. But then just over a year after the tests, he was sacked. That is how the political vicissitudes play out in Pakistan and also determine the role an individual or an institution can play at a particular point of time.

Judicial Activism really started in right earnest with Iftikhar Chaudhry who became Chief Justice in 2006 and remained Chief Justice for seven years. There were some major judgments which would pass along the way against martial law regimes but the important thing is that all the pathbreaking judgements were passed after the regimes were no longer in power. This also explains what the judiciary could do, especially when they realised that they are basically alliance under the throne and that is the role they have always played.

Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry was 'hand-picked' by Musharraf for Chief Justice. Before being picked, he was not doing well as a lawyer in Quetta. Within weeks of becoming the Chief Justice, he had started prescribing himself to certain executive functions and then also started interfering in government decisions. He used to summon civil servants and lawyers and humiliate them. He started taking Habeas Corpus quite seriously. The final straw really came when he started talking about the missing persons. He also interfered in the privatisation of Pakistan Steel Mill, a privatisation project that was being handed over to Sharif's cronies for a pittance. Post this, Musharraf sacked Justice

Chaudhry, but he never expected any defiance or resistance from him. However, Justice Chaudhry refused to go silently and then all hell broke loose; the rest as they say is history.

By this time (in 2007) Musharraf was on the downside. If he had sacked Justice Chaudhry in 2003-04, when he was at the peak of his popularity, things would have turned out differently. Nevertheless, the sort of spine that the judiciary showed at the time of Iftikhar Chaudhry sacking set the stage for judicial activism, and in some ways judicial administration or judiciary plays a role in the administrative function in the state.

Ultimately, Musharraf was ousted as a result of the lawyers' movement, and after Musharraf was ousted, Chaudhry the judiciary became a kind of power centre. Post Chaudhry, most of the successors pretty much remained under the radar and did not assert themselves too much, nor did they indulge in too much activism. They were far more circumspect at hand and slipped back into the role of 'lions under the throne'. They functioned as the hitmen of the military establishment and the concept of a 'Judicial Coup' suddenly entered the Pakistani lexicon. What happened with Yousaf Raza Gillani and with Nawaz Sharif was nothing but judicial coups, which were ordered as per the wishes of the Army.

Judicial Activism was taken to 'absolutely ridiculous extremes' by Justice Saqib Nisar. He was one of those people who believed in judicial restraint. Although before becoming the Chief Justice, he was against judicial activism, the moment he became Chief Justice he virtually started interfering in everything. He issued notices to the government as to why the currencies were falling, challenged a tax which the government imposed and started a fund to build a dam. There were at least 150 *Suo Moto* notices and some were utterly ridiculous. When the political leadership or the administration or the executive does not want to take a call or does not want to give tough judgements or make tough decisions, they try to 'fire their guns from the judiciary's shoulder. The more one does it, it cedes space to another institution which then does not let go.

Individual judges tend to become activists at times even against the establishment. There is no real defiance at the institutional level and it is mostly an individualistic kind of a thing. When the circumstances change then the institution kind of doubles down on the individual and then makes a push for it. Otherwise, they are conservative and obedient. But some exceptions in recent years have been there.

- One of the most significant examples is that of Justice Qazi Faez Isa and two of his judgements:
 - When a hospital in Quetta was bombed, virtually the entire top judiciary of lawyers in that city was wiped out in one bombing. Justice Qazi Isa took cognisance of it. He held hearings and he passed very severe strictures against the security establishment.
 - He ruffled even more feathers when he held an inquiry into what is now known as the Faizabad Dharna. This was extremely significant because Justice Qazi Isa once again took on the establishment heads and passed severe strictures not just against the ruling party PTI, but also the establishment.
 - The third thing that he did which really ruffled a lot of feathers, was when he let off the Sharif family in what is often referred to as the ‘mother of all corruption cases’ in the Mills case. This was where all the money laundering that they are accused of, was being done.
- Another example is of the Islamabad High Court Judge, Shaukat Aziz Siddiqui, who was sacked because he gave a speech in which he exposed the ISI and accused it for leaning upon him to pass judgements which were not going to go in Nawaz Sharif’s favour. This became one of the reasons for his sacking.
- The third example in recent years was that of the Peshawar High Court Justice Waqar Ahmed Seth. In some ways this was the most important judgement against the establishment. The following three judgements which he passed really challenged the ruling establishment:

- He passed judgements scrapping all the death sentences, which were awarded by the military courts to people who were accused of terrorism. Nevertheless, Supreme Court behaved as the '*lion under the throne*' and didn't let that judgement go through.
- The second judgement Justice Waqar Ahmed Seth passed was even more significant when he ruled the action in aid of civil power. This was a new law passed in Pakistan and was originally made for FATA. As per this ordinance, a mere confession by anyone could make another person a suspect, which could land him in jail and which is prosecutable or admissible as evidence. It was the testimony of the investigating officer that was the law. After the merger, the PTA government wanted to implement it in the whole of the Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) province. Justice Waqar Ahmed Seth scrapped that as well.
- The third judgement Justice Waqar Ahmed Seth passed was when he ruled that Musharraf should be dragged out of his grave, even if he dies and hung from the lamp post for three days. But unfortunately, that is one part of the judgement, but it kind of dissolved everything else which was there in the judgment and was quite path-breaking in many ways.

General Bajwa's extension judgement, where Justice Khosa kind of suddenly backed off, highlights the entrenched influences which the deep state exercises on the judiciary and that is the reason that all bails are being granted only by the Lahore High Court.

The whole function of judicial independence and that the judiciary is actually going to emerge as a major power centre, is not likely to happen in the near future and is merely a figment of our imagination. The reality remains that some individuals might exert themselves, but at an institutional level, they are the '*lions under the throne*'.

Ethnic/Sectarian Problems and Issues by Dr. Ashok K Behuria



Plate 6: Dr. Ashok K Behuria, Senior Fellow, MP-IDSA

The Speaker, Dr. Ashok K Behuria stated that, for all practical purposes, Pakistan is a ‘Sunni Sectarian State’. If one looks at the law enforcement agencies, the way the parliament functions and the way the laws have been regulated for a long time, it shows openly that the Sunni sectarian influence is paramount. The Sunni dominance remains and because of the 1979-89 experience, the 10 years of Afghan Jihad, the Sunnis have got further radicalised.

There is an opinion that Islam is not the founding principle of Pakistan state, neither it unites Pakistan. In fact Islam divides more than it unites Pakistan. From 1979 onwards, Islam has been divisive. If we talk about ‘Islamising Pakistan’, we are bringing Sharia into Pakistan. The different denominations within Islam have asserted themselves and it has led to militarisation of different sectarian groups and sectarian denominations. They have Sunni, a Sunni-Deobandi, a Sunni-Barelvi and Shia militant organisations. So, in the process, various sects have tried to assert themselves and tried to protect their own interests. The intra-sectarian divisions have also widened as is seen within Sunni-Deobandi and within Sunni-Barelvi sects and they have fought among themselves.

Islam is pluralist but it is not monolithic and the 'hat' has started asserting itself too. Militarisation of these sects has created a problem for Pakistan and there are a lot of things that have come up during the last 10-12 years which have not been taken into account by analysts. One of them is the rise of the Tehrik-i-Taliban (TTP).

The use of terror as an instrument of state policy has led to the rise of TTP. If one goes through the videos and articles that TTP has been circulating in the media space, specifically social media, it will alarm everyone as they criticise the Pakistani State, the Pakistani Army and also the very concept of Pakistan. One of the main man of TTP is Adnan Rashid who was implicated for Musharraf's assassination plot in 2003-04. He is now heading the media division of TTP.

In one of the videos of TTP, Adnan Rashid has said that the partition of India and Pakistan was unfair. It led to the division among 'Muslims of Hindustan' hence it should not have come into effect. So, this is an interesting statement coming from an 'ultra-radical Sunni sectarian group'. They have radicalised themselves in a manner that there's no space for them in Pakistani politics. The TTP has been saying that only after they dislodge the Pakistan Army, will they rest in peace. They will bring order to Pakistan and will bring Sharia in Pakistan.

The elements of Sunni-Deobandi and Wahabi are now targeting the Pakistani state. If one looks at the statistics for 2019 brought out by Pakistan Institute for Peace Studies (PIPS), a Pakistan-based organisation, Pakistan witnessed 357 attacks and there were 588 casualties. Out of the 357 attacks, 128 were cross-border attacks that came from India. Out of the 229 terrorist attacks that originated in Pakistan, 158 attacks were executed by TTP, i.e. an average of one attack every second day. The casualties inflicted were about 229, out of which 208 were on security personnel. The inference is that they are basically targeting security personnel. If one compares it with the previous year these attacks were much less in number. These attacks have come down, but are not completely out yet. The Quetta attack was the latest one that we saw. So, there is a confrontation that is going on between the Pakistan Army and these elements who were

once raised by them. There is a sense of recognition about this threat but Pakistan has not quite acted in the right earnest. Its genesis goes back to 1996. In 1996 there was a parliamentary committee report which said the Jihadi policy is to be rolled back, but they have not been able to do that even today after 23 years. So, this suggests that there is a feeling that it can be controlled and used against Afghanistan and India.

The sectarian attacks in Pakistan were around 24 in 2018 and 11 attacks in 2019 with 34 casualties. The targets were mainly the Shia-Hazaras of Balochistan which has led to a lot of angst at the local level.

On the Shia dominated area in Gilgit-Baltistan, there is lot of enthusiasm in India about their anti-Pakistan sentiments. This is not true. In fact, despite the fact that the Shias have been at the receiving end in Gilgit-Baltistan, they are demanding integration into Pakistan state.

Coming to the ethnic scenario, there were days when the Pashtuns were also opposed to Pakistan. Pakistan continues to suspect that there are some elements within them who are still open to the idea of working with India. So in that sense, Pashtun's dissatisfaction is somewhat there, although majority of it has been taken care of by the Pakistani state. If we look at their population, they are about 15 percent of the total population and they account for about 20 to 22 percent of Pakistan Army. So, they have their representation in the Pakistani State .Whereas, if you look at the Baloch, Sindh, Hazaras, etc., taken together, they account for 2 percent of the Pakistan Army at the moment and there is a lot of dissatisfaction. But the Pashtun sentiments have not been there for a long time and have come to fore in the Karachi model in 2014. It has just crystallised into a movement like the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement (PTM), which is now coming to the fore and Pakistan Army is extremely sensitive about it. India must recognise that the Pashtun Tahafuz Movement is concentrated in Northern Balochistan and FATA areas. Pakistan Army is worried that they will be funded by Afghan intelligence in conjunction with Indian, American and Israeli intelligence agencies. So, there are some problems there.

If we look at Baloch ethnicity, they are not in favour of the idea of a Pakistani State. But over the years, especially from 2002-2003, when the latest phase of Baloch resistance started, gradually the sense of fatigue seems to have set in and the movement is now petering off. It is also clear from the statistics put out by PIPS that last year there were only about 54 attacks as compared to about 92 attacks the previous year; and in these 54 attacks there only were minor casualties, i.e. about 32-33 security personnel. This is both because of lack of adequate external support and because the Pakistan Army decided to go whole hog about quelling their movement. In fact, in 2016 the famous statement on Balochistan from our side has done the damage as it gave Pakistan Army the legitimacy to go the whole hog and raze villages after villages which led to fleeing of the Baloch's Armed groups to Iran or to southern Afghanistan. It may now take another decade for them to come back.

As for the 'SINDHI' political aspirations, these were taken care of by the rise of Bhutto family. In Bhutto they found somebody through whom they could have some share in the power structure of Pakistan and that led to wiping off of many Sindh liberation groups. But last year there were four attacks conducted by Sindhu Desh Liberation Army and Sindhu Desh Liberation Front which resulted in about 6-7 casualties. So, at this stage it is unsure as to what is coming up next. The Sindhi nationalist aspiration is down but not entirely out. One should not try to over analyse it and there will be such aspirations coming to the fore again. This would require some support at a certain level for this movement to reappear so as to pose a critical threat to Pakistan.

SESSION II: CURRENT ECONOMIC SITUATION AND ROLE OF MEDIA and CIVIL DIASPORA

Special Address by Dr. Jyoti M Pathania



Plate 7: Dr. Jyoti M Pathania, Senior Fellow, CLAWS

In her special address Dr. Jyoti M Pathania recalled Muhammad Ali Jinnah's speech to the Constituent Assembly, which he gave in the port city of Karachi on August 11, 1947, just three days before the creation of Pakistan, "*You are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or any other place of worship in this state of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion, caste or creed that has nothing to do with the business of state*". Although it has been 73 years after the death of their founding father, but Pakistanis are still searching for their Quaid-e-Azam's vision for their country, as he wanted Pakistan to be a state for Muslims, rather than an Islamic State. What is the difference between the two? A Muslim State refers to the state where citizens are predominantly Muslims, whereas an Islamic State is a state with Islamic flavoured version of totalitarianism, that seeks to impose a sustained program of various Islamic practices which are thronged upon the society. The Pakistani nationalist movement highlighted

the idea of Muslims as victims, subjected to discrimination and thus rejected the Pakistan Muslim League's secular vision; hence shifting the focus towards an Islamic State. Therefore, the famous saying of Ayub Khan is quiet apt that "*Jinnah gave Muslim a country, Ayub Khan gave Pakistan Army a State.*"

Pakistan's social, economic, political, legal order, both old as well as new, has been dominated by a triad of Army, Bureaucracy and Feudal Lords, commonly referred to 'The Establishment' in the earlier times but now referred to as the Deep State or the state within the state. In fact, it was Pakistan's ex-Prime Minister, Mr. Nawaz Sharif, who was quoted in the Dawn newspaper of July 12, 2018, when he said that the "*Pakistan Army is now a state above the state and not within the state.*" Hence, it is this deep state entity that has been guiding the destiny of benighted Pakistan since its creation.

Prof. Moonis Ahmar, of the University of Karachi says that "*the military, bureaucracy, security establishment and the intelligence community has undermined the writ of the elected government in Pakistan not once but time and again. One military intervention in 50 years could be seen as an incident; two, as an aberration, but four spells of military rule, and three more successful coups*". Does this indicate a deeper systemic problem or a deeper systemic failure? A few Pakistani scholars of repute like Hussain Haqqani, Hassan Abbas, Ayesha Jalal, Shahid Shafiq, Mazar Aziz, etc., all of them argued that the military has brought under its ambit multiple roles, but in a very manipulative manner making the state and the political system weak at the same time.

In the case of Pakistan the security concerns have always triumphed over developmental concerns and this has continued even today. The current situation remains bleak as inflation is on the rise. The economic development, if any, remains exclusively in the urban areas. There remains political upheaval due to ethnic, social, political, tribal divides, within the country. Although a nuclear power state, Pakistan is grappling with an under-developed and an abysmal state of the economy.

The Pakistan military took upon itself the role of guardian of the country's identity, territory, and even society. Again, Stephen Cohen in

his famous book *The Idea of Pakistan*, has sufficiently portrayed that in the case of Pakistan, it is the army which is the state and not vice-versa. Even in this present era, this security obsession is witnessed with the state, wherein more than half of the budget of Pakistan is allocated to defence, starting from its first budget where 70 percent was allocated for the same portfolio. The policymakers in Pakistan have continued to prioritise defence expenditure over important civic issues like health, education, and alleviation of poverty and this contradiction in their priorities is no longer sustainable and will have to be addressed by them for any improvement. Apart from this, Pakistan needs to address its internal issues of poor governance, rather than being interested in the affairs of Kashmir and of Afghanistan. Pakistan's historical institutional imbalances have hampered the country's ability to provide its citizens with better social services and a higher standard of living. However, this turns out to be a dichotomy as the country's resources get diverted towards defence spending and are largely seen as a public good by the policymakers in Pakistan, which is a surprise!

Pakistan remains a paradoxical puzzle. While constitutional democracy has never truly blossomed, authoritarianism too has never garnered widespread legitimacy in Pakistan. Not a “uniform-ed democracy”, but a truly genuine civil democracy can take Pakistan to the path of progress and development.

Opening Remarks by Chairperson



Plate 8: Mr. Amber Sen
Former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat

Mr. Amber Sen, in his opening remarks said that Pakistan's economy is not developed as they have only concentrated on security issues ever since 1947 or a few years after that. Along with this, their civil society has really not progressed as it still remains mired and is completely old fashioned consisting only of the landlords based on caste, which controls all the political powers and also controls a part of force of the army. Pakistan's economy is in dire straits as illustrated by the statistics that follow.

- Pakistan's growth rate in 2019, which forecasts 3.3 percent was just above that of Afghanistan (2.7 percent) and Sri Lanka (2.6 percent), amongst the countries in South Asia;
- Pakistan's inflation rate forecast at 7.3 percent in 2019 and 12 percent in 2020;
- Per Capita GDP growth is expected at 1.5 percent in 2019 and 1.2 percent in 2020;

There are two principal challenges that the departments and the government in Pakistan are working on: first, how to restore fiscal discipline, and second, how to broaden the tax base. He mentioned that, there is also the problem of the near calamitous state of industry and agriculture, which between them account for more than half the size of the economy. Understandably in such a situation, Pakistan heavily depends on economic aid.

In the context of Pakistan's economic dependence, as in May 2019, the state had finalised US\$ 6 billion foreign aid with the International Monetary Fund (IMF). It was Pakistan's twenty-second such bailout from the financial institution.

The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) is being developed with the contribution of mainly concessionary loans from China under the Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). Much like the BRI, the value of CPEC investments transcends any conventional currency, and it's only estimated vaguely as it spans over decades of past and future industrial development and global economic influence. However, he added that consequent to the aid by the bilateral, IMF or other multilateral forums,

international reserves have started to recover in Pakistan. Financial flows boosted in the financial year 2019 due to a significant decrease in Central Bank deposits and bilateral inflows from China, UAE and Saudi Arabia. The approval of the IMF extended fund facility in July, coupled with the presumption of multilateral budget support contributed to an increase in the international reserves to US\$ 9.5 billion in September 2019 compared to US\$ 7.6 billion in January 2019.

About the media in Pakistan, surprisingly it has developed rather well over the years. It has been a very vibrant and critical media. Particularly since the start of the century, media in Pakistan has grown enormously in terms of scale and influence. From virtually a state-owned broadcast sector at the turn of the century into a cacophonous landscape of dozens of independent news and entertainment channels that relatively vie for public attention. Though as choices have boomed in terms of the variety, quantity and quality of international fare and offer, the media in Pakistan as of today, is in a multifarious crisis of major proportions which is a recent development.

The media is much less loved today than it was a decade ago when it was at its peak of popularity, when it flexed its muscles to help political courses to hound out a military dictator from the power. One of the few good qualities Musharraf had was that he allowed considerable freedom to the media during his years in power. But, then ultimately, it was the media that played a fairly large role in his ouster. The media also needed out of the democratic governance and championed the new Pakistan or *Naya Pakistan* when their spills sparked in the popular imagination, literally helping Imran Khan come to power which has now turned into a mire crisis of credibility.

The steadily growing manipulation of the media by a coursing regulatory regime, driven by political compulsions of the Deep State has stripped the media of its integrity and hence the audiences and influence. The media has become a priority target for the country's deep state. He again mentioned that the military establishment which opposes independent journalism stepped up this harassment of the media significantly in the run-up to the July 2018 general election. He concluded by saying that, the Imran Khan government has now created

a *Pakistan Media Regulatory Authority* which is intended to mean such restriction.

CPEC: Implications for India by Maj Maroof Raza (Retd)

Major Maroof Raza commenced by giving the recent update on China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is a key component of China's Belt and Road Initiative, in Lahore and South Punjab. The status of these projects in end February 2020 was as follows:

- Economic corridor projects were halted in end February 2020 in South Punjab. Seventy-one Chinese engineers along with local security personnel were undergoing screening for Coronavirus. Work on Orange Line Metro Train project in Lahore was also suspended. Chinese workers were asked to remain in their compounds for three days, during which they were to be screened for Coronavirus.
- The Orange Line Metro Train project is the largest mass urban transit project taken up under the auspices of the economic corridor at a cost of \$1.63 billion. As per the Reported Daily, *The News*, Mr. Uzair Shah, the general manager of the project had told members of the media that work on the project was stopped temporarily. Chinese people working on the Lahore Safe City project were also restricted to their compounds as a precaution.

On China's miscalculations and therefore the problems in Pakistan, the situation is that the authorities have fallen behind on payments for electricity from New Chinese Power projects because of long-standing problems of getting Pakistanis to pay their bills. The BRI has certainly contributed to the balance of payment crisis. Raw materials are required to construct buildings, bridges and roads and Pakistan has to import all of them. The same applies to heavy machinery, where Pakistan's imports are set to top \$27 billion by 2021.

Pakistan can pay for Chinese machinery with Chinese loans, but unfortunately, these loans are due before the economic gains that will be used to pay for them, are accrued. A bailout from the IMF seemed inevitable, but Pakistan has received an IMF bailout 12 times since

1988. But it would create a number of renewed difficulties for the CPEC, including strict restrictions on borrowing and spending and transparency requirements for existing Chinese loans and projects.

In case of a bailout, the US being the largest contributor to the IMF would acquire a significant measure of influence over China's plans in Pakistan. Beijing does have enough sway to ensure that Pakistani authorities reject an international bailout program, but in that case China would have to shoulder the financial costs all by itself and essentially double down on its high-risk Pakistan bet.

There are, but many underlying compulsions on China to conceive a project such as the BRI. These are as follows:

- China needs to create about 2.3 million jobs by 2020 to replace those lost due to the closing of coal mines, a consequence of growing environmental concerns.
- In East and South China, low-cost manufacturing such as textiles, garments and low-end domestic goods have become unviable due to rising affluence standards. China needs to identify relatively less developed areas, particularly its western hinterland, to relocate these industries.
- China is beset by excess industrial capacity and foreign exchange reserves. The BRI is an idle avenue to explore new markets, secure return on investments and safeguard economic growth, while the country makes a quick transition from a low-value export model to a model based on domestic consumption and technologically intensive exports. So, the BRI would also aid the financial integration of the Yuan, in order to increase China's heft in the IMF.

The geostrategy and the geopolitics of BRI are the geo-economics of infrastructure wherein, according to the Asian Development Bank report of 2017, Asia will require US\$ 26 trillion dollars from 2016 to 2030, i.e. US\$ 1.7 trillion investment per year to maintain a balanced growth. China, perhaps, is the only country that has the potential to undertake projects of this magnitude. It is opined, that the fates of these Asian countries and China are bound to converge. The BRI will,

possibly, increase Chinese penetration in these countries and the latter's dependency on it.

It is important to understand the geo-economics of earth metals. China supplies 95 percent of the world's rare earth metals that constitute most electronic devices. China demonstrated stronghold in 2010, when it stopped the supply of these metals to Japan, Europe, and the USA, thereby triggering widespread panic. China is now focusing on marine resources to source these metals and thus focusing on marine scientific research and renewed maritime interests in the Indian Ocean Region. So, this also gives us a reflection on how you look at the 21st century Maritime Silk Road from this perspective.

It is the most important economic corridor and the flagship project of the BRI due to the following reasons:

- The Economic corridor connects Kashgar in Xinjiang Uyghur Autonomous Region, an underdeveloped restive region in China, to Gwadar, thereby giving China access to a deepwater port. The port would keep its trade and alternative energy lines from the Middle East intact, even if the IOR would be bottled up by its adversaries in a conflict scenario. The port in Balochistan province in Pakistan cuts transit time for oil from the Persian Gulf to China from 45 to just 10 days reflecting the geostrategic aspect.
- Further, Gwadar lies at the confluence of the most commercially important regions comprising West Asia, Central Asia and South Asia. Therefore, the economic potential of CPEC is enormous. It gives China an ideal launchpad to develop its western region and also cement better ties with Southern, Central and West Asia.

The CPEC represents both possibilities and also risks. Pakistan's strained relations with India and Afghanistan, its fragile internal security situation, proliferation of and support to Islamic terrorist groups and its backlash, weak political structures, mistrust in civil-military relations, and a crisis-ridden moribund economy makes the CPEC an extremely risky project that may result in huge sunk costs for the Chinese.

India's concerns for the CPEC are as follows:

- **Violation of India's Sovereignty:** The CPEC violates Indian territorial integrity as it passes through Pakistan Occupied Kashmir. The United Nations substantiates India's concerns by highlighting that the CPEC could create geo-political tension between India and Pakistan and ignite political instability in South Asia, even as China dismisses India's concerns.
- **Militarisation of India's Neighbourhood:** India's strategic and national interests are closely linked to peace and stability in the IOR. However, her immediate neighbourhood (Pakistan, Bangladesh and Myanmar), is witnessing unprecedented militarisation due to Chinese support in the form of military technology, fighter aircraft, warships and submarines (Type 039A-Yuan class). The fact that 70 percent of China's arms sales are funnelled into these three countries heightens India's security concerns.
- **BCIM-Economic Corridor and North East India:** India is also sensitive to the possible security concerns arising out of linking its restive North East to the Yunnan province of China through the BCIM-EC.
- **Security Challenge to India and Indian Shipping:** The BRI and CPEC will likely lead to increased shipping congestion in the IOR, thereby posing security challenge to India, Indian shipping and complicating its Maritime Domain Awareness.

China's long-term investments in CPEC can be explained in three ways.

- To demonstrate China's attractiveness as a partner.
- To prove that the Chinese development model can be exported.
- To use Pakistan as an element of strategic competition with the United States and India.

The effect of a strong US-India strategic partnership on China's hegemonic designs can be analysed as under:

- There is a growing potential that China's surge into Pakistan could increase the threat that Pakistan poses to India, particularly if China expands its military position there and if Pakistan does not curtail its use of militant proxies.
- The resulting dynamics could prove a further impetus to a deepening of the US-India partnership in the face of a common threat from China and Pakistan.

Pakistan and Financial Action Task Force (FATF) by Prof Amita Batra



Plate 9: Prof. Amita Batra, JNU

Professor Amita Batra gave the economic context of FATF's decision with respect to Pakistan's economy. The Pakistan growth model has been based on consumption without the requisite level of investment to the GDP ratio. This in an overall sense means that Pakistan has invested little in evolving a sustainable growth path that would be based on self-sustained manufacturing and industrialisation, resulting in a growth process and growth rates that have been largely unsustainable. Pakistan has experienced peaks in the sense of high and low rates of growth, but inevitably it has fallen into crisis situations where it has gone to the international organisations for borrowing.

This time it has been observed that the growth path led to a 'Ballooning Fiscal Deficit' and 'Current Account Deficit' together, known as the 'Twin Deficit Crisis' that Pakistan is facing. The current account deficit was 19.9 billion USD, that is 6.3 percent of GDP in Financial Year (FY) 2018. The exchange rate remained overvalued during this time, which is a matter of concern because every time the exchange rate remains overvalued, the central bank has to intervene, support the market, hence leading to a depletion of foreign currency reserves, which adds to the overall crisis situation, as far as Pakistan is concerned. Fiscal deficit was 6.4 percent of GDP in FY-2018, which increased to 8.8 percent of GDP in FY-2019. The primary causes of this were in terms of revenue under-performance and higher interest payments. The tax revenues in Pakistan have stagnated in the recent past at both the federal and provincial levels. All these are being highlighted because these are ultimately related to what happens to Pakistan in terms of its international borrowing capability and credibility. The IMF loan, therefore, comes in the form of a US\$ 6 billion financial aid to reduce economic vulnerabilities which as earlier cited have been created and generated a balanced growth path for Pakistan.

Pakistan and IMF have signed 22 agreements for loans since 1958. Interestingly, ten programs have been signed under poverty reduction, growth trust and the General Resource Account of the IMF and 12 of these have been bailouts. US\$ 6 billion loans that have been given to Pakistan recently in 2019 includes an immediate disbursement of US\$ 1 billion to help Pakistan address its immediate balance of payment crisis and then there is an extended period arrangement which will be phased out over the duration of the 39-month long program. This would be subject to four quarterly reviews and four semi-annual reviews requiring Pakistan to undertake fiscal consolidation in order to reduce public debt and undertake revenue reforms while expanding social spending. The road ahead for Pakistan's economy to revive is tough given the kind and the nature of quantum and nature of public debt, and the revenue reforms that are required in Pakistan to move to a flexible market-oriented exchange rate system.

The economic performance in the last one year for Pakistan has been such as to have led to a decline in the current account deficit. It declined to \$13.5 billion that is 4.8 percent of GDP from the earlier 6.6 percent in FY-18. This was driven primarily by lower input growth, but exports have not responded immediately. This is the billing competitiveness pillar of the IMF loan which has not yet started. Growth in remittances, which is a critical factor as far as Pakistan is concerned, has risen by 9.7 percent in FY-19 due to higher flows from US, Malaysia, and GCC countries. Pakistan banks rely heavily on remittances, particularly because there is no return as far as these are concerned. The narrowing of the current account deficit has also continued in the financial year 2020. It has declined further to \$1.3 billion in July-August FY-2020 compared to a higher US\$ 2.9 billion in July- August FY-2019. Notably, the imports have declined further in the first quarter of the current FY and exports have recorded a marginal recovery of 1.4 percent year-on-year only on a quarterly basis. However, this slight recovery of exports does not, in any way, ensure or assure Pakistan that this is rising competitiveness as is required by the IMF loan. It is assumed that the International reserves have also started to recover; US\$ 9.4 billion of 1.9 months of import coverage in September 2019, compared to the low that happened in terms of US\$ 7.6 billion of 1.6 months of import coverage in January 2019.

Pakistan has also received aids and various kinds of multilateral and bilateral inflows, that have come in from countries with which it has good relationships, especially Saudi Arabia.

- From Saudi Arabia, the loans have been across in terms of deferred payments as far as oil payments are concerned. This would lead to what has been seen earlier in terms of declining imports, investments and financing educational institutions.
- The UAE, which also involves US\$ 3.2 billion worth of supplies of deferred payment, is going to contribute to lower imports, besides the 3 billion cash deposits. It is basically the friendlier contributions that are leading to lower imports and not necessarily engendered by an improvement in Pakistan's economy or economic strength. The three packages, including oil and gas imports from

Saudi Arabia, together cover about 60 percent of the oil and gas import bill for Pakistan. This accounts very substantially for their import requirements as per the IMF loan reviews, that would be periodically undertaken.

- Further, the support has been coming from China; but in this case it is important to note that there have been a completion of early harvest CPEC projects and would lead to a decline of foreign direct investment to Pakistan from China, particularly in the power sector. However, there is a possibility of compensation occurring in the construction sector because that is where the Chinese investments continue to flow. Although, the overall inflows may fall from China, but it would continue to be the largest investor in the case of Pakistan. The lower imports also would lead to reduced pressure on the exchange rate which needs to be converted into a flexible market-oriented exchange rate as per the requirement of the IMF loan.

The projections for the IMF for the Pakistan economy are the real GDP growth which is projected to decelerate further to 2.4 percent in FY 2020 as the government has to tighten both the fiscal and monetary policies. Pakistan's adjustment would therefore call for rebalancing from domestic to external demand. Again, a fallout and a follow up of what the IMF loan really demands in terms of Pakistan economy i.e. increasing its competitiveness and looking outwards to create or to be able to generate sufficient demand.

While domestic demand is going to slow down as the rates of growth have slowed down, the net exports are expected or desired to increase gradually. The growth is expected to recover gradually to 3 percent in FY-21 only if the external demand picks up and this is a tall order as far as Pakistan's economy is concerned; for this the macro-economic conditions are to be improved and sustained. So, it is the tax reforms and competitiveness that has to build up an industrial sector. To a large extent Pakistan is depending on China to build up its industrial sector, how much that pans out is another question altogether. Inflation is expected to increase slightly in FY-20 driven by the second round impact of exchange rate pass-through to domestic prices.

What is it that we really see happening in Pakistan in response to what is desirable and what they need to do perforce on account of the IMF loan? As far as the fiscal deficit is concerned, the country has very low sources of revenue and very high non-developmental expenditures. For decades the Pakistan authorities have not been able to establish effective tax collection practices and currently only 1 percent of Pakistanis pay their taxes. The country has one of the lowest tax to GDP ratios in the world. It is difficult to correct this as successive governments have avoided imposing stricter controls because they have been staffed by members of the same elites that are actively engaged in evading taxes. Notably, the non-developmental expenditure which is really the one that needs to be cut down; but, Pakistan has actually cut down on social expenditure in order to correct their fiscal balances. The possibility of cutting the non-developmental expenditure is bleak as the biggest source of sub-spending of these funds after debt servicing is the military. These funds that the military receives from the state budget is in addition to the revenue it gets from its large business operations that are undertaken by it, including 50 commercial entities generating nearly \$1.5 billion annually.

There is a new committee that has been set up by Pakistan called the National Development Council to oversee Pakistan's economic growth strategy. This council among the other important functionaries of the government also includes the army chief as its member. The influence that would be exercised by this council on the change in growth, if at all it does, is to be seen. As per some primary sources this committee actually never meets.

In the past few days what has been seen is that there are high chances of Pakistan exiting the grey list. China is the current chair of FATE. China being in the chair contributes a lot to Pakistan's position. As far as India is concerned diplomacy is the way forward here.

What economic measures can India take in the present circumstances? There is not much that can be done. As far as capital inflows are concerned, India does not have a huge share in Pakistan's inflow of foreign direct investment. In terms of trade over the past one year many expressions of displeasure from India's side were sent out to Pakistan on withdrawal of

Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status. Does it really impact trade? Well, as far as India and Pakistan are concerned, there is both formal trade as well as informal trade, the latter being much more than the former. Is it a real cost to Pakistan in terms of the formal trade? Well, the formal trade is really a small proportion of their overall trade that happens with India. In terms of Pakistan's imports from India relative to China as far as their overall imports are concerned; it is seen that in 2005 Pakistan's imports from India were 2.3 percent and 9.3 percent from China which has now increased to 26 percent as against close to 2.95 percent as far as India is concerned. They have more trade happening with China as well as a Free Trade Agreement (FTA) with China, much to their smugness. They might say that it was signed earlier when the import was less and was not necessarily in favour of Pakistan. But, they undertook a revision of the FTA recently in June 2019, to say that this is now more aligned with Pakistan's interests as well. Further, there are possibilities for every country to look for alternative trade partners for every commodity that it can seek from an existing trading partner (India), and Pakistan has been doing that and given the smallness of the trade with India, it will continue to do that.

Role of the Civil Society and NGOs by Dr. Priyanka Singh



Plate 10: Dr. Priyanka Singh, Associate Fellow, MP-IDSA

The speaker Dr. Priyanka Singh said that it is not often that the role of civil society and Non-Governmental Organisations in Pakistan is spoken about. Pakistan is one country where there exists a range of cultures and with sub-cultures ethnicities within, but perhaps its descent into chaos is something that has eclipsed every other characteristic of that country. Discussion on issues, such as this in several ways breaks the pattern and the monotony of the hardcore security paradigm, which is prevalent in the discourse on Pakistan especially post 9/11. After 9/11 it has been majorly characterised as the country which serves as a physical sanctuary for the terrorists. However, a study of the ordinary people to understand their despair, their struggle to cope with everyday challenges, social, political, perhaps economic, is essential. The civil society's role in a country like Pakistan is conspicuous or peculiar. According to CIVICUS, an international alliance of civil society groups that track the space in various countries that the civil society actors get, defines Pakistan's civil society "*as a collection of incoherent voices, conflicting worldviews and opposing interests characterized by unresolved struggle between the practice and values of free capitalist society and modes of social life between authoritarian legacies and democratic aspirations*". The civil society in Pakistan cannot be treated as a standalone case and why so because of larger goals in the pursuits of the civil society are very similar to what it isn't in the country and what it is in other countries, as what some would call the process of democratisation. At the same time, it is worth noting that what makes civil society's role in Pakistan more daunting and precarious? It is the wide array of fault lines that exist in the country and in that sense, the role of the civil society in Pakistan is very vital. The speaker also adds that there is a secessionist challenge as a lot has been discussed about it in Balochistan that has persisted for decades. There is ethnic tension, sectarian strife, eminent threat to democracy, gross human rights violations, unemployment and social indicators that have been dismally low. So, it is a demanding case in every sense for the civil society in Pakistan. It should be understood that in an ecosystem where the status seems to be underperforming, the pressure from the state structures is more intense.

The current status of the NGOs and civil society in Pakistan is really bad. Some analysts have recently argued that it is on the brink

of extinction. Some analysts have also criticised the civil society in Pakistan, as a reactive civil society that has not evolved as it should have and is more cosmetic in nature than real. The fact that there are monumental problems inside Pakistan and there is so much of social chaos. Otherwise, it should be a very fertile territory for civil society actors to operate, but that has not happened.

A relevant question which emerges is, will the civil society ever have a kind of revolt against the state and whether there is any ray of hope? At this point it is really difficult to judge because Pakistan has been through its worst phases of violence and turmoil. Its economy has been in a dire state along with political instability and unaccountability towards a larger section of the people. Despite this, the common people have not really risen and revolt against the system in the manner required. There have been few incidents in certain constituencies but there has been a sub-optimal cohesion in these movements. Therefore, it is incorrect to assume that such things will not happen in the future.

There have been very renowned faces from Pakistan who have served as powerful members of the civil society and have earned a lot of respect internationally. Some of them are, Hina Jelani, Asma Jahangir and I.A. Rahman, who was the director of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan. However, there are various occasions when these social workers have faced opposition while performing their work. Few of these incidents are:

- Asma Jahangir faced the wrath of the establishment on several occasions, including that of the current Prime Minister, Imran Khan who was hailed as very progressive. All this happened when her name was floated as a prospective critic of Prime Minister before the elections in 2013.
- Malala Yousufzai was targeted and brutally injured by the Taliban, just because she was trying to spread a message about embracing education.
- Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa has a history of violence against the NGOs, especially those who deal with health and education. Activist like

Fareeda Afridi was killed because she was working for the tribal women in this region.

- A British doctor, who happened to be a Muslim, was working for the committee for the International Red Cross was kidnapped and killed in 2012.
- Similarly, in 2015, Sabeen Mahmud, another human rights activist was killed because she had held an event that discussed the human rights violation in Balochistan.

There is no protection given to these workers and the activists by the state, despite the fact that they are risking their lives and working in such volatile streets of Pakistan.

As for the dynamics between the Civil Society/NGOs and the military, it is the Pakistan Army that commissions most of the things that afflict Pakistan from undermining every form of civilian structure, society and institutions or use of violence as a proxy for religious and political objectives. The Human Rights Watch has also been repeatedly targeted by the military calling it a 'body which spreads a pack of lies' and as 'propaganda driven and totally biased'. Thus, the overall space in Pakistan for the NGOs and civil society actors is constrained as they have been allowed only to function in a very limited way within permissible limits which are defined by the state. Nonetheless, the reflective fact is that the military is threatened by its existence.

What has been the approach of Pakistan's civil society towards the Indian diaspora? Even though there has been a kind of volatility all around and everything that has to do with India-Pakistan equations. The prospects in this particular domain are not very dismaying and disconcerting as there are deep cultural bonds, familial ties and people of both countries meet each other considering they were one before 1947. The fact also remains that some elements of soft power could be true, but to say everything is positive between the two is an overstatement and particularly intense. Such issues have been deeply divisive even as the two sides engaged in track two and the other activities. It is only the broader cultural and ethnic linkages that both nations share which bring out the goodwill and faith.

The current status of the NGOs and civil society in Pakistan is not optimistic as the state does not want the human rights violations to get exposed via these NGOs. There has been a severe clamp down on the numerous non-governmental entities of what could be termed as a civil society. Not long ago, about a hundred members of civil society comprising authors, intellectual lawyers issued a statement where they expressed concern due to the “colossal crisis they were facing as a result of repeated undemocratic interventions and a lack of consistent sustainable policy”. Most of the recent clampdown has been on the pretext of FATF as Pakistan has been alleged of not doing enough to plug in terror financing. Interestingly, many of these religious outfits which have been involved in money laundering have been registered as NGOs in Pakistan. This is the kind of collateral damage that is happening to NGOs there. The actual NGOs find themselves equated with fanatic religious organisations and they are getting weeded out in order to meet Pakistan terror objectives.

Also important is the fact that these organisations are mostly finding themselves at odds with the regime constituencies. As most of them work for the women issues and child welfare and at times , it does not suit the extremist agenda which is perpetrated by the fanatic religious groups. The media houses have also been under constant threat. There are regulations for the NGOs that have been effectively used to curtail the activities of these organisations and Media Houses, viz. Foreign Contributions Act of 2015 and the Prevention of Electric Electronic Crimes Act of 2016.

The 2007 Lawyer’s movement was recognised by some media houses as something of social awakening. It has been debated whether that was to meet limited goals for the lawyers’ fraternity or whether it was the largest civil movement that happened under the military rule. With regard to Balochistan, the army and its accomplice are noted to be brutally suppressive of any voice that dissents with the state narrative. Another important divisive issue between the army and the civil society has emerged in the CPEC, especially in the perpetuated slow down which is happening in the said projects. There are voices in Pakistan which have been questioning the visibility of this project. How much

of this discontent which is existing in the Pakistan society is going to really percolate in the popular discourse needs to be seen. In fact, this is something we need to watch considering the army has a large stake in this upcoming corridor.

So, it is without a doubt that civil society and the NGOs have an important role in Pakistan. But, they have also been found to be mired in corruption, misappropriation of resources and lacking accountability towards the people and the society they claim they cater to. This is true for the media houses, the political groups, etc. Indeed, there is this wedge driven between the people and these NGOs or the civil society groups; and this kind of trust deficit between the people and the NGOs is serving to the benefit of the state.

There are theories floating around which mention that the crackdown against the NGOs is only for public consumption. There is some kind of ‘behind the door reassurances’ which are happening between these international NGOs and the state to maintain that kind of external support, which is very critical for Pakistan’s frail economic situation.

Role of the Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) by Brig Manoj Kumar



Plate 11: Brig Manoj Kumar, SM, VSM, ADG PI

The speaker Brig Manoj Kumar began by describing the media landscape in Pakistan. The country has a population of approximately 200 million and they have 161 million smartphones. This is due to the Chinese influx of smartphones which has already made its way and most of them are on social media portals and accounts. Apart from this, they have informed citizenry and this is what Pakistan army leverages while creating a capacity as that of ISPR. India and Pakistan which have already fought many wars in physical domains, surprisingly, today are fighting a war 24x7 in a battle space which is owned by private companies like Jack Dorsey and Mark Zuckerberg. We need to understand one thing, that Pakistan Army is a 'propaganda machinery' and according to Donald Trump's tweet (January 1, 2018), is based on "lie, deceit and deception", where he used these particular words and mentioned that "they" have been fooling him. This is where ISPR stands. They are not only fooling the world, they are fooling their own people as well. Today's battle is a 'battle of narratives' and that is why the relevance of ISPR has to be factored in.

What is ISPR?

- It is a joint services information management tool for Pakistan Armed forces, predominantly controlled by Pakistan Army. ISPR was established in 1949 and it wields immense authority to manage information flows both for a domestic audience as well as for international opinion building. Though, it works under the Joint Services Headquarters but is effectively controlled by Pak Army. Till late 1990, ISPR was a small setup, playing a very modest role as a media arm of the armed forces. Over the years now, ISPR is a well resourced, well equipped, well-staffed organisation that is vicious and brutal in character and attitude. In some ways, the rapid expansion and growth of ISPR was a natural by-product of the information revolution and the advent of the digital age. In Pakistan, the army took the lead and invested heavily in ISPR, to project power through weapons of mass influence especially under Lt Gen Aseem Bajwa, the ex DG ISPR and now the DG of CPEC. It aimed at the formation of national narratives that affected and suited the military leadership. Under Major General Asif Ghafoor, ISPR assumed a greater political role and degenerated into many controversies.

- ISPR is led by a Major General, and has four verticals under two Brigadiers, one Commodore, and one Air Commodore. Each vertical has a special staff from both the services and civilians who are domain specialists. Their likely strength is about 55 service officers and 45 to 50 civilian officers. They also hire a lot of people. They have a total of about 400 persons having a multitude of skill sets which include creative directors, behavioural psychologists, Imams, photographers, audio specialists, speechwriters, animation experts, cartoons and meme creators, mimics, musicians and digital library managers.
- Looking at ISPR, one can compare it with any governmental organisation; but the question remains whether we have that kind of capacity to build this organic structure? Besides organic structure, ISPR has an enormous social media external ecosystem. Their sponsoring of series of Jamat-ul-Dawa's social media workshop is well known. In one of the events that happened in October 2018, they operationalised a model of generating 1 lakh content a day and pushed it into the public domain. This was a very difficult task by any government organisation.
- The ISPR conducts workshops in various colleges for talent hunting. They train over 1000 interns every year and interestingly 60 percent of them are women. ISPR organises frequent competitions for youths as to those whose tweets get retweeted the most. The prizes include jobs and contracts in the Fauji Foundation, and in days of utter economic despair and unemployment anyone would be willing to take this particular offer. ISPR gets funds from three services, ISI and government. The budget is substantial. A portion of *Milbus*, i.e. military business, is also in commercial ventures like producing movies and TV plays. It will suffice to say that Budget is not a constraint for ISPR.

What does ISPR do?

- It ensures a wide coverage and perception management of Chief of Army Staff and Pakistan Army. To do this, ISPR creates an immense amount of sensory inputs, including messages, social media narratives, movies, books, music, and videos. ISPR also

monitors and controls all local *print-audio-visual media* through a Media Control Centre. The legislations are given very little importance, hence there is no real hindrance to Pakistan Army. ISPR uses and abuses the Pakistan Electronic Media Regulatory Authority (PEMRA). Qualified under Article 19, Chapter One of the Constitution of Pakistan, PEMRA has jurisdiction to impose reasonable restrictions in the interest of religion, integrity and national security of Pakistan. All books and periodicals are vetted by ISPR covering anything and everything about Pakistan Armed Forces. Authors and editors are called and conditions are imposed. It is also widely believed that only the selected few anchors are allowed to give live coverage while the rest are given the differed live coverage. The list is updated frequently. Except the DG ISPR, no officer faces media including the Army Chief. It is important to 'not see' what DG ISPR is doing in Pakistan and instead 'see why' it is doing, this might fetch us the right answers. The connection of the OHCHR Report which was there in Geneva and the killing of Shujaat Bukhari has a deep connection to it and needs to understand that it was orchestrated by both ISI as well as ISPR.

What does ISPR orchestrate?

- ISPR is a powerful institution that has a disproportionate influence on decision making, lack of importance to the legitimacy of the democracy, elected authorities and subverting democracy. The ISPR was used by Gen Aseem Bajwa to idolise Gen Raheel Shareef's role in eradicating militancy through 'Operation Zarb-e-Azb'. In January 2016, posters had appeared in Karachi and Islamabad suggesting an extension of the Army Chief's tenure. When Gen Bajwa became the Army Chief he reverted the practice of a Major General heading the ISPR. Under Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor, ISPR increased coverage of the Chief of Army Staff, stance on Kashmir and Afghanistan and its primacy over the Pakistani Government. Adding to this, ISPR has been officially endorsing violence in Jammu and Kashmir along with composing and publishing promotional songs and preempting civil government from intervening in the CPEC negotiations by tweeting about the Chief of Army Staff role and resolve to push through the completion of the CPEC at any cost.

- The Chief of Army Staff's meeting with ordinary citizens, tribal leaders, politicians, and foreign leaders and its projection on the social media creates a narrative of the Army Chief as a statesman and de facto ruler. This helps in projecting the Army Chief as somebody personified for the entire Armed Forces. DG ISPR creates an extraordinary space for him to dominate the entire political and security system.
- Major Asif Ghafoor will be remembered for his emphasis on 'Fifth Generation Warfare'. In his numerous press conferences and tweets, his idea about the 'Bajwa Doctrine', was being used frequently by the social media. It also helped in building the narrative of need for a robust defence.
- What happens to be a war of political-ideological and geostrategic narratives, is being summed up in a self-explanatory and convenient term, 'Fifth Generation Warfare'. The term refers to the use of misinformation and other non-kinetic means such as fake news and propaganda, which is well leveraged by nobody else than ISPR. ISPR has lakhs of followers acting as trolls, who usually identify themselves as Patriots, Muslims, Pro-Army, Pro-Kashmir and PTI supporter. The trolls operate swarms and acts like bullies, collectively attacking through WhatsApp. Each troll with the hierarchy of contacts sends them multiple daily instructions regarding the content to push out. The content could be a satire, parody, misleading content, imposter content, fabricated content, manipulated content, threatening content and all these are deployed and misused. The trolls commit the same errors, the same spelling mistakes every time as these are initial WhatsApp messages and it has been observed in a series every day. These are certainly not healthy for democratic discourse, but that is how ISPR has been subverting the democratic discourse in Pakistan. The troll army of ISPR uses a network of covert Twitter accounts, Facebook and Instagram pages, and many of them are always brought down. They have inflamed tensions and frenzy pushes in Pakistan's claims over Kashmir, boosting support for the army inside Pakistan and boosting support for Pakistan abroad. All these are based on "lie, deceit and deception", as we saw during Pulwama-Balakot

incident and in the conduct of Pakistan Cricket Super League, which happened last year in the month of March. The ISPR and its narrative of an omnipotent army is habituated of disobeying, disregarding and dictating policies to the civil government. By showing the politicians in a negative light, it helps them perpetuate the myth of supremacy of the Armed Forces and strengthen their role in the imagination of the public. The use of social media platforms like Twitter, which is a free searchable database, has made the army's interventions more visible and strengthened its hold over the state. ISPR is seen as a model that has weaponised social media and it uses mobile not as a gadget, but as a weapon.

What relationship does ISPR have with ISI and who is more relevant?

- In the pre-internet and pre-social media era, intelligence operations of hostile countries required physical contact, controlling access to military areas and monitoring of suspect organisations by counterintelligence agencies. These actions were adequate enough to address the threats. However, social media has added a new dimension to espionage. In ISI there is cybersecurity and not an organic media organisation, while ISPR is only a media organisation. In Pakistan Army, the resources are shared with a common division to produce the plan. The roles of ISPR and ISI do overlap in many cases, especially when it comes to subjugating voices critical to the army. For example, in January 2017, five bloggers writing on the prosecution of minorities or human rights disappeared in a span of one week. Before their disappearance, a robust campaign was launched on TV and social media portraying them as anti-Pakistani and anti-Islam especially by channels close to the army like 'ARY' and 'Bolt TV'. Functionally, it can be said that ISI is more externally oriented while ISPR is more internally oriented; and as per some people ISI influences foreign media and other influencers including tweeting on the external environment as well. The ISPR's tweets' visibility is essentially meant for the local and domestic population. Interestingly, Honey Traps are undertaken by ISI but profiles are mostly of ISPR. Thus, comparing ISI and ISPR as to which one is more relevant, will be unfair. He also asserted that ISPR is

using other resources to create vulnerabilities through intelligence and communication manoeuvres as they together are creating resources for the 'Image Domain of Virtual Societal Warfare'.

Will there be a change in ISPR from February 1, 2020, with the induction of the new DG?

- ISPR has acquired and landed the organisation in many serious controversies that should not have involved institutional military in the past. With a new DG, ISPR may return to the original mandate of becoming the voice of the Pakistan military, which currently as the deep state is seen and believed to have diluted military standards, ethics and is only busy subverting democracy and will of the Pakistani people.

What we need to do to counter ISPR?

- There exists a need for active and sharp interventions to counter ISPR, but we need not become ISPR or behave like them. Narratives must be based on our national core values, dignity, credibility and our national character. Whatever be the idea of ISPR in our minds, the media and other sources of communication which was classically not a part of the global commons, can be well expected to create vulnerabilities for organisations like ISPR. Pakistan's Defence handle was suspended in 2017 and since then it has not been restored thanks to the patriotic Indians. ISPR has not given many uncomfortable moments, but currently our approach is fragmented. We need to take cue from the futuristic organisations and structures of UK 77 brigade which was raised as part of the credible response to the disinformation campaigns of China and Russia. They conveyed a clear message that "*if you mess with us, we also can mess with you.*" There is a need for a credible structure at the national level and also at the military level, maybe under the Department of Military Affairs. The apex structure at the national level is the first requirement, along with it a need to create structures wherein staff and unit functions is a separate manner. Units in this domain can act as foot soldiers creating a credible ecosystem by unlocking their horns with audacity and dynamism.

- We have some great stories to tell which we are not telling, while Pakistan is spreading a false narrative of Islamic Pakistan with secular credentials and signals India with incorrect credentials. Ultimately, nothing is far from the truth. The best counter-narrative is our vibrant secular democracy and their narrative can be countered very well. In fact, the state of minorities is a ‘dwindling lot’ in Pakistan as they are fleeing. Also, in Pakistan there are temples and churches but most of them are only structures and not places of worship. Pakistan keeps peddling false narratives that India is acting as a big brother to the neighbours which is incorrect. Take example of Bhutan, where India has for many decades banked on equitable currency value. There are many such stories which need to be told in an equal volume.
- There is a need to implement ‘S-2 Model’, i.e. model ‘*Structures*’ and tell inspiring Indian democratic experiences through ‘*Stories*’ which will be read even by the Pakistanis, explaining the virtues of democracy and sublime civilian supremacy. If this can be done, then Pakistan’s behaviour will change for enormous good. If Pakistan wants to become a true democracy as India is, then it needs a civilian supremacy and rule. Pakistan Army and ISPR must go back to the barracks and let the will of people run a democratic Pakistan.

CONCLUDING REMARKS

Lt Gen (Dr.) VK Ahluwalia (Retd), Director, CLAWS listed the following salient issues and takeaways that have emerged from the Seminar.

- Pakistan looms large in India's strategic thinking due to which we are losing focus on a growing China. In the case of Pakistan, economic and human developments comes after the Army. The priority is the Fauji Business Enterprise.
- The Balakot Strikes post Pulwama have shifted the security paradigm, and have established a new norm to strike across the borders. Moreover, the abrogation of Article 370 by India took Pakistan by surprise, due to which they took a number of diplomatic, economic, information and psychological actions to show their solidarity with the people of J&K, which did not achieve any results, thereby, further affecting the relationship between the two countries.
- Although Pakistan is facing the biggest economic slowdown in its history, it could be stated that is not diplomatically isolated, as it has been made out to be. The judiciary of Pakistan has also shown defiance a few times in its history, but with varying perceptions during different periods.
- While it was advocated that India requires a long-term strategy to deal with Pakistan, Director felt that the geopolitical and geostrategic environments are changing rather rapidly. Therefore, it may be prudent to look at a future strategy between 30 and 50 years. It has been observed that China is using Pakistan as a strategic element to counter the US and India in the region.
- Intra-sectarian issues have widened with the rise of Sunni-Deobandi, Sunni-Barelvi and Shia militants. Baloch movement is now tapering off and will be difficult to revive without external support.
- Media in Pakistan has been vibrant since the 21st century and has witnessed the arrival of new private channels. Media has

been critical of Pakistan Army, which has resulted in heavy media regulation by the incumbent Prime Minister Imran Khan.

- Pakistan's Economy is consumption-driven and is unsustainable due to low domestic investments. Pakistan's Current Account Deficit (CAD) is 6.3 percent of GDP in 2019; Fiscal Deficit is 8.8 percent of GDP in 2019; and tax is stagnant in Pakistan. Energy is a critical sector for Pakistan. Growths of remittances have risen to 9.7 percent in 2019. Pakistan has high non-development expenditure. The biggest source after debt servicing is the military. Pakistan-India has very limited trade as India has revoked the Most Favoured Nation (MFN) tag on Pakistan; China-Pakistan share a free trade agreement.
- The current situation of civil society in Pakistan is in a dismal state and it is more cosmetic in nature. Security has been a major issue for the civil society activist in Pakistan. There has also been a clampdown on NGOs by the Pakistan Government as many religious organisations are registered as NGOs. To get out of the FATF list, Pakistan Government and Army have gone down heavily on NGOs. The feasibility of CPEC is another issue between Army and civil society.
- ISPR is Pakistan's propaganda machine; its strategy is based on lies, deceit and deception. ISPR has weaponised mobile phones to build false narratives. To counter ISPR, we need to strategise the S-2 Model, that is, through 'Structures' and 'Stories'. The question which has to be addressed carefully is "Why Pakistan is doing this; not what Pakistan is doing?".
- Maj Gen Asif Ghafoor has brought the era of Fifth Generation Warfare, where they have actively used social media as a tool, through fake news and propaganda and making Pakistan Army's intervention visible, consolidating its hold over the state.
- In India, there are several positive stories of civilian supremacy and democracy. These should be used by the media in our country to change perception of the population.

CONCEPT NOTE

Pakistan, a nuclear-armed country strategically located at the base of Central Asia, with its proximity to West Asia, makes it impossible to ignore in global affairs. Its importance is even more prominent for India being its immediate neighbour. Having fought four major wars/conflicts, it continues to have innumerable unresolved issues like Cross-border Terrorism, proxy war, etc. To delve more on this complex subject, a seminar was organised by the Centre for Land Warfare Studies (CLAWS).

The seminar adopted a holistic approach to understand the evolving security dimension by incorporating sessions on various politico-socio-legal, economic issues, including the civil society and media. This broader approach has become important considering the increased interconnectedness of these variables and their impact on strategic and security related matters.

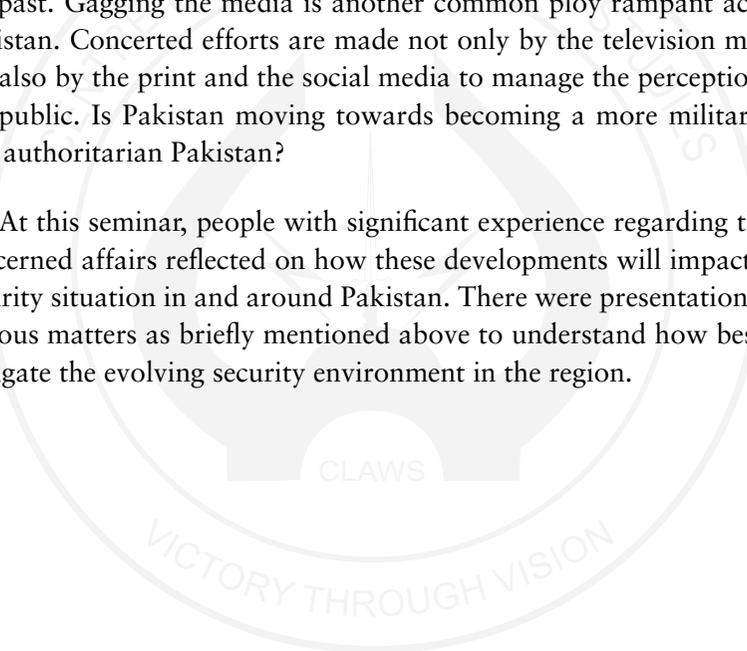
In the contemporary politico-socio-legal situation in Pakistan, the Pakistani establishment has managed to put in place the current PM, Imran Khan, in a soft coup. Recent Court judgements against former Army Chief Pervez Musharraf and the relief against the incumbent Army Chief General Qamar Bajwa regarding extension of his tenure has showed some signs of power struggle between the judiciary and the army. The social fabric of the country is still fragile, and the social space is marred with sectarian violence be it against the Ahmadis or the Shi'a community.

At the economic front, the much-touted China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) passing through India territory of Pakistan Occupied Jammu and Kashmir (POJ&K) has invited protests from India. There are also concerns regarding the presence of the Chinese PLA in POJ&K, posing direct threat to Indian security interests. India's continued diplomacy in highlighting the sponsorship of terrorism by the Pakistani state has borne fruit with Pakistan being put on the grey list by the Financial Action Task Force (FATF), which has already had some very tangible adverse economic implications for the country.

Such pressure from an Intergovernmental Organisation with far-reaching material impact has forced Pakistan to shut down various terrorist organisations and freeze their funding, at least for the time being. It is also important to note the correlation between chronology of the FATF scrutiny and the lack of major terrorist attacks against India.

The civil society and the media in Pakistan are facing restrictions from the state, both formal and informal. The recent crackdown on domestic and international NGOs to suppress dissent is reminiscent of the old days of authoritarianism that the country had witnessed in the past. Gagging the media is another common ploy rampant across Pakistan. Concerted efforts are made not only by the television media but also by the print and the social media to manage the perception of the public. Is Pakistan moving towards becoming a more militaristic and authoritarian Pakistan?

At this seminar, people with significant experience regarding these concerned affairs reflected on how these developments will impact the security situation in and around Pakistan. There were presentations on various matters as briefly mentioned above to understand how best to navigate the evolving security environment in the region.



PROGRAMME

Timing	Subject	Speakers
0830-0915h	Tea & Registration	
0915-0925h	Welcome/ Opening Remarks	Lt Gen (Dr.) VK Ahluwalia (Retd) Director, CLAWS
0925-0940h	Keynote Address	Lt Gen AK Singh, PVSM, AVSM, SM, VSM (Retd) Former Lieutenant Governor of Andaman & Nicobar Islands
0940-1105h	Session I : Contemporary Politico-Socio-Legal Situation	
	Opening Remarks by Chairperson	Sh. Ajay Bisaria Former High Commissioner of India to Pakistan
	Contemporary Role of Military in Politics	Sh. Rana Banerji Former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat
	Judicial Activism?	Mr. Sushant Sareen Senior Fellow, ORF
	Ethnic/Sectarian Problems & Issues	Dr. Ashok Behuria Senior Fellow, MP-IDSA
1035-1105h	Q & A Session	
1105-1135h	Tea	
1135-1325h	Session II: Current Economic Situation and Role of Media & Civil Diaspora	
	Special Address	Dr. Jyoti M. Pathania Senior Fellow, CLAWS
	Opening Remarks by Chairperson (10 min)	Mr. Amber Sen Former Special Secretary, Cabinet Secretariat
	China–Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC): Implications (12-15 min)	Maj Maroof Raza (Retd)
	Pakistan and The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) (12-15 min)	Prof Amita Batra Professor, JNU
	Civil Society/ NGOs (12-5 min)	Dr. Priyanka Singh Associate Fellow, MP-IDSA

	Inter Services Public Relations (ISPR) (12-15 min)	Brig Manoj Kumar, SM, VSM, ADG PI
1255-1325h	Q & A Session	
1325-1335h	Takeaways & Closing Remarks	Director, CLAWS
1335h	Lunch & Dispersal	



