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# Interaction

May 2024

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**EDITORIAL**

# FREEDOM IS NOT FOR SALE

"Freedom is Not for Sale." General Zia-ul-Haq, the former president of Pakistan, is renowned for saying these poignant remarks, which still reverberate throughout the halls of power and in the hearts of Pakistanis. They act as an unmistakable reminder of Pakistan's steadfast dedication to its sovereignty and security. Swirling rumors about the protection of the country's critical assets and alleged transactions involving the Reko Diq mines among the biggest undeveloped copper and gold reserves in the world have given these statements newfound meaning today.



It is imperative that we handle these issues from a balanced stance, keeping in mind the governments' long-standing and continuing commitment to the security and prosperity of the country. Since gaining its independence, Pakistan has traveled a path characterized by an unwavering dedication to upholding its territorial integrity and national sovereignty. From General Zia-ul-Haq to the current leadership, Pakistan's leaders have steadfastly defended the maxim that the country's security and freedom are unassailable.

Pakistan's strategic resources were significantly strengthened during General Zia-ul-Haq's leadership, especially in the defense and security spheres. The fundamental tenet of his administration's policy was the interdependence between economic independence and security sovereignty. The way that succeeding governments have dealt with internal pressures and external threats has been influenced by this heritage.

The way the government has managed its strategic assets, including as nuclear capabilities and key places like the Reko Diq mines, CPEC, etc., shows how this attitude has persisted. These assets are more than just resources; they are symbols of sovereignty and pride in the country. The preservation and careful use of these resources show a distinct continuity between the past and the present, demonstrating that Pakistan makes strategic choices with long-term national security in mind.

Pakistan's strategic assets, including its nuclear arsenal, critical infrastructure, and mineral resources, are fundamental to its national security and economic stability. These assets, vital for maintaining sovereignty and defense capabilities, are crucial in balancing regional power dynamics, particularly with India. The investment in nuclear capabilities, also used for peaceful purposes in various sectors, underscores a commitment to deterrence and peace. The development of nuclear weapons, initiated in the 1970s after the separation from East Pakistan,



was a response to security concerns and regional nuclear advancements. Managed by the Strategic Plans Division with stringent safety protocols, Pakistan's nuclear arsenal supports strategic stability in South Asia by deterring conflicts and enhancing negotiation capabilities with other nations.

Recent claims that Pakistan's security and integrity are being compromised are totally false, and such rumors should be addressed

and refuted decisively. Pakistan's government and military leadership have continuously prioritized national asset security. Any notion that these assets are at risk under the present administration is false and contradicts established processes and the government's track record.

Pakistan's leaders and decision-makers recognize the significance and responsibility of managing national assets. High-level government officials have consistently emphasized that safeguarding Pakistan's strategic assets is a top priority, and they remain committed to this pledge. In discussing national assets, including Reko Diq, it's essential to understand the importance of Reko Diq.

### **REKO DIQ: A TREASURE TROVE OF RESOURCES**

Reko Diq, located in the Chagai district of Balochistan, Pakistan, is one of the world's largest untapped copper and gold mines. It spans roughly 13,000 square kilometers with deposits estimated at 5.9 billion tonnes of ore, which includes 0.41% copper and significant gold quantities. Economic projections suggest the mine could produce over 200,000 tons of copper and 250,000 ounces of gold annually, potentially generating billions of dollars over its 56-year lifespan.

Recent rumors about the potential sale of a 25% stake in Reko Diq have sparked concerns. However, the Pakistani government remains committed to preserving national assets, emphasizing that "Our Freedom is Not for Sale." The notion of selling a significant part of Reko Diq is dismissed as misrepresenting government policy and intentions. Any decisions regarding such strategic assets would involve thorough transparency and focus on national interests, ensuring Pakistan's sovereignty and economic future are not compromised.

The approach to managing Reko Diq and similar assets is focused on sustainable development and maximizing national benefit, involving rigorous assessment processes and public consultation. The government aims to attract international expertise and investment on favorable terms, ensuring control and majority benefits remain with Pakistan. This strategy not only refutes baseless rumors but also reinforces the commitment to safeguarding Pakistan's sovereign assets for economic independence.





# GRAND IFTAR DINNER AT DODARYA, KARACHI



**RFI team enjoys a Grand Iftar Dinner at Dodarya Karachi, organized by the Chairman RFI, Nusrat Mirza**



**Chairman RFI presents souvenir to Prof. Dr. Uzmah Shujaat, Director Institute of European studies on her visit to RFI.**

# MEMORANDUMS OF UNDERSTANDING



**Ambassador Hasan Habib, leading A delegation from the Ambassador Club, signs a Memorandum of Understanding with Mr. Nusrat Mirza, Chairman Rabita Forum International (RFI), to enhance cooperation and jointly promote national interests.**



**Mr. Nusrat Mirza, Chairman of Rabita Forum International, and Dr. Uzma Shujat, Director of the Area Study Centre for Europe at the University of Karachi, formalize their commitment to collaboration by signing a Memorandum of Understanding aimed at fostering joint initiatives.**

# JOURNALISTS PAY CONDOLENCE TO THE COUNSEL GENERAL OF CHINA MR. H.E. YANG YUNDONG



A delegation of journalists pays condolence to the Counsel General of China Mr. H.E. Yang Yundong on the unfortunate killing of five Chinese engineers. Chief Editor Interaction is on the Right side of CG.

## RASHAN PACKAGES TO THE NEEDY PEOPLES



Nusrat Mirza, the Chairman of RFI, hands out 'Rashan packages' to the needy in Orangi Town, Karachi.

## NUSRAT MIRZA VISITS ORANGI SCHOOL SCOUTS



Nusrat Mirza, Chairman, Rabita Forum International (RFI) visits Orangi School Scouts and receives souvenir from trainers, teachers and organizers.

# THE CONCEPT OF EURASIA AND IRANIAN INFLUENCE IN THE REGION:

## PROSPECTS FOR PAKISTAN



**DR. UZMA SHUJAAT**

On the face of it, “Eurasia” is a worldview that sees Asian and European continents as a collective entity.

A consequent question would be: what could be the factors that would motivate someone to have this view? Why would there be a need to have a stake in both regions?

Well, when we try to find answers to these questions, we, roughly, find two streams of thought. One is Russian that tries to maintain an ideological equilibrium between Moscow's European and Asiatic postures; it develops into “Eurasianism” seeing Russia as a distinct civilizational entity not just an extension of either European or Asian civilizational parameters. The other one deals with extra-territorial observations and readings, often geo-strategic in their nature, that perceive Russian affairs deeply affecting Asia as well as the Eastern limits of Europe; the “heartland” theory by Halford Mackinder emanates from this seedbed.

### RISING FROM THE DEAD AND THEN DYING AGAIN

The recovery from the devastating Mongol incursions saw gradual expansion of Russian frontiers in all four directions. Naturally, conflict became inevitable. The Swedes, Baltics, Poles, Ottomans, Central Asian Turks, Iranians, etc. all clashed fiercely with Russian geopolitical ambitions. Yet, Russia was able to acquire a massive landmass. Its territory touched Black Sea as well as the Pacific Ocean.

Conceptually, sovereignty over such a gigantic area forced Russian spirit to seek explanations which would take into consideration this vast imperial acquisition. Also, being adherents to the Orthodox Church, a whole-hearted association with the European Latin and Germanic Christian civilization was also out of the question.

At the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, acute socio-political unrest and foreign entanglements pushed Russian Tsardom towards terminal illness. When it finally fell in 1917, the new dispensation, the Bolsheviks, imposed communist rule over the vast Russian territory. It was a redefinition of Russian civilization. Russians were brutally cut off from their historical trajectory and were given a new identity. Those who opposed this totalitarian brutalization of a people tried to come up with alternatives.

Then, when the Soviet communist system collapsed in the final quarter of the 20<sup>th</sup> century, the quest to redefine Russia surfaced again. An initial tilt towards the West, largely





because of the institutional chaos within the Russian political grid, ceased once the state regained some energy with the arrival of Vladimir Putin as Russian President who took over from the ailing Boris Yeltsin.

The country was to be a Federal Constitutional Republic on Western lines but wrapped in heavy Tsarist and Orthodox Christian symbolism. The foreign posturing of this multi-ethnic/racial/religious domestic arrangement would manifest itself under the banner of Eurasia or Eurasianism. Multilateral forums like the "Eurasian Economic Union" are a case in point. Russia aims to commercially integrate this region with it being at the center of things. The "Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO)" is another example which now extends as far as the Bay of Bengal after India gained its membership along with Pakistan. Beijing-Moscow diplomatic understanding nourishes the SCO.

### THE ROLE OF IRAN

As the Sassanid Empire collapsed in the face of Arab onslaught in the 7<sup>th</sup> century, the Iranian geopolitical space remained in a state of chaos for almost the next 1000 years. It was under the Safavids in the 16<sup>th</sup> century that Iran was able to overcome its geopolitical disunity and begin to project power abroad.

The Ottomans and the Russians, however, struck back. Iran was forced to cede its Western (Middle Eastern) and North Western (Caucasian) possessions. When the British imperial ambitions entered this arena, the pressure on the South-eastern borders increased as well.

The Safavids disappeared from the scene and power transferred to other royal houses. But despite all these setbacks and being besieged on all sides, Iran did not undergo lengthy European imperial occupation. The socio-cultural nucleus remained undisturbed

which was to prove decisive during the revolutionary uprising in 1979. With the emergence of the Islamic Republic in the last century, Iran, for the first time since the Safavids, has been able to not only influence events in its immediate periphery but generate a powerful system of alliances to respond to threats far away from its sovereign territorial limits. It would be a mistake to underrate the foundational rigor of the Islamic Republic and dismiss it as an occurrence which would subside in a generation or two like "Arab Nationalism" or communism.

Iranian posturing has tremendous socio-political confidence behind it. Five Arab centers of power namely, Baghdad, Damascus, Sana'a, Beirut, and Al-Quds al-Sharif (Zionist occupied Palestine) have significant Iranian influence. The same is the case in the Caucasus (Azerbaijan) and Central and South Asia. So, from the Oxus River to the Mediterranean Sea, Tehran, today, has the capacity to dictate events.

This is more than the Safavids when they were at their zenith. There is a propensity to compare this state of affairs with the ancient Persian Empires. But it is a wrong comparison since it overlooks the organic nature of the Islamic Republic. Notwithstanding the annual circus of "protests" which arrest international mass communications for a while, the Islamic Republic continues to command extensive allegiance. Certainly, faith has a lot to do with it. Iranian nationalist expression is vacuous without Islamic symbolism. And, in this particular instance, it gets strengthened when its imagery is shared outside its frontiers.

Thus, Iran is a key player on the Eurasian chessboard with a potential to complicate things if it feels it is being cornered.

### PROSPECTS FOR PAKISTAN

We, from the banks of the mighty River

Indus and the peaks of the Himalayas, should make the most of this regional reconfiguration. Our sovereign territory is a kind of junction where Middle-East, Central Asia, and South Asia intersect with each other. At the same time, Eurasia is conflict-ridden. War in Ukraine, and for the last six months, in occupied Palestine have been dominating international airwaves.

**Central Asia:** There will soon be a generational shift in the Central Asian states. Soviet-era bureaucratic structures will steadily wither away. Islamabad should increase its footprint in the region. We have deep historical, cultural, and linguistic links there. An historic opportunity beckons.

**Iran:** As far as Iran is concerned, it goes without saying that this diplomatic relation has been extremely sensitive and accommodating. Granted that, three months back, there was a brief flare-up on the Iran-Pakistan border. A missile strike, which was never properly and officially acknowledged from any Iranian official, resulted in the deaths of civilians in Baluchistan.

It seemed either someone accidentally misfired or there was a deliberate attempt to create tension between the two neighbors. Iranian side appeared rattled. Unlike the boastful coverage the strikes in Syria and Iraq received, there was strange silence when it came to Pakistan. Anyhow, Pakistan responded with precision strikes across the border. The matter did not escalate any further and both sides wisely refrained from provocative gestures.

President Syed Ebrahim Raisi recently concluded his visit to Pakistan. It happened right after Iran militarily responded to Zionist aggression. The symbolic value here is immense. It shows Islamabad is prepared to withstand pressure and deepen its ties with Iran. Besides, given its strategic geography, it

is not easy to diplomatically isolate Pakistan.

It is hoped that commercial ties will reach their full potential and both sides will keep a close eye on spoilers hell-bent on sabotaging the good-will between the two nations.

**Afghanistan:** Unfortunately, it has not been all fine on this front. The return of the Taliban in Kabul has increased tension on the long international frontier. Cross-border attacks have increased. Apparently, there is a sense in some Taliban circles that they would be able to dictate their terms by adopting a hostile stance towards Pakistan.

They are playing with fire. May sanity prevail there! They should realize that they are not insurgents anymore. Now, they have a state to look after. The revolutionary fervor needs to be constructively channelized. Otherwise, Afghanistan's neighbors, including Pakistan, may seek intervention to pacify the situation. Respect for sovereignty and territorial integrity cannot be one-sided. Durand line is the international border between us and Afghanistan. We hope the latter come to terms with this fact.

**China:** Our ties with the Chinese have been facing challenges, domestic as well as foreign. A sort of power-struggle is going on between factions who prefer the Western camp and those who would like to see greater regional integration.



**Continued on page 12**

# WHO CREATED ISIS AND WHY?

**NUSRAT MIRZA**

The terrorist activities of ISIS or Daesh, are on the rise in countries like Pakistan, Iran, Afghanistan, and Central Asian nations. The branch of Daesh linked with Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan is based in Afghanistan and has become a central hub of terrorism a fact that the Afghan Taliban government has yet to fully acknowledge. ISIS's growing presence in Afghanistan poses a significant threat to the Afghan Taliban, Pakistan, Iran, Russia, Central Asian countries, and China. Initially, the U.S. intelligence community believed that ISIS could be used as a strategic tool to exert pressure on Russia and confine it within its borders.

Over time, ISIS has been known by various names including Daesh and ISIL, and it harbors ambitions to establish a Muslim state called Dolate Islamia Khurasan, which would extend from Syria and Iran to Turkey and other Islamic nations. This concept is inspired by the historical Khorasan state, a once-powerful Muslim empire believed by some Muslims to herald a renaissance for the Muslim world.

From the outset, I researched and concluded that Daesh is a tool employed by



some Western powers to destabilize the Muslim world, particularly targeting Pakistan while keeping an eye on Russia and China. It was disclosed that around 200 fighters came from Europe and 100 from North America, with Israel providing the necessary weapons and funds. Regrettably, the Muslim world failed to grasp the full implications of this development, similar to how Turkey provided safe passage and lodging to these fighters en route to Syria, mirroring Pakistan's support for the Taliban during their struggle against the Soviet Union.

The plan, suspected to be influenced by designs for a greater Israel, aimed to redraw the boundaries of the Middle East to include Iran and Pakistan. Israel's support for Daesh was apparent, evidenced by the medical treatment provided to wounded Daesh fighters within Israel. Daesh was decisively defeated by Russia and Iran in Syria after intense battles. Subsequently, thousands of ISIS fighters were transported from Syria to Afghanistan aboard unmarked planes.



Observers estimated that around ten thousand ISIS fighters relocated. While there were initial clashes between the Afghan Taliban and ISIS, the Taliban appeared to defeat them, though this may have been a temporary tactical retreat by ISIS. When the Afghan Taliban formed a government, ISIS began to flex its muscles more openly.

Despite the Afghan Taliban initially dismissing ISIS as a minor issue, the situation proved to be challenging. For instance, an attack near the Pakistan border on August 24, 2019, in Jalalabad, Afghanistan following the successful U.S.-Afghan Taliban negotiations highlighted ISIS's readiness to escalate their tactics through suicide attacks, bombings, and direct confrontations using advanced weaponry from the USA, Europe, and other countries, including India, which has increasingly opposed Pakistan, the Afghan Taliban, Iran, and, more directly, China and

Russia. The Afghan Taliban are advised to maintain close relations with Pakistan, Iran, China, and Russia, both covertly and overtly. Russia's vested interest in Afghan peace has spurred peace talks with the USA, enhancing the Afghan Taliban's position through the Shanghai Cooperation Organization, which remains a supportive element in the Afghan peace process.

This collaboration is crucial, especially in the face of potential provocations by the USA or India. The Afghan Taliban, known for their simple appearance and diplomatic acumen, have shown remarkable bravery and strategic insight. In dealing with ISIS, they must tackle the issue with determination and wisdom, seeking support from Pakistan, Iran, China, and Russia, all of which are prepared to assist in combating the threat posed by ISIS.

The author is the Chief Editor of **Interaction**.

*Continued from page 10*

## THE CONCEPT OF EURASIA AND IRANIAN INFLUENCE IN THE REGION:

Moreover, the last politico-bureaucratic scheme (2018-2022) purposely frustrated the Chinese-Pakistan relations. Unwisely, a lot of time was wasted.

**India:** Pakistan-bashing has always been a commercially and electorally profitable endeavor in India. At the moment, there is no political voice brave enough to challenge this juvenile attitude with respect to Pakistan. Sometimes one gets the impression that incessant exposure to surreal motion-pictures has permanently damaged the critical faculties of our eastern neighbors. The situation is bleak across the Radcliffe line.

### CONCLUSION

Everything hinges on political stability which precedes economic stability. Institutions

must not breach their constitutional limits. We have just had a decade of brazen political engineering where actors from various sectors of administrative bureaucracy were blatantly trespassing into forbidden areas. Parallel chains of command cannot be the order of the day. The elected executive must assert its authority and the organs of state must obey it. There can be no other arrangement. There is no room for any "hybrid regime". Policy making is the domain of the elected which it should reclaim instead of retreating and bargaining its way to safer zones. Lastly, we as citizens expect to be taken into confidence by our political leaders. Perpetual patronization has badly affected our collective intelligence. The rulers and the citizens perceive things from different vantage points. A healthy exchange of views will be mutually beneficial.

The author is the Director of Area Study Centre for Europe, University of Karachi.



# IRANIAN PRESIDENT VISIT: OPPORTUNITIES AND CHALLENGES FOR PAKISTAN



**MIRZA KASHIF  
BAIG**

The recent visit of the Iranian President to Pakistan marks a significant milestone in the long-standing relationship between the two neighboring countries. This diplomatic engagement comes at a crucial time when both nations are navigating complex regional dynamics and looking to strengthen bilateral ties. The visit not only symbolizes a mutual desire to enhance cooperation but also serves as a strategic move to address common challenges in economic, security, and cultural domains.

## HISTORICAL CONTEXT

The relationship between Iran and Pakistan is deeply rooted in a shared historical and cultural heritage. This bond has been nurtured over decades through mutual respect and cooperation, reflecting a commitment to regional stability and bilateral strength despite international political shifts.

From the outset, Iran and Pakistan established a relationship based on mutual respect and support. Iran was the first country to recognize Pakistan's sovereignty after its



independence in 1947. In the years that followed, both nations engaged in frequent diplomatic exchanges that strengthened their ties. Pakistan has consistently supported Iran during significant global events, advocating for its right to peaceful nuclear technology and standing against unilateral sanctions that could affect the Iranian economy and regional stability.

One of the defining moments in Iran-Pakistan relations occurred during the Iran-Iraq War from 1980 to 1988. Despite the complexities of the geopolitical landscape at that time, Pakistan demonstrated its commitment to Iran by providing humanitarian aid and support. Pakistan's efforts were not limited to diplomatic neutrality; it actively sent shipments of humanitarian assistance to alleviate the suffering of the Iranian people during the conflict. This support underscored Pakistan's approach to upholding its moral and





diplomatic principles, fostering a sense of goodwill and reinforcing bilateral ties under difficult circumstances.

In more recent history, Pakistan has actively sought to deepen economic ties with Iran, particularly in energy cooperation. The Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline project, despite facing delays and challenges, exemplifies the significant potential for energy collaboration between the two countries. Additionally, joint efforts in combating drug trafficking and managing cross-border security highlight their shared interests in regional peace and security.

Cultural and religious connections between Iran and Pakistan have long served as a bridge between the two nations. These ties are manifest in numerous cultural exchanges, religious tourism, and shared reverence for common heritage sites significant in Islamic history. The strong spiritual and cultural bonds have provided a resilient foundation for their diplomatic relationship, emphasizing mutual respect and understanding.

**PURPOSE OF THE VISIT**

The Iranian President's visit to Pakistan is a strategic engagement designed to deepen bilateral relations and address key issues of mutual interest. This visit is characterized by discussions and negotiations across several pivotal areas:

The primary goal of this visit is to reinforce and reinvigorate diplomatic ties between Iran and Pakistan. The leaders aim to establish a comprehensive strategic partnership, which includes enhancing political dialogue and cooperation at various levels of governance. Addressing and resolving outstanding bilateral issues, such as border security concerns and trade barriers, is crucial for building trust and stability between the two nations.

A major focus is on advancing significant joint energy projects like the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline. This project is seen as a cornerstone of energy cooperation that could transform Pakistan's energy landscape and ensure energy security. Discussions aim to explore new avenues for increasing trade and economic interactions, focusing on reducing tariffs and improving logistics and connectivity between the two countries.

The discussions include strategies for combating terrorism and enhancing border security. Both countries are keen to curb the influence of terrorist groups and manage cross-border criminal activities that threaten regional stability. There is a concerted effort to harmonize their stances on regional security issues, including the situation in Afghanistan and the broader Middle East.

Promoting cultural ties and understanding through exchanges in arts, literature, and education. Initiatives may include joint cultural



festivals, language programs, and academic conferences. Enhancing academic collaborations through scholarships, joint research initiatives, and student exchange programs.

Amid regional tensions, particularly with respect to Iran's stance on Israel, Iran seeks Pakistan's support in mediating and potentially dampening conflicts. These discussions are intended to explore ways Pakistan can assist in fostering regional peace and preventing escalations.

### OPPORTUNITIES FOR PAKISTAN

The visit of the Iranian President to Pakistan opens a multitude of opportunities across several domains. These opportunities not only foster stronger bilateral relations but also promise substantial benefits for Pakistan in economic, strategic, and cultural spheres.

The completion of the Iran-Pakistan gas pipeline can significantly alleviate Pakistan's energy shortages by providing a steady and reliable source of natural gas. This project not only supports Pakistan's energy needs but also strengthens economic ties between the two countries.

With Iran's strategic location and resources, there is vast potential for increasing bilateral trade. Reducing trade barriers and enhancing transportation links can lead to a boost in trade volumes, benefiting industries in both countries.

Strengthened ties could lead to increased



Iranian investment in Pakistan's infrastructure and manufacturing sectors, fostering economic growth and job creation.

Collaborative approaches toward regional issues, including security and conflict resolution, can enhance stability in South Asia and the Middle East.

Joint efforts in combating terrorism and managing border security are crucial for maintaining peace along the shared border, and preventing the movement of militant groups and illegal activities.

Strengthened relations with Iran could enhance Pakistan's influence in Muslim-majority countries, balancing its international relations, especially within the context of its relationships with other regional powers like Saudi Arabia and the UAE.

Increased educational and cultural exchanges can foster better understanding and relations between the populations of both countries, creating long-lasting bonds.

Promoting religious and cultural tourism can benefit both nations, with Pakistan hosting Iranian tourists visiting historical and religious sites, boosting local economies.

### DIPLOMATIC CHALLENGES

The strengthening of ties between Iran and Pakistan, while beneficial in many respects, introduces several diplomatic challenges that require careful navigation. Pakistan maintains

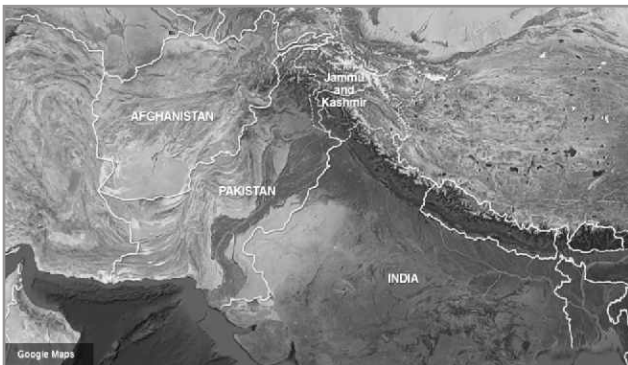


historically significant relationships with Gulf Cooperation Council (GCC) countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and the UAE, both of which have had strained relations with Iran. Enhancing ties with Iran might be perceived as a shift in Pakistan's foreign policy, which could lead to diplomatic tensions. Pakistan will need to assure its Gulf allies that its closer relationship with Iran will not come at the expense of its commitments to them.

The United States has had a complex relationship with Iran, especially concerning nuclear programs and regional security issues. As Pakistan seeks to balance its relationship with both the U.S. and Iran, it faces the challenge of navigating U.S. sanctions against Iran. Engaging economically or in significant strategic partnerships with Iran could potentially lead to complications in U.S.-Pakistan relations, including financial and military aid considerations.

While Pakistan aims to enhance economic ties with Iran, particularly in energy and trade, it must also consider the international sanctions regime. Engaging with Iran under the current sanctions landscape requires a nuanced approach to avoid any punitive measures from the international community, which could include restricted access to international banking systems and economic penalties.

Pakistan must develop a strategy to



engage with Iran that respects international legal frameworks while pursuing its national interests. This involves diplomatic dialogue with major world powers and ensuring that its actions are transparent and well-communicated to avoid misunderstandings.

Any significant shift in Pakistan's policy towards Iran could elicit reactions from neighboring countries, including India and Afghanistan, which have their own complex relations with Iran. Pakistan will need to manage this regional diplomacy carefully to maintain stability and peace in South Asia.

## CONCLUSION

The visit of the Iranian President to Pakistan marks a significant moment in the diplomatic relations between the two neighboring countries. This visit is not merely a ceremonial gesture but a strategic engagement aimed at deepening ties across multiple dimensions including economic, strategic, cultural, and political arenas. It holds the promise of enhanced bilateral cooperation that could bring substantial benefits to both nations.

The future of Iran-Pakistan relations looks promising, with potential for significant mutual benefits. If both countries manage to effectively address the outlined challenges, especially through diplomatic finesse and strategic engagements, this partnership could serve as a cornerstone for regional stability and economic prosperity.

Ultimately, the success of this renewed engagement will depend on continued commitment from both sides to uphold agreements and constructively address any arising issues. The international community, along with regional stakeholders, will be watching closely as Pakistan and Iran navigate this complex but potentially rewarding path.

**The author is the Editor of Monthly Interaction.**



# THE TROUBLED MYANMAR; A THREAT FOR NEIGHBORING CHINA



**DR. BUSHRA  
BATOOL**

Myanmar, a strategically Southeast Asian country, has been undergoing political turbulence for years now and the challenges of instability and insecurity have spilled over across borders into China and India. The military junta who seized power in 2021 in a coup d'état (stroke of state), has lost control of several towns and security outposts in the country's border areas in the hands of Three Brotherhood Alliance (3BHA), a coalition of rebel groups.

The 3BHA, which includes the Myanmar National Democratic Alliance Army (MNDAA), the Ta'ang National Liberation Army (TNLA), and the Arakan Army, launched a huge offensive against junta positions in various regions last October in an operation named Operation 1027. This operation enabled the 3BHA to receive rapid gains in terms of seizing towns and military outposts. The concern for China in the entire situation is the capture of important border crossings with China by those rebel groups, who even threatened to push the military out of northern

Shan State altogether.

The offensive has energized the nationwide armed struggle to overthrow the military regime and fighting has spread to many parts of the country. According to the United Nations (UN) reports, more than half a million people have been displaced in different parts of Myanmar due to this surge of fighting, with a total of 2 million displaced since the coup. This creates a refugee crisis in neighboring China and India when the latter is already reluctant to accept refugees due to the already existing instability in the state of Manipur, engulfed with ethnic violence over illegal immigration from Myanmar. India, despite the Western pressure, has also been providing developmental and security aid to the Burmese junta while keeping its lines of communication with the rebels open.

In this scenario, China's position is a little complicated. China has strong ties with the coalition of Myanmar rebel groups which also prompted dozens of nationalist pro-junta Burmese protesters to gather outside the Chinese Embassy in Yangon, Myanmar, with banners requesting the Chinese government not to extend its support to northern terrorist groups. In parallel, China also keeps the Burmese junta in confidence. The junta spokesman refused to critic China over the embassy protest matter and soon after that, China was seen conducting joint naval drills with the military junta-led government of Myanmar.



**Continued on page 39**

## ADNCA'S EPILOGUE:

### UNVEILING INSIGHTS AT NATIONAL SEMINAR ON THE THEME

# 'GREAT POWER COMPETITION: CHALLENGES AND OPPORTUNITIES FOR PAKISTAN'

On the 2nd of May, 2024, a one-day seminar convened at BUIITEMS by the Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN), attracting a distinguished array of participants including delegates from the Advisor Development National Command Authority (ADNCA), the Center for International Strategic Studies Sindh (CISSS), Rabita Forum International (RFI) and other think tanks alongside notable figures such as former governor Balochistan, diplomats, dignitaries, academia representatives, and officials from forces. Notably, ADNCA, Lt. General (R) Khalid Ahmed Kidwai NI, HI, HI(M) delivered a comprehensive address to the audience, encapsulating key insights and perspectives pertinent to the seminar's themes and objectives. His remarks, presented in the form of an epilogue, are detailed below.

1. Justice Amanullah Yasinzai, Brigadier Agha Ahmed Gul, Dr. Zafar Khan, eminent speakers of the Seminar, ladies and gentlemen. It always gives me great pleasure to be in Quetta and spend quality time with one of my favourite think tanks the Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN). Further, it gives me added pleasure, personal satisfaction and pride in seeing the rapid progress and growth of BTTN as it emerges on the academic and intellectual horizon of Pakistan. In a very short time of less than three years, BTTN has earned a nationally respected name for itself. In Balochistan alone, BTTN has established itself as the go-to strategic think tank on a variety of subjects of interest whether these be of local interest or national or international strategic interest. This is entirely in line as visualized in the founding objectives laid down for BTTN. So, I can say with complete confidence to team BTTN, well



done, you have delivered with aplomb." 2. The topic chosen by BTTN for its annual seminar could not have been more relevant to the strategic environments, and from Pakistan's perspective, may I say, challenging strategic environments, prevailing in today's geo-political and geo-economic world: Great Power Competition: Challenges and Opportunities for Pakistan. And to do justice to the topic, the BTTN has invited

speakers of the highest caliber, respected professionals in their respective fields. Listening to their candid and informed views was a great learning experience and I am sure, everyone here would agree that we will all go out from this Seminar wiser than when we came in and so, a very special thank you to the eminent speakers.

3. The term used in the topic "Great Power Competition" reminds me of a familiar and somewhat similar term used over a century plus ago, which was in vogue in this part of the world when the British Empire in India was struggling to keep the Russian Empire of the Tsars at bay. The term used then was "The Great Game" which was centered on and around Afghanistan, our own North West Frontier Province (NWFP) and parts of Central Asia. A century plus later, today, from the South Asian perspective, if we were to say that the American Empire has replaced the British Empire, and the emerging Chinese Empire has replaced the Russian Empire, we may not be too wide off the mark.
4. From Pakistan's national security perspective, and for that matter from India's national security perspective as also from the national security perspectives of the USA and China, the



strategic and geographical areas and features remain much the same. The Himalayas, the Karakorum, the Hindukush Mountains remain quite where they have always been for centuries unknown, the mighty Indus, the mighty Ganges, the mighty Brahmaputra, and for that matter the mighty Oxus separating Afghanistan from Central Asia, continue to flow richly as they always have for centuries unknown. The Indian Ocean, the Arabian Sea, the Bay of Bengal, and the Pacific, stay where they always have been for centuries unknown.

5. However, the Great Game of today, call it Great Power Competition as in this Seminar, is very much on, only with a change of cast, characters and actors. The difference being that after the partition of India in 1947, two new sovereign nations of India and Pakistan, adversaries for a variety of reasons anyway, also find themselves additionally at the receiving end of the fallout of today's Great Power Competition or The Great Game, between the USA and China. From the foregoing analogy, one can also reconfirm the famous proverb of the French writer Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr: the more things change, the more they remain the same. And from the point of view of history therefore, while one can





say that history repeats itself, one can also say that historically speaking, there is nothing new about the Great Power Competition between the USA and China, and by extension as surrogates, between India and Pakistan.

6. As I see some of these global developments today, I think you might agree that we are living through very interesting times. I think we are also living through historic times. In a philosophical sense you and I are fortunate to be witnessing history unfold before our eyes in our lifetime as we watch three super powers, the USA, Russia and China competing, containing and where possible confronting to establish their respective footprints for global supremacy. The chessboard is fascinating but the chessboard also carries direct consequences for South Asia. The fallout effects are already upon us, India and Pakistan, in a variety of negative and positive ways. The South Asian region as such remains in a flux while attempting to adjust to the global and regional developments and ground realities around it.
7. The USA has of course been an undisputed super power since the end of World War II particularly since the demise of the USSR. However, it has faced challenges to its world domination in the past and continues to face serious challenges to its status today, interestingly not only from China and Russia in the politico-military domains but also economic challenges. There is an increasing de-dollarization drive by many countries in an attempt to break free from American monetary hegemony. Then there is the enlargement of the BRICS

grouping of Brazil, Russia, India, China and South Africa, which now also includes some important countries of the Middle East which were thus far considered to be in the US area of influence. Mildly put, one can say that the US is struggling as it tries to retain its sole super power status.

8. The second super power of our times the USSR collapsed dramatically right before our eyes in the early 1990s, and splintered into the original 15 o d d Republics that had earlier come to form the then USSR some 70 years ago in 1922. The mantle of the collapsing USSR along with the nuclear weapons, passed on to the successor state of Russia. For



over three decades since then Russia has struggled to regain its inherited super power status politically, economically, militarily and technologically. However, both the USSR (read Russia) and the US have demonstrated vulnerabilities, and limits to power, through strategic debacles in Afghanistan, one following the other, refusing to learn from history, with serious consequences for their respective geo-political clout and global influence.

9. Additionally, for over two years now, Russia and the US are directly embroiled in Ukraine in what essentially is yet another struggle for security, power, and





domination. While the world suffers the consequences politically and economically, and anxiously awaits the conclusion of this unwarranted conflict, I have no doubt that the eventual outcome will redefine the future global strategic balance in more than one way.

10. In the meantime, beside the broader geo-political and geo-economic outcome that might emerge in the indefinite future, there are issues of immediate relevance and concern as the Ukrainian conflict rages; some of these issues touch Pakistan directly or indirectly.
11. One, the use of energy - both gas and oil - as also wheat as a strategic tool of war.
12. Two, the real possibility of the use of nuclear weapons especially tactical nuclear weapons (TNWs) leading possibly to a global Armageddon. While Russia has chosen to deploy the TNWs on the Belarus-Ukrainian border, as a deterrent, as a warning, or for possible employment, the other side too continues to respond by its own nuclear threats and warnings rather loosely. The latest in this one up-man ship was Poland recently.
13. Three, Russia has also walked back from its ratification of the Comprehensive Test Ban Treaty (CTBT), indicating intention to test nuclear weapons if the US were to do so, or even if the US were not to do so. And who can tell then that both India and Pakistan might actually welcome such an opportunity to test their own new weapon designs even as the prevailing non-proliferation regime is scuttled.
14. Further, as a corollary to these issues, one could also perhaps debate the now hypothetical possibility of what might have been if Ukraine had not given up its nuclear arsenal a few decades ago, in a moment of strategic insanity, in exchange for unreliable international security guarantees. These guarantees of course did not rescue Ukraine when most needed. Would Ukraine have been able to join NATO without a bullet being fired because its nuclear weapons would have deterred Russia from invading?
15. If one looks at all these developments closely, I think these issues carry strong relevance and lessons for countries like Pakistan and its deterrence policies when faced with asymmetrical military, political and economic challenges in South Asia with direct strategic effects on regional strategic stability.
16. In the geo-political milieu of today's global order, or disorder, it is the third super power of our era China which is emerging, some say has emerged, as the brand new super power posing multiple challenges to the US in the political, economic, military and technological spheres and is now making soft inroads even in areas of traditional US influence. Even though the meetings between President Joe Biden and President Xi Jin Ping, and now the recent visit of the US Secretary of State Anthony Blinken to China, may have calmed nerves, the Great Game, or the Great Power competition remains very much on with desperate American efforts to contain the

rise and rise of China, duly identified as the main threat, with a series of alliance building like the AUKUS and Quad, and getting countries like India, Australia and a few Far Eastern countries on board for playing the contain China game. The fact is that ever since President Obama's policy of Pivot to Asia over a decade ago, the resultant focus of the United States to contain the rise and rise of China, is today the singular dynamic driving the international, and in the case of Asia particularly, the regional geopolitical scene, with chips falling wherever they might.

17. Consider the soft but a surprise



diplomatic coup in March 2023 by China in the Middle East. China hosted and brought about a rapprochement between Saudi Arabia and Iran to not only re-establish broken diplomatic relations but also revive and honour a number of past agreements that the two sides had worked out but suspended years ago. The wider strategic effects of the rapprochement will eventually impact strategic outcomes in Yemen, Syria, Iraq and possibly Lebanon. For now though the regional game in the wider Middle East seems to have taken a strategic pause because of the ongoing Israeli war of genocide on Hamas and the Palestinians, further aggravated by the Israel-Iran military escalation and stand-

off.

18. These are tectonic events, ladies and gentlemen, which speak of China's emerging international diplomatic clout, which rests on solid economic strength as the world's second largest economy. And this despite the fact that China's latest military budget is only 27 % of the US military budget; USD 225 billion versus USD 817 billion.

19. With Russia and China aligning against US hegemony and supremacy, the US finds itself confronted by strong challengers. The identifiable responses in the US geo political and geo-economic strategies are to retain its pre-eminent dominant position through the sheer force of its military-industrial power and alliance building like the Quad and AUKUS. This stands out in considerable contrast to the strategies of China, which is more confident of itself and is exercising its traditional strategic patience in order to assert its global position of eminence through the tools of its economic power, its soft global reach and growing military, nuclear and technological prowess.

20. Also consider the build-up of Chinese hard power; the military exercises that China held in April 2023 to demonstrate its capabilities of physically encircling and isolating Taiwan despite the presence of strong US forces in the Pacific and the South China Sea.

21. Where does South Asia figure out in this unfolding global and regional geopolitical environment? What are the emerging challenges for Pakistan especially because of Pakistan's traditional and strong strategic relationship with China on the one hand as well as a long history of transactional

relationship with the US on the other hand? Is a balancing act possible that would work to serve Pakistan's national interests? How should Pakistan in the context of its security interests view and respond to the clear strategic choice that the US has made in over two decades by now, of propping up India as a counter weight to China? Even though India is nobody's fool as it has quite boldly and smartly demonstrated in its handling of the Ukraine crisis and unapologetic retention of its traditional strategic and economic relationship with Russia. In keeping with the emerging trend of dedollarization in international trade, India also went ahead and struck an agreement with Russia for the purchase of Russian oil in non-USD currencies. 'India first' is the declared and practiced policy under Modi and Jaishankar - and rightly so, why not?

22. On the flip side however, I am sure that deep down somewhere the US and the western establishments would wonder on the reliability of India as a strategic containment partner if and when the chips might be down against China in a future scenario. With a roaring trade with China of USD 136 billion in 2022, and an entirely mismatched Indian military as it emerged clearly during the 2020



thrashing in Ladakh, one wonders how much of a containment game would India want to play on behalf of the US and the west when actually needed? The west would likely watch as helplessly then, as it does now with reference to Russia and Ukraine, while India will play for preserving its own interests in a future US-Chinese conflict. An article by the Indian-American academic Ashley Tellis in the Foreign Policy magazine last year quite clearly indicated which way India would swing in such an eventuality - and he said quite clearly that it would not be towards the US. And while Ashley Tellis is the voice of the Indian establishment in Washington, the US continues to live with blinkers on and builds up India as a bulwark against China. India is quite happy with those blinkers.

23. Under these challenging geo-political and security environments, I think Pakistanis should thank our elders of many decades ago who aligned Pakistan's star with China. The effects of that visionary decision have borne fruit all through these decades as the Pakistan-China friendship has blossomed steadily and has gone from strength to strength. Today, Pakistan not only has a reliable friend but a strategic partner in the truest sense of the word, who can be trusted blindly and who has stood by Pakistan and safeguarded its interests in every conceivable way. Internationally, economically, strategically and militarily, Chinese help has been crucial, and on a number of occasions in fact, life-saving. Consequently, as China rises slowly but surely to claim its historical and rightful place as a great power in a multipolar world, I have no hesitation in saying that





Pakistan is on the right side of history. We therefore need to be wise about safeguarding zealously our coveted position and our interests. That does not at all imply walking away or a dilution of our relationships with other world powers but it does imply certainly the recognition as to where the anchor is.

24. Given the vast scope of the topic of today's Seminar, the worthy I speakers and subject experts have done full justice to their sub-topics and deserve our deep gratitude for their candid analysis and views. There is just one last point that I would like to make and that is with regard to India especially in the context of its rising place in South Asia and the region. I have a viewpoint on that account and I would like to say a few words on it.
25. There is no doubt that India is a rising regional power and it is aspiring to become a major global player in the future I have no argument with that. Besides its geographical size and a population of over 1400 Million people, over time India has developed strategic, military and economic strengths that compel international players to woo India as an emerging power of consequence. In the unfolding international power play India has smartly aligned itself with the US and the west because of converging

- mutual interests mainly over a rising China. Recent events and successes have provided India an opportunity to showcase its claims to recognition as an emerging regional and global power. The landing on the moon, the hosting of the G-20 Summit in New Delhi, the announcement of the India-Middle East-Europe Economic Corridor (IMEC), all in quick succession, have come at an opportune time for India to glamourize and bask in international recognition. This to a point that it can, not only participate in an anti-US trade de-dollarization drive, be on the opposite side on Ukraine, display arrogant behavior before the very powers that are trying to propel it upwards by signing strategic agreements after strategic agreements with it, but also get away with state sponsored murders in Canada, USA and in Pakistan in addition to undertaking state sponsored terrorism inside Pakistan and in Indian Occupied Kashmir by taking pages out of the Israeli playbook.
26. Simultaneously, India has also retained its historically strong ties with Russia especially due to its heavy dependence on Russian military inventory. While counting itself as an important member of the SCO and BRICS, India has played to the west's need to contain the rise of China without itself undertaking any meaningful







obligations as pay back. We have seen how in the Ukraine crisis India has played both sides of the fence and protected its national interests quite unapologetically while the US and Europe watch helplessly.

27. Notwithstanding the relative successes of India in different fields. India has also suffered a few strategic setbacks in the last few years A consideration of these will enable us to take a more balanced view of India.

- a. Continued shut out by a direct land route from Afghanistan and Central Asia without Pakistan's consent.
- b. Inability to draw benefits from the alternative route to Afghanistan and Central Asia through Iran's Chabahar Port despite massive investments. The concurrent entry of China into Iran with a 25 years \$ 400 billion deal has further complicated India's strategic investments in Iran.
- c. The strategic fiasco against China in Ladakh, Doklam and in Arunachal Pradesh, which carries serious security and operational implications for India's western front with Pakistan, I the LOC and its Siachen positions in a potential two front war scenario. To briefly recall, China cut India and its surprised military to size in the full glare of international publicity without firing a bullet. India was humiliated; the US

and the west had no help to offer and simply watched India get a drubbing. Modi had to lie with a straight face to the world and to the Indian public when he said that, "no post has been lost, no territory has been lost". The Indian public simply swallowed the lie as a face saver. The so-called disengagement publicized by India is nothing more than the formalization and freezing of the strategic territorial reverses suffered by India. India's strategic over reach against China on the LAC compelled India to restore the ceasefire on the LOC with Pakistan in order to offset a possible two front war



scenario. The arrogant rhetoric to take Azad Kashmir and Gilgit-Baltistan also mellowed down for some time because of ground realities. Now of course, the Defence Minister Rajnath Singh, with an eye on the ongoing national election, had the temerity to say that he would chase terrorists inside Pakistan with a convenient memory lapse of the fantastic tea that was served to Abhinandan the last time India came chasing terrorists inside Pakistan.

- d. In my opinion, strategic stability in South Asia especially from Pakistan's viewpoint has been well served because of the consequences of India's

strategic over reach against China. With committed deployments of the Indian Army and the Indian Air Force from Ladakh to Arunachal Pradesh, a portion of the Indian military is likely to remain fixed in the northern front of nearly 3700 kilometers for the foreseeable future with an additional logistical burden far greater than that required to sustain Indian positions at Siachen. That eases pressures against Pakistan creating relatively greater equilibrium and balance in the strategic stability paradigm.

- e. On the economic front, while India's broader growth trajectory is impressive at first glance, it does not provide any hope whatsoever to India's nearly 700 million people living in abject poverty - that is 50 % of a hungry and shelter less population living in some of the worst slums in the world. It is a typical story, like Pakistan and many other third world countries, of lop sided economic growth which has nothing for the poor in it, except that in the case of India, the astounding figure of 700 million people living in abject poverty with no hope in hell of being lifted out of it is a ticking time bomb. While India's foreign exchange reserves of nearly USD 600 billion are indeed impressive, a lesser known figure is the size of



India's external debt of USD 624 billion. However, the sheer size of the Indian economy provides the state with enough resources to spend lavishly on its security apparatus rather than on the 700 million poor souls.

28. Here I would like to state purely militarily and strategically speaking that this is where an opportunity for Pakistan emerges. While Pakistan's military has always been conscious of the disadvantages of a conventional force asymmetrical imbalance, this has largely been offset by the acquisition of a robust nuclear weapons capability. Pakistan's inventory of a variety of nuclear weapons across the entire spectrum of the deterrence paradigm from strategic to operational to tactical, including First and Second Strike options, has strengthened Pakistan's hand enormously and allowed Pakistan to transit to the policy of Full Spectrum Deterrence creating strategic and operational effects to a point where India's large conventional military capability has become quite irrelevant to the security paradigm of South Asia. War as an instrument of policy for India stands outlawed. India therefore is not ten feet tall and is manageable.
29. My recommendation is very simple really! That from such a position of relative strategic security, enforced peace and comfort, it is now up to politics, diplomacy and smart governance to use the time and space window created by Pakistan's nuclear deterrence capability in all earnest for focused economic resurgence in order to regain Pakistan's compromised economic sovereignty, and strengthen internal cohesion.
30. I thank you, ladies and gentlemen.

# **HATF-1**

## **BALLISTIC MISSILE SYSTEM**



# HATF - 1 BALLISTIC MISSILE SYSTEM



**SYED SAMIULLAH**



The Hatf 1 Ballistic Missile System is the first system developed under Pakistan's Hatf program (meaning "Target"). It was jointly designed and developed by the Space

Research Commission and Kahuta Research Laboratories (KRL) in 1987, and it entered military service with the Pakistan Army in 1992. The Hatf I is a land-based tactical and battlefield-range ballistic missile. Serving primarily as a rocket artillery weapon system, the Hatf I has since been succeeded by its enhanced versions, the Hatf-1A and Hatf-1B.



## DEVELOPMENT BACKGROUND

The development of the Hatf 1 missile was initially revealed by Pakistani officials during a Pakistan Day Parade in 1989. Its design is believed to have been heavily influenced by external technological assistance, predominantly from France and China.

## VARIANTS AND UPGRADES

The Hatf 1 missile system includes three variants: Hatf 1, Hatf 1A, and Hatf 1B. Each variant marks an evolution in the capabilities of the system:



◆ **Hatf 1A:** Introduced in 1995, this variant features enhanced range capabilities, extending up to 100 kilometers, and improved accuracy over its predecessor.

◆ **Hatf 1B:** Launched in February 2000 and operational by 2004, the Hatf 1B incorporated a rudimentary inertial guidance system while maintaining the range and payload capacities of the Hatf 1A.

### SPECIFICATIONS AND FEATURES

The Hatf 1 missile is characterized by its mobility, tactical utility, and solid propellant fuel system, which simplifies storage, transport, and firing processes. Key specifications include:

◆ **LENGTH AND DIAMETER:** The missile measures 6 meters in length and 0.56 meters in diameter.

◆ **LAUNCH WEIGHT:** The launch weight of the missile is approximately 1,500 kilograms.

◆ **PAYLOAD CAPACITY:** It can carry a single warhead weighing up to 500 kilograms.

◆ **RANGE:** The extended range of both variants, i.e., Hatf 1A and Hatf 1B, is 100 kilometers.

◆ **WARHEAD OPTIONS:** This system is declared non-nuclear by Pakistan. Although primarily equipped with conventional warheads, it has the capability to be outfitted with chemical or high-explosive payloads.



### PROPULSION AND ACCURACY

The Hatf 1 uses a single-stage solid propellant rocket motor. However, as the missile is unguided, it should be considered a long-range artillery shell, with the location of the impact depending on the proper direction, angle of launch, and the missile's ability to fly straight.

### STRATEGIC IMPORTANCE

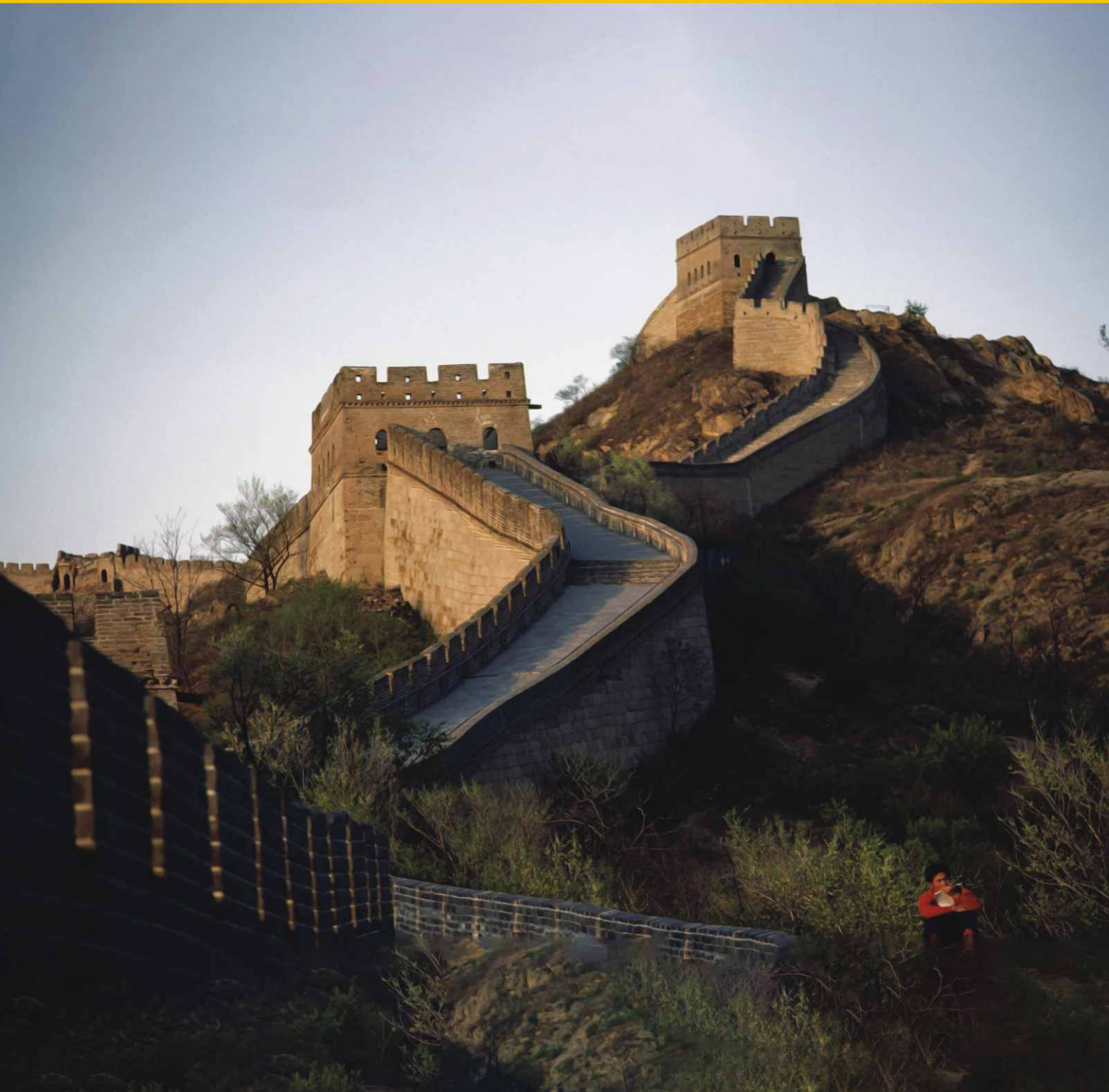
The Hatf 1 missile plays a significant role in Pakistan's defense strategy, providing a short-range option that complements the country's broader missile arsenal. Its road-mobile basing capability enhances its tactical flexibility and survivability, allowing for rapid deployment and relocation, which is crucial in maintaining a deterrent posture in the region.

### CONCLUSION

The Hatf 1 missile system highlights Pakistan's commitment to developing a versatile and effective missile capability. Despite its limitations, the system's mobility, ease of operation, and range of payloads make it a valuable asset in the country's military inventory. As regional security dynamics evolve, the strategic importance of maintaining such short-range missile capabilities becomes increasingly evident, ensuring Pakistan retains a credible deterrent and operational flexibility in its defense strategy.

"The author is a Research Officer at Rabita Forum International (RFI) and Associate Editor of Monthly Interaction".

# ANCIENT CHINESE CIVILIZATION



# ANCIENT CHINESE CIVILIZATION

**INTERACTION TEAM**

The ancient China is recognized for cultivating one of the world's oldest and most enduring civilizations. The term "China" itself stems from the Sanskrit word 'Cina', which is taken from the Qin Dynasty and represents the civilization's early status in global history. This term was propagated through the extensive trade on the Silk Road, with the area also known to the Romans and Greeks as 'Seres', the place where silk originates.

## PREHISTORIC FOUNDATIONS

Before the emergence of a recognized Chinese civilization, the area was inhabited by various prehistoric cultures:

- 1. PALEOLITHIC AGE:** This period saw the earliest human settlements, which include some of the first known uses of stone tools and fire. Notable sites from this period include the caves at Zhoukoudian, where remains of Homo erectus, popularly known as Peking Man, were found.
- 2. NEOLITHIC AGE:** Marked by the development of settled agricultural communities and the use of polished stone



tools. This period saw the emergence of pottery and the domestication of animals. Notable cultures from this period include the Yangshao Culture (5000-3000 BCE), famous for its painted pottery, and the Longshan Culture (3000-2000 BCE), known for its black pottery and advanced social structures.

## THE BIRTH OF CIVILIZATION

### DYNASTIC BEGINNINGS: XIA TO SHANG

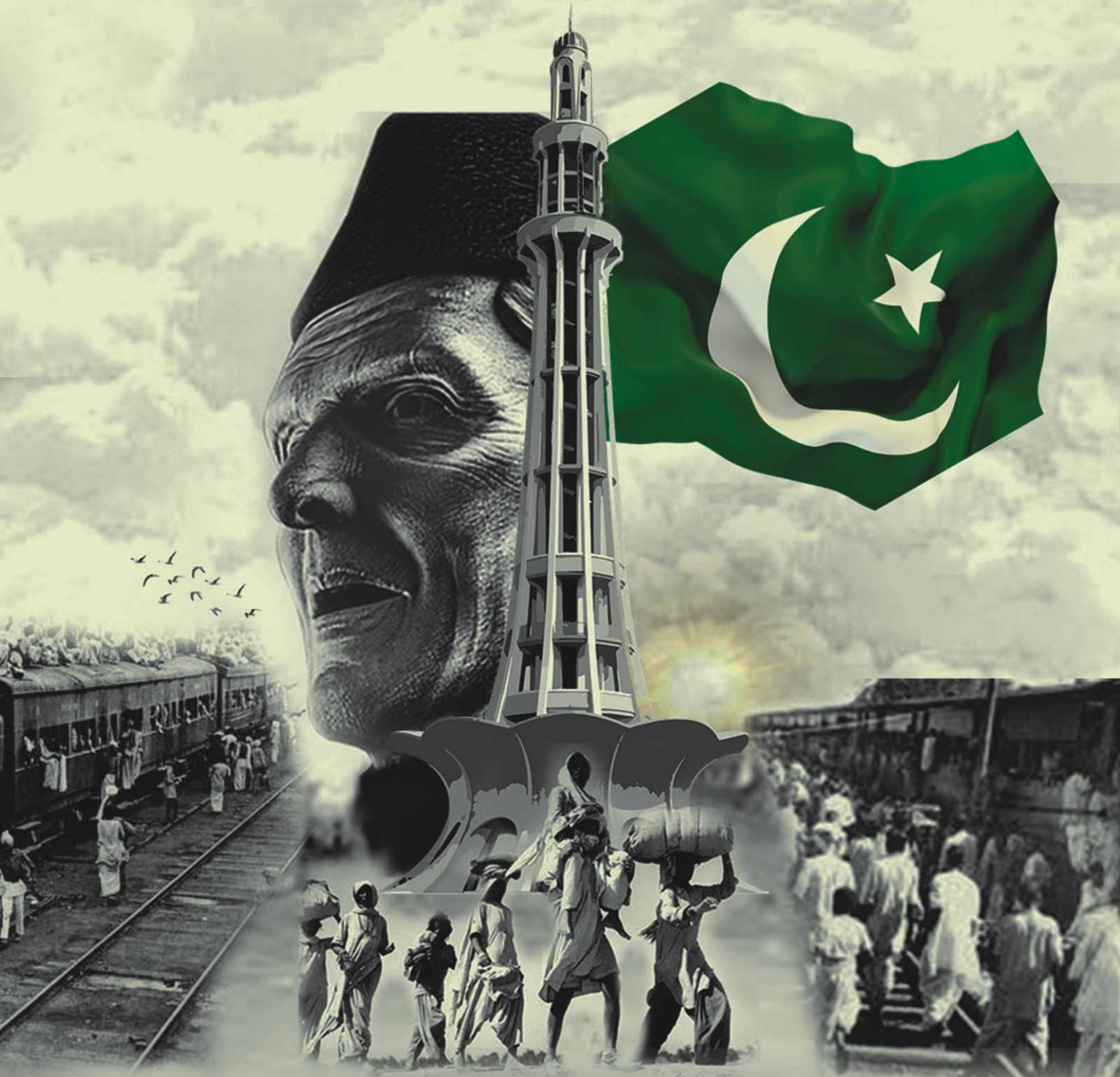
The evolution from scattered Neolithic villages to a unified state is marked by the Xia Dynasty, around 2070 BCE, and progressing into the Shang Dynasty around 1600 BCE. These periods were characterized by significant advancements in bronze metallurgy, architecture, and the inception of writing.

### RELIGIOUS AND CULTURAL DEVELOPMENTS

During the Shang era, the supreme god Shangti was worshipped, alongside ancestor worship which became integral to their spiritual and social life.

**Continued on page 37**



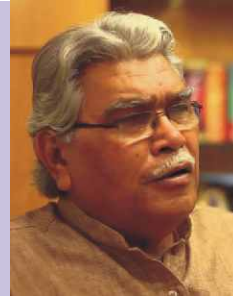


# PAKISTAN CORNER

Welcome to "Pakistan Corner," a dedicated section in our magazine where we explore the rich tapestry of Pakistan's history, culture, and legacy before and after its independence. This series aims to illuminate the diverse heritages, local languages, various cultures, and unsung heroes of the nation, offering our readers an in-depth look into the different facets that shape today's Pakistan.



# PAKISTAN RESOLUTION AND TWO-NATION THEORY



**KHAWAJA RAZI  
HAIDER**

The resolution, based on the demand for a separate homeland, passed in the March 1940 meeting of the All India Muslim League in Lahore, later popularly known as the Pakistan Resolution, holds great significance from the perspective of the long political, cultural, and social history of the Muslims of the subcontinent.

In that context, there is a significant level of consensus among historians, and every individual agrees on the fundamental point that based on centuries-old interactions between Muslims and Hindus, it was almost established that Hindus and Muslims are two separate communities and it is not possible for them to coexist within the same society.

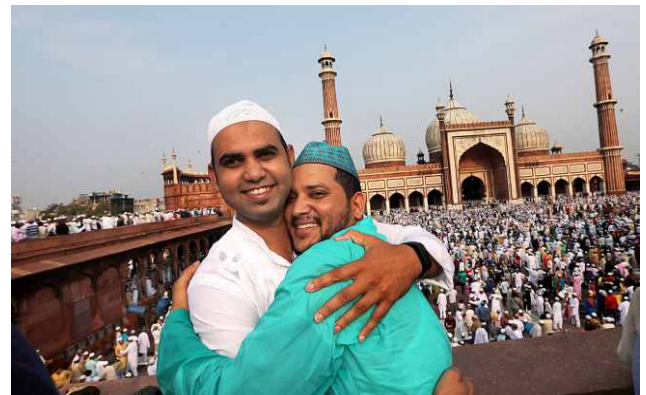
This fact led to the creation and popularity of the two-nation theory, and in view of this, after 1857, the Muslims of the subcontinent not only promoted their national identity but also, under the guidance of this national identity, began their struggle to reclaim their political and cultural identity.

Historical facts also support the fact that

Muslims, after their arrival in India and especially after establishing power, took measures to ensure that their governments were not perceived as alien or foreign by the local population. Muslim rulers socialized with the local population, made contacts, reconciled with local traditions, and attempted to create cultural harmony while avoiding ethnic separatism.

However, Hindus consistently kept themselves separate from Muslims because they disliked the dominance of anyone other than themselves in India, and they sought to establish their rule. As Dr. Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi has written, there was no expediency in the behavior of Hindus at any point in history. They were ready and willing to expel Muslims from the region, viewing the existence of a Muslim government as anathema. Their aim was to establish Hindu Raj in the subcontinent.

In the last period of the Mughal Empire, the Hindus had openly expressed their prejudice against the Muslims, and their last attempt



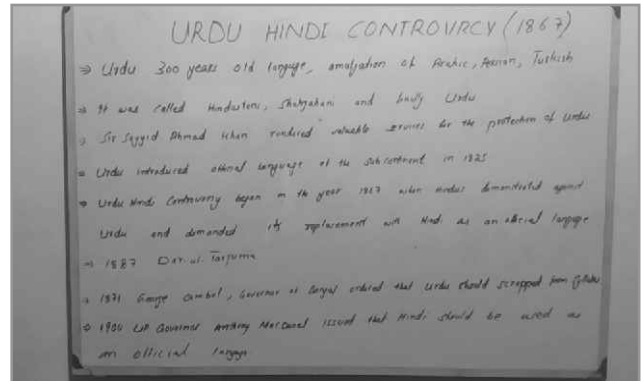
Was to completely end the power of the Muslims. Particularly, during the eighteenth century, Sardar Shivaji vigorously pursued anti-Muslim agendas. His animosity towards Muslims reached such extremes that he wrote this letter to Raja Jai Singh:

"My sword is thirsty for the blood of Muslims. It is a pity that this sword has to be unsheathed for another campaign." It should have fallen like lightning on the heads of the Muslims. Who has no religion and who does not know how to do justice? The armies, roaring like thunderclouds, will pour down like a bloody rain of swords, causing all Muslims to be swept away in this torrent of blood from one end of Deccan to the other, leaving no trace of a Muslim identity.

From this letter of Shivaji, it is clear that he wanted to eliminate the Muslims from the subcontinent and make Hinduism the common religion of the region. In this context, other Hindu leaders also showed activity and used all kinds of tactics to end the supremacy of Muslims. On the other hand, the Muslims tried to build equal ways of cooperation between the two nations. These efforts of the Muslims are recorded on the pages of history not only till 1857 but also in the subsequent periods, but these efforts continuously proved futile.

Hindus persisted in their stance to the extent that in 1867, they demanded Hindi to be used instead of Urdu in the courts of Benares. According to Professor Sharif Al-Mujahid, although there was hardly any significant difference between the two languages except for the script, this demand was unjustified and its reasons were obscure from the Muslim perspective.

Consequently, Muslims became increasingly vigilant in safeguarding their socio-cultural and spiritual heritage from the



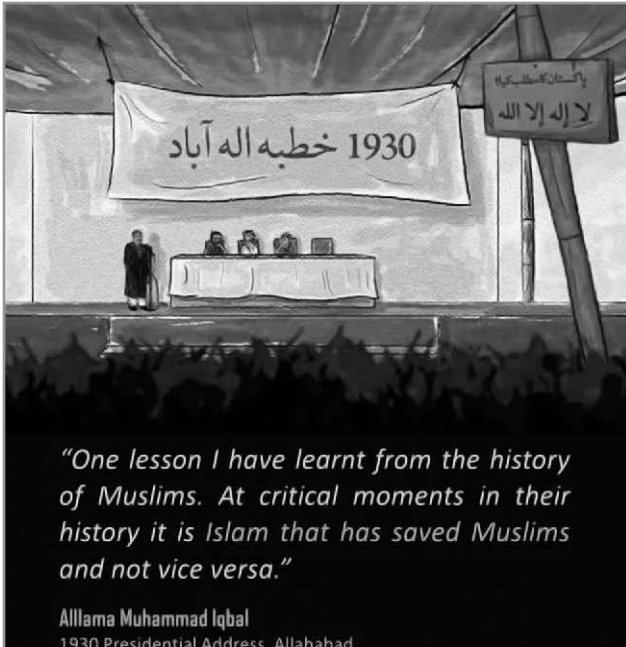
obstinate Hinduism. Particularly notable was the adoption of the Salam Dua attire, emphasizing religious individualism and external distinctions from Hindus, a departure from the days of Muslim supremacy where such measures were unnecessary.

In this context, Sir Syed Ahmed Khan emerged as one of the earliest Muslim thinkers who instilled in Muslims a sense of being a distinct nation both theoretically and politically. He advised Muslims to dissociate themselves from the Indian National Congress, a political party dominated by Hindus aiming to maintain Hindu supremacy and urged them to uphold their national identity.

Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his companions also deemed the Congress detrimental to the national identity of Muslims. Consequently, Muslim leaders deliberated on the formation of a separate political party. The actions of Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and his associates revealed that the emerging class of Muslims, with a modern understanding, was unwilling to accept Hindu dominance.

Moreover, various events and circumstances further underscored the reality that Muslims and Hindus are two distinct nations, and attempting to accommodate them under one rule would exacerbate sectarian tensions and class conflicts.

The political life of Quaid-e-Azam



Mohammad Ali Jinnah began in 1905 with his association with the Congress party's platform. He was recognized as the ambassador of Hindu-Muslim unity till 1916 due to his moderate stance and concerted efforts towards fostering unity between the two communities.

By the third decade of the 20th century, it became evident that the biggest obstacle in the path of Hindu-Muslim unity was Hindu resistance. They did not desire Muslims to attain a dignified and prominent position in this region.

The Nehru Report of 1928 further clarified that the Indian National Congress and its leadership were solely focused on Hindu dominance and the establishment of Hindu power, which hindered any form of unity with Muslims. This realization was deeply felt by other Muslim leaders as well.

In December 1930, for the first time, the renowned poet and philosopher Allama Iqbal, during his presidential address at the All India Muslim League's platform, emphasized that without acknowledging the existence of

different nations based on Western democratic principles in India, it was not possible to apply these principles. Therefore, the demand of Muslims to establish an Islamic India in Hindustan was completely justified.

Allama Iqbal further stated that it was his desire to merge Punjab, Sindh, and Balochistan into one province, whether it be a self-governing unit within the British Empire or outside it. In his view, it seemed that ultimately the Muslims of Northwestern India would have to establish a well-organized Islamic state. This recommendation by Allama Iqbal was the result of extensive analysis and demands in the political history of the region, reflecting his political foresight.

Iqbal's political insight led him to realize the imperative need for a separate homeland for Muslims in the region, understanding that the preservation of Muslim culture and traditions was impossible without it. His proposal instilled political awareness among disillusioned Muslims in the face of Hindu attitudes, prompting them to contemplate this direction earnestly.

Various schemes and proposals for the partition of India were presented from 1930 to 1940, among which Chaudhry Rehmat Ali's proposal held significant importance. Not only did Chaudhry Rehmat Ali demand a separate federation comprising the northwestern provinces of India, but he also explicitly coined the term "Pakistan" for this federation. His proposal gained prominence when it was presented during the Round Table Conferences in London, where Muslim delegates were disheartened by the attitudes of Congress leaders.

Consequently, this proposal was not only deliberated upon in the Round Table Conference's Select Committee but was also widely accepted among the Muslim

community in British India. The demand for a separate homeland resonated from all sides, and subsequently, various proposals for the partition of India were put forward.

In October 1938, the Sindh Provincial Muslim League Conference presented a resolution, marking the first instance at the party level where the demand for the partition of India was made. Dr. Ishtiaq Hussain Qureshi wrote that the Muslim League, through its platform, presented, for the first time, the concept of a separate nation to the Muslims of India. It was the first time that the Muslim League initiated discussions for the self-determination rights of Indian Muslims and, for the first time, demanded a constitution that would enable Muslims to attain complete freedom.

Muslims' concerns were further strengthened when, after the general elections in 1937, the Congress, overlooking Muslim representatives in Hindu-majority provinces, formed governments and implemented programs and policies aimed at assimilating Muslims into Hindu identity and keeping them merely subservient.

Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah took a firm stance on the situation at the Muslim League session in Lucknow in October 1937, expressing in strong words that Congress was fundamentally a Hindu organization, a fact evident through its

leaders' words, actions, and programs. Since assuming power, the majority party has provided ample evidence that India is for Hindus.

The Congress-led governments subjected Muslim minorities to extreme injustice and inhumane treatment after the 1937 general elections. The Muslim League established a committee, known later as the Pirpur Report Committee under Raja Syed Muhammad Mehdi of Pirpur, which highlighted in its report the widespread belief among Hindus that every Hindu aspires for 'Ram Raj' and views Congress government as a Hindu government.

A large number of Congress members, consisting mostly of Hindus, have harbored dreams of Hindu rule since the end of British colonialism. Continuous hostile behavior from Hindus intensified the feeling to such an extent that during the Lahore session in March 1940, Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah clearly stated that Islam and Hinduism are not merely religions in their verbal sense, but distinct and particular social systems as well. It is merely a dream that Hindus and Muslims can rise together as a common nation.

The misunderstanding of a single Indian nation has gone beyond bounds and is the root cause of most of our problems. If we do not reconsider our views in time, this misconception will ruin India. The relationship between Hindus and Muslims is not merely based on different religious philosophies, social customs, traditions, and literature. They do not intermarry or dine together.

The fact is that they both adhere to cultures founded on conflicting ideologies and perceptions. Therefore, the consequence of merging two such nations into one state, with one being a majority and the other a minority, inevitably leads to increased unrest and,







ultimately, the collapse of the entire system.

In that historic session in Lahore, a resolution was adopted for the resolution of constitutional issues of India, demanding, in clear terms, the establishment of a separate homeland for Muslims in British India. This resolution later became known and accepted as the Pakistan Resolution. The essence of this agreement was the creation of a nation where Muslims could live according to their principles and destinies.

This was the spirit of the agreement that emerged from the two-nation theory. Matloobul Hasan Syed, Quaid-e-Azam's private secretary and his early biographer, wrote, "This agreement was a positive solution to the constitutional issues of Muslims, and after its acceptance, the horizon of their struggle became clear and bright. Their destination was in sight, and they had to strive for one thing, the creation of a free country."

Matloobul Hasan Syed further wrote that "If the Pakistan Resolution had not been presented, India would not have been free today because it was only after the acceptance of this resolution that the concept of a separate homeland for Hindus emerged."

The Muslims welcomed the creation of Pakistan with great enthusiasm, while Hindus displayed strong opposition. They began to interpret the agreement in a hostile manner, aiming to sow discord among Muslims.

Mahatma Gandhi, the leader of the Hindus, wrote in his newspaper, *Harijan*, on April 6, 1940, emphasizing that understanding and respecting the personal interests of Muslims would always prevent them from dividing India.

He argued that their religion advocates a clear self-sacrifice that opposes division. He deemed the two-nation theory as unreal, condemning efforts to use it to alienate Muslims.

When considering the communal situation in India, it becomes evident that from Shivaji to Gandhi, every Hindu perceived the separate identity of Muslims and their inclusion in power as an unpardonable offense. They persistently sought to undermine Muslims by pushing them away from the two-nation theory, which forms the foundation of a separate homeland.

However, their aspirations couldn't be realized, and Muslims, under the guidance of the leadership of Quaid-e-Azam Mohammad Ali Jinnah, achieved their desires and aspirations on August 14, 1947, not only by obtaining Pakistan but also by making it clear to Hindus and the entire world that Muslims are always prepared to fully engage in any trial for the preservation of their culture, traditions, and religious authority.

**The author is the former director of Quaid-e-Azam Academy, Karachi.**

**Continued from page 30**

**ANCIENT CHINESE CIVILIZATION**



This laid the groundwork for the complex rituals and beliefs surrounding life and the afterlife that would define much of Chinese religious culture.

**ZHOU DYNASTY AND THE MANDATE OF HEAVEN**

The Zhou Dynasty, beginning in 1046 BCE, introduced the Mandate of Heaven, a fundamental concept that justified the ruler's divine right to govern. This period also saw the flourishing of arts and the rise of philosophical thought, notably during the Hundred Schools of Thought era.

**THE WARRING STATES PERIOD**

The fragmentation of the Zhou in 771 BCE led to the Warring States period, a time of intense conflict and political intrigue lasting until 221 BCE. This era ended with the rise of the Qin state under Ying Zheng, who unified China and became known as Shi Huangdi, the First Emperor.

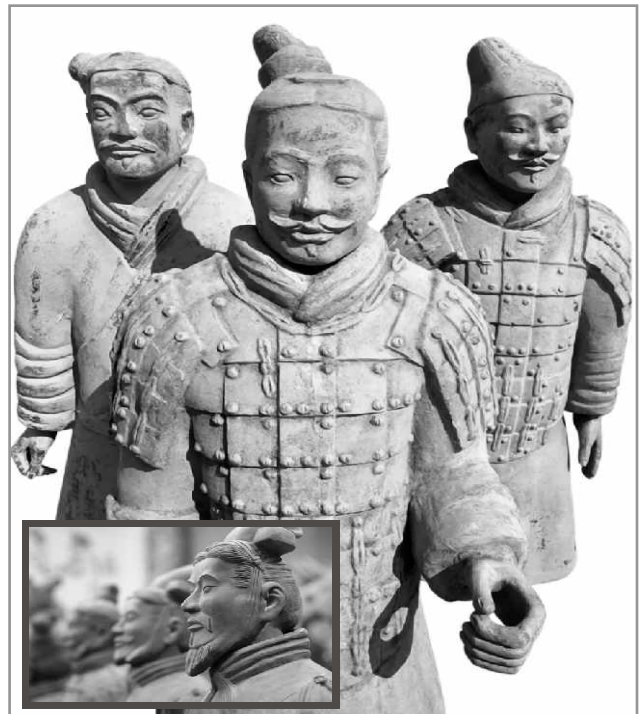
**QIN DYNASTY AND IMPERIAL CHINA**

Under the leadership of Shi Huangdi, the Qin Dynasty (221 to 206 BCE) brought about revolutionary changes and ambitious initiatives that fundamentally transformed Chinese society. Renowned for his authoritarian tendencies, Shi Huangdi abolished the feudal system and divided the

empire into administrative regions under the direct rule of the central government. In an effort to streamline trade and military operations, he standardized weights, measurements, and even cart axle widths. The Great Wall's original construction, which was done with the intention of defending against invaders from the north, is one of his most famous contributions. He also standardized the Chinese script, which helped to unify China's many areas under a single language for governance and culture. However, his rule was characterized by tyranny, including the infamous burning of books and the burial of scholars to put down intellectual protest, with a special focus on Confucian scholars. This suppression of intellectual variety, along with the harsh tax and labor duties imposed on the public, resulted in widespread unrest and the dynasty's fast downfall shortly after his death, clearing the way for the Han Dynasty's rise.

**HAN DYNASTY: A GOLDEN AGE**

The Han Dynasty (202 BCE-220 CE)



ushered in a golden age of culture, technology, and politics. The period saw significant developments such as the codification of medical knowledge, the invention of paper, and the expansion of the Silk Road. The Han rulers, particularly Emperor Wu, endorsed Confucianism as the state philosophy, influencing successive generations.

### **PERIOD OF DISUNITY AND SUI-TANG RESURGENCE**

Following the fall of the Han, China entered a prolonged period of disunity, which lasted until the rise of the Sui Dynasty in 589 CE and subsequently the Tang Dynasty in 618 CE. These dynasties revitalized China through extensive reforms in administration, culture,



and military prowess, setting the stage for the renaissance of arts, science, and trade.

### **SONG DYNASTY AND BEYOND**

The Song Dynasty (960-1279 CE), was deeply influenced by its predecessors, notably the Tang and Zhou dynasties, and laid substantial groundwork for subsequent dynasties such as the Yuan, Ming, and Qing. Building upon the cosmopolitan and bureaucratic foundations set by the Tang Dynasty, the Song Dynasty enhanced the imperial examination system, which democratized and expanded the civil service by making government positions accessible based on merit rather than lineage, echoing the meritocratic ideals rooted in the Zhou Dynasty's Mandate of Heaven. Culturally, the



Song era experienced a renaissance in arts, science, and technology, with significant advancements such as the invention of gunpowder, the magnetic compass, and the pioneering of paper money, illustrating an evolution of the sophisticated cultural and technological landscape initiated during the Tang era.

Politically and economically, the Song Dynasty established a more centralized bureaucracy and a vibrant market economy that would influence the administrative reforms and commercial expansion of the Yuan and Ming dynasties. This period symbolizes a bridge between the classical philosophies and innovations of ancient dynasties and the more modern developments that shaped late imperial China, demonstrating a dynamic continuity in the evolution of Chinese civilization.

### **CONCLUSION**

The history of ancient China is a vast tapestry of cultural, technological, and philosophical achievements. From its prehistoric roots to its complex dynasties, the civilization's legacy is a tribute to the enduring nature of Chinese culture, its adaptability, and its profound impact on the world stage. According to Will Durant, an American Historian, and Philosopher, "China is a museum of antiquities, a gallery of art, a sanctuary of religion, and a mine of literature, unequalled by any other country in the breadth and mass of its heritage."



**Continued from page 16****THE TROUBLED MYANMAR; A THREAT FOR NEIGHBORING CHINA**

China is worried about intensifying insecurity fueled along its borders due to the rebel offensive. Beijing has called for a cease-fire and has said the warring parties should try to resolve their differences through dialogue. In an effort to ease tensions, China brokered an agreement between the Myanmar military and the alliance of the armed resistance groups, the 3BHA or Northern Alliance, in Kunming, China. The two sides had agreed to pull their troops back from the frontlines and the Myanmar military to agree on formally recognizing the MNDAA as the government of the Kokang special region. From the China's perspective, the important development was to ensure that China's interests in Myanmar were not harmed and that there would be reopening of the overland trade between Myanmar and China, which was closed due to the fighting that followed Operation 1027.

The settlement however proved to be short-lived and another wave of tensions arose followed by rebel forces capturing the Myanmar town of Myawaddy, a key trading outpost near the Thai border. This also prompted a stream of refugees into Thailand, engulfing another Southeast Asian country into trouble. Beijing has worked to push both the junta and the rebels to the negotiating table, but the results have been viewed as limited.

The People's Liberation Army (PLA) conducted its second live-fire drill along China's border with Myanmar in April, signaling Beijing's heightened concerns over its neighbor's deteriorating security situation. Earlier in the month, the PLA's official website PLA Daily reported that the war in Myanmar has "seriously threatened" the security and

stability of the border region. It further added that the Chinese army would take "all necessary measures" to protect the safety of its people.

China for the third time, since the launch of the offensive by the rebel alliance, has conducted live-fire drills along China's border with Myanmar and holds great motivation to maintain peace in Myanmar. In addition, the 3BHA and Myanmar military junta are also not in a position to afford China's alienation or ignore what China wishes to achieve vis-à-vis Myanmar. Notwithstanding, tensions are looming large and the warring parties are yet to make arrangements to accommodate one another in the regional equation.

China's anxieties about the situation in Myanmar are likely to grow, at least until there is a settlement between the rebel groups and military junta about territorial controls. China's utmost objective is to secure its strategic and commercial interests. Stringent Western sanctions against the junta and the support it enjoys not only from its neighboring India but also Russia and the military exercises with China make the power balance of the region precarious. The situation, if not sorted out, could take the region to a flash point where it could lead to a humanitarian and security catastrophe.

**The author is a Research Officer at Rabita Forum International (RFI).**





# THE KARACHI INSTITUTE OF POWER ENGINEERING

**INTERACTION  
TEAM**

This series is dedicated to showcasing the remarkable achievements and vital contributions of the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) and its affiliated institutions. It aims to provide readers with insights into Pakistan's nuclear advancements, including nuclear science, energy production, healthcare breakthroughs, agricultural innovations, and environmental conservation, all driven by PAEC's pioneering efforts. The series draws extensively from the insightful book "Johari Nishtar e Tehqeeq," the first-ever Urdu book on the topic, authored by the Chief Editor of the monthly Interaction, Nusrat Mirza. It offers a unique perspective on untold stories, significant milestones, and the unwavering commitment of PAEC and its dedicated scientists and researchers.

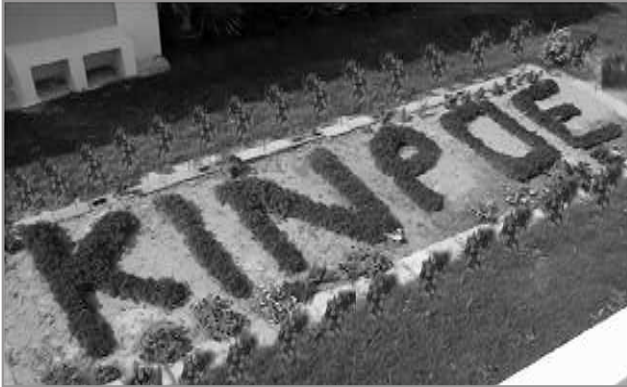


The Karachi Institute of Power Engineering (KINPOE) is a vigorous educational institution in Karachi, Pakistan, founded by the Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission in 1993. Established to meet the increasing demands for qualified manpower in the nuclear power sector, KINPOE has evolved from its origins as the Karachi Nuclear Power Training Centre (KNPTC).

Initially, KNPTC was focused on training engineers and technicians primarily for the operation and maintenance of the Karachi Nuclear Power Plant (KANUPP), offering a

one-year post-graduate training program. Over time, the center's educational programs were refined to better equip students with analytical and design skills essential for the nuclear industry.

In 1993, KINPOE with its establishment began offering a master's degree program in nuclear power engineering, marking a significant advancement in its academic offerings. This program was initially affiliated with NED University of Engineering and Technology, Karachi, awarding a Master of Engineering Degree in Nuclear Power



Engineering. The affiliation later shifted to the Pakistan Institute of Engineering and Applied Sciences, allowing KINPOE to confer a Master of Science degree in Nuclear Power.

KINPOE is strategically located adjacent to KANUPP, enabling practical, hands-on training for operators and engineers directly involved with the nuclear power plant. The institute offers three primary academic programs: a Masters in Nuclear Power Engineering, a Postgraduate Training Program, and a Post-Diploma Training Program. These programs are designed to produce highly skilled professionals capable of contributing effectively to Pakistan's nuclear energy sector. The recent collaboration under the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has further enhanced KINPOE's capabilities, with China funding the design and construction of a \$2.7 billion nuclear reactor at the institute. This initiative is part of the broader \$46 billion CPEC agreement

between China and Pakistan, aimed at boosting infrastructure and energy projects across Pakistan. KINPOE not only prioritizes rigorous academic training but also places a significant emphasis on research and development. The institute encourages the advancement of nuclear technology through initiatives that address nuclear safety, waste management, and the development of new reactor technologies. These research efforts are crucial for ensuring a sustainable energy future and for keeping pace with international standards in nuclear safety and security.

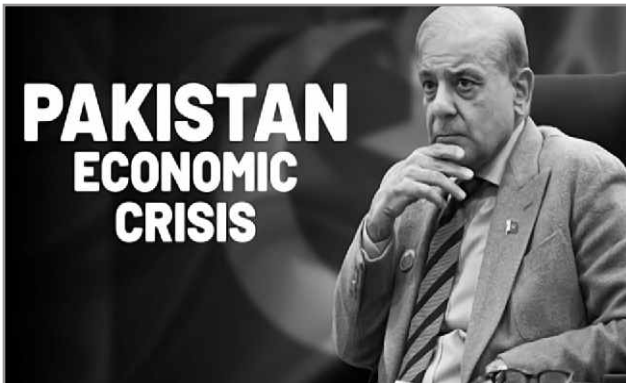
In addition, KINPOE also supports Pakistan's energy sector and plays a critical role in the national development and the pursuit of sustainable energy solutions. Its efforts ensure that Pakistan remains at the forefront of the peaceful use of nuclear technology, contributing to the country's socio-economic transformation and bolstering its national security.



# INDICATORS OF PAKISTAN ECONOMY ARE GRIM



**BISMAH MIRZA**



The indicators of Pakistan's Economy shows that it is in great crisis.

1. Inflation rate has been rising 20% every year. More inflation is round the corner.
2. The common men's purchasing power has been reduced as the income is not increasing at the same level. Thus its effect on the market is very severe.
3. The petrol prices is increasing on fortnightly basis
4. The electricity price has risen to unbearable level for the common man Pakistan has access to some of the cheapest hydropower and solar resources. However, using these will require investment which will only come if long-standing issues in the distribution and transmission systems are addressed, mainly through more private participation. This is the assessment of Foreign and local experts.
5. Hence, it seems like Pakistan is in dire need of energy: crude oil and gas to power its industries and generate more electricity. Its exports have gone down as Industrial production has shrined 13% last year due

to the increase of electricity and gas prices. According to recent surveys, the Large Scale Manufacturing Index (LSM) in March 2024 remains lower than its peak of March 2022, suggesting that over the last two years, manufacturing has remained well below earlier peaks and even below optimal levels.

The auto sector also saw a 30% slump in 2023 as the production of almost all kinds of vehicles decreased, except for buses and diesel engines. In another setback for electricity consumers already facing financial difficulties, the Central Power Purchasing Agency (CPPA) of Pakistan proposed a significant increase of Rs7.13 per unit in fuel charges for the February billing cycle, reflecting electricity consumption in January.

This increase can be attributed to the rise in domestic coal and gas prices, despite the fact that imported fuel prices such as furnace oil and LNG were lower in January, while the exchange rate remained







stable.

6. Pakistan has two choices other than Saudi Arabia, Qatar and UAE:
  - a) Obtaining oil and gas from Russia. The problem to get oil from Russia is that Pakistan do not have the refinery for Russian Crude oil. Russia supplies from Indian refinery. India put its markup and send to Masqat for another markup to increase the price of the Russian oil.  
Further, Indian media boasts that India is supplying oil to Pakistan with greater mark up and Oman's markup also added to increase price just equal Saudi oil. The concession or less price jacket has been stolen by India. If Russia is interested to favor Pakistan, it has to establish a refinery in Pakistan or persuade India and Oman to provide oil without the mark ups.
  - b) Iran is another source of oil supply which can solve Pakistan's problem but Pakistan will face sanctions if it gets oil from Iran. Pakistan has to work out some sort of solution.
7. In the food area, the production wheat and rice fell 12%
8. The price hike in the international market has a negative effect on Pakistan's economy. Now the rise in international commodity prices will have a negative impact on Pakistan's economy, given its

high dependence on imports of crude oil and palm oil and constrained foreign currency reserves. Any increase in commodity prices over the next few months can trigger inflation, leading to a serious spiral of price increases for the masses.

9. The ruling class of Pakistan is indifferent to the problems of the Pakistani people and to address the difficulties that the local manufactures are facing. The rulers and elites of Pakistan are always looking forward for the foreign investment to increase their wealth through commission and through manufacturing and productive activities and thus keeping Pakistan at mercy of foreign countries.
10. The God gifted natural resources are given hands of foreign experts. It is general perception in the country that those are either stolen, wasted or sold at lessor price.
11. Dangerous than that is Pakistan's real wealth, its youth (skilled and nonskilled) is leaving Pakistan for greener pastures and may become victim of some country's war and any other activity which they may experience later and repent.

Due to above reasons the lives of the people of Pakistan has become miserable. The measures to improve Pakistan's economy have to be taken seriously. The volatile situation has to be addressed in the best interest of the country and the people of Pakistan.

**The author is the Executive Editor of Monthly Interaction.**



# ESCALATING TENSIONS AND REGIONAL IMPLICATIONS IN THE IRAN-ISRAEL CONFLICT

**WAJEEHA NAJAM**

The escalating tensions between Iran and Israel have thrust the Middle East into a precarious and volatile situation. Iran launched a significant offensive against Israel, utilizing a formidable arsenal of approximately 170 drones, over 30 cruise missiles, and more than 120 ballistic missiles, targeting both Israel and the Israeli-occupied Golan Heights. This aggressive move was framed as a direct response to Israel's bombing of the Iranian embassy in Damascus on 1 April 2024, an attack that led to the deaths of two Iranian generals. Notably, this marked a significant escalation, as it represented Iran's first direct assault on Israel since the onset of their proxy conflict.

In retaliation to Iran's aggressive actions, Israel executed a military strike on Iran on 19 April 2024. This retaliatory measure by Israel further exacerbated tensions and raised concerns about the potential for a wider conflict in the region. The international community, including the United States, closely monitored the situation and expressed growing apprehension about the escalating

hostilities between Iran and Israel.

Amidst these heightened tensions, Iran's pursuit of nuclear capabilities has garnered international scrutiny, prompting mounting pressure and the looming threat of sanctions. In response, Iran has signaled a recognition of the imperative of diplomacy, actively seeking meaningful dialogue with neighboring nations and global powers.

Iran's defense strategy, rooted in deterring external threats and safeguarding national interests, encompasses a mix of conventional and unconventional warfare capabilities, including ballistic missiles and a formidable presence in cyber warfare. The country's emphasis on bolstering its domestic defense industry and investing in advanced military technologies underscores its commitment to strategic self-sufficiency. Conversely, Israel, long regarded for its qualitative military superiority, has had to recalibrate its defense strategy within the shifting balance of power.

Maintaining a cautious and strategic approach, Israel seeks to secure its territory. Israel's defense strategy rests on the development and acquisition of advanced technologies, supported by substantial investment in intelligence capabilities. The country has continued to fortify its air defense systems, cyber capabilities, and precision-guided arms, while solidifying its regional alliances to bolster its security posture. These developments underscore the intricate and evolving nature of the defense tactics of both Iran and Israel.



As they navigate the complex geopolitical landscape, these nations are steadfastly focused on safeguarding their national interests, although through contrasting approaches. The unfolding events demand a distinction understanding of the region's dynamics and the delicate balance of power, as well as a keen awareness of the potential implications for global stability.

In the wake of the escalating tensions between Iran and Israel, Pakistan finds itself in a delicate position, strategically positioned at the crossroads of major transit routes between the Middle East and South Asia.

The situation, which unfolded after 1 April 2024, has placed Pakistan in a challenging diplomatic landscape, with implications for its regional relations and security considerations. Iran's unprecedented air attack on Israel on 13 April 2024, and the subsequent defensive efforts to intercept Iran's drones and missiles have drawn significant international attention. The United States, in particular, has been actively engaged in diplomatic efforts, with Secretary Blinken holding discussions with foreign counterparts to convey messages indirectly to Iran and to urge other countries to discourage Iran from escalating the conflict.

This underscores the gravity of the situation and the international community's concerted efforts to mitigate further escalation. Pakistan's own experiences with cross-border strikes from Iran earlier in the year have added complexity to its stance. Iran's actions, including missile strikes into Pakistan's Baluchistan province, have underscored the regional implications of the conflict. Pakistan's response to these strikes, including the targeting of hideouts in Iran's Sistan-Baluchistan province, reflects the intricate dynamics at play and the need to navigate a delicate balance between safeguarding its



sovereignty and managing regional tensions.

Furthermore, the visit of Iranian President Ebrahim Raisi to Pakistan in late April 2024 holds significance in the context of the escalating tensions. This visit, occurring shortly after the exchange of cross-border strikes between Iran and Pakistan, underscores the importance of maintaining friendly relations and deep historical bonds between the two nations. It signals a concerted effort to diffuse the standoff and underscores the critical role of diplomacy in stabilizing the region.

In the core of these developments, Pakistan's response to the escalating tensions between Iran and Israel has been characterized by a call for restraint and a strong emphasis on the need for diplomacy to stabilize the situation. This stance reflects Pakistan's recognition of the imperative to navigate the complex geopolitical landscape and to contribute to regional stability. As the situation continues to unfold, Pakistan's foreign policy in the context of the Iran-Israel conflict underscores the country's strategic importance and the need for a distinct and balanced approach to safeguard its national interests while contributing to regional stability and diplomacy.

The author is a Research Officer at the Rabita Forum International (RFI).



# NAVIGATING THE MODERN NUCLEAR LANDSCAPE:

## CHALLENGES, RESPONSES, AND THE PATH FORWARD



**SANAULLAH**

Russian President Vladimir Putin, in his state of the nation address, issued a blunt warning to the West that Russia is ready to use nuclear weapons if its sovereignty is threatened. He dispatched the threat to NATO, which inducted Sweden on March 7, 2024, the second after giving membership to Finland in the previous year.

Formerly, the Russian president suspended diplomatic talks on the Strategic Arms Reduction Treaty for the next episode. Regrettably, the reaction of the competitive powers to this avowal is not attuned to the amount of the threat. During the Cold War era, Russia shared a major role with its adversary the United States in contributing to designing a nuclear regime characterized by the creation of the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) and the Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) in 1957 and 1968, respectively.

Besides that, Russia not only prudently engaged with the United States in bilateral nuclear arms limitation and reduction treaties



but also played an instrumental role in congregating nations under the umbrella of peaceful use of nuclear technology. Presently, the following radical budge in Russian demeanor to deal with the anticipated challenge indicates a distressing pose for the nuclear regime.

The terror attacks on the World Trade Centers in September 2001 subsequently spurred a terrible response driven more by power and security interests than by normative considerations. It multiplied the attribute of national security of states to the extent that it stimulated the intimidation to the stability and safety of the existing armed regime. A full-scale US invasion of Iraq based on forged charges of building weapons of mass destruction demonstrated the test case of overlooking institutional and diplomatic



approaches in achieving national security preemptive measures.

The repercussions of this strained malfunctioning by impulse are revealed in the form of appalling steps by North Korea and Iran, who overtly pursued their impetus to widen nuclear programs for armed purposes. North Korea departed from the NPT in January 2003, stating, "We can no longer remain bound to the NPT, allowing the country's security and dignity of our nation to be infringed upon." Kim's legacy announced enrichment of uranium for the production of nuclear arsenals. North Korea carried out its first nuclear test in 2006 and continued the exercise in 2009, 2013, twice in 2016, and in 2017. Another NPT signatory country, Iran, attracted attention in 2002 as well when its undeclared nuclear facilities became the subject of an International Atomic Energy Agency inquiry.

As an expression of international concern about the evident progress of the nuclear programs of North Korea and Iran, the most promising way to keep both states from developing nuclear weapons was the effective, forceful, and determined use of the full range of nonproliferation tools, security guarantees, ranging from diplomacy to the threat of international sanctions and the use of force.

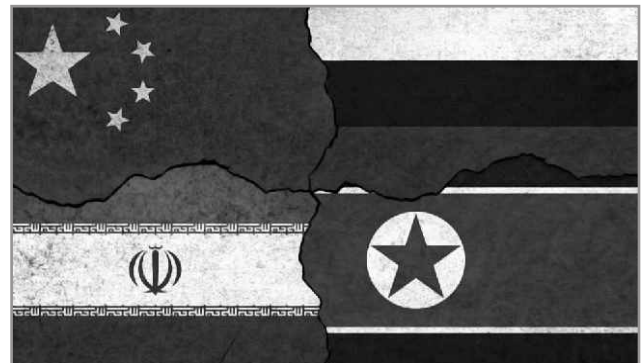
A series of negotiations held intermittently with North Korea by China, Russia, South

Korea, Japan, and the United States, known as Six Party Talks, for the purpose of dismantling the program. The talks were hosted in Beijing and chaired by China. The negotiations lasted six years with five major rounds but failed to reach a resolution. North Korea remains one of the most unstable nuclear powers today.

In the case of Iran, negotiations took a tangible turn. Starting from 2013, Iran's talks with the five permanent members of the United Nations Security Council and Germany, known as P5+1, came into full fruition in July 2015, with the signing of the Joint Comprehensive Plan of Action (JCPOA). The agreed action plan limited Iran's centrifuge construction, heavy water-related activities, and weapons-grade plutonium and uranium production and possession.

This landmark agreement puffed up an important progress in the history of arms control endeavor in the post-September 2001 period. Nevertheless, the Trump administration pulled out of the agreement in May 2018 and enforced stringent sanctions on Iran. Consequently, the agreement halted to become a model of diplomatic achievement for the non-proliferation world in the future.

Even so, there is a need to tackle the root causes, including the rapacious military and industrial practices that drive to harm the nuclear regime in the contemporary world. Powerful military, industrial, and bureaucratic



establishments in the nuclear states play disproportionate roles in justifying the destabilizing activities for achieving the national security interests framed in a regional balance of power. For instance, Russian aggression against Ukraine, in February 2022, is enshrined with the apprehension of growing intervention of NATO in its so-called sphere of influence, shoving simultaneously with other border-connected states to join NATO. Violent guided policy exacerbating the conflicting atmosphere to the extent that it arrived at the menace of using nuclear arsenals.

Nuclear proliferation has remained a major global challenge for more than six decades, but the nature of the issue changed after the start of the 21st century. The interplay of the security threat environment and the reshaping balance of power dynamics has greatly changed, and that necessitates reorganization in the existing nuclear non-proliferation regime. This regime is the one in which the main actors, Russia, France, China, the United Kingdom, and the USA (N-5), have not changed much and maintain legitimate nuclear arsenals. The lack of consensus among these great powers means greater disputes about promoting and sustaining non-proliferation norms.

It has essentially hampered the process of strengthening the regime, which has



ultimately resulted in regional conflicts escalating to the level of extreme retorts of nuclear warfare. The nuclear regime requires constant vigilance, resources for compliance, and collective implementation. While dealing with dissenting nihilists, the right strategic and diplomatic policies can go a long way toward stopping the worst forms of occurrences.

This suggests the need to expand the circle of stakeholders beyond the N-5, considering the fact of post-Cold War modernization of challenges and opportunities.

The expansion, in one expression, to revisit difficulties and mechanisms is likely to be made if two hundred countries attempt to negotiate progress of the non-proliferation to the common risk they all face, and the potential solution is required to be integrated with practical, diplomatic, legal, and institutional steps that can contribute to deterring dangerous behavior and building security interests.

This might also have included the extensive role of Japan, Germany, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, South Africa, and Australia, representing peaceful, stable countries of various regions. Such an effort probably has a better chance of generating a fresh perspective on the non-proliferation order.

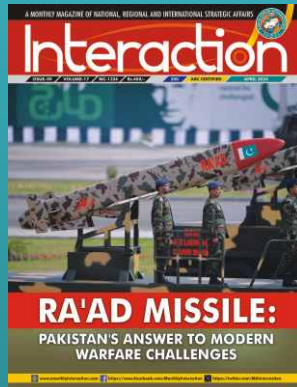
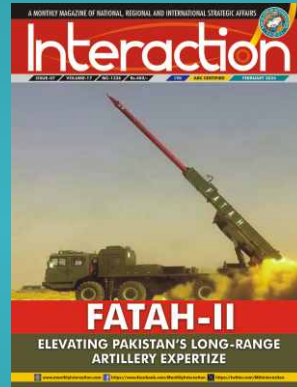
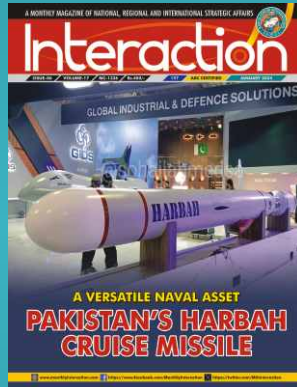
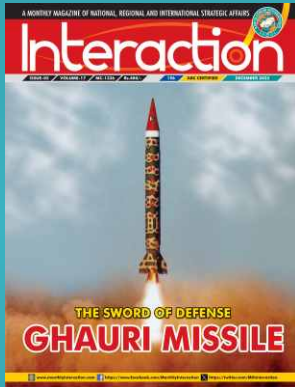
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# Interaction

## With Missile Series

(from August 2023 to May 2024)



Interaction



زاویہ نگاہ

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