
Regional Environment & Imperatives of Security

NUST Institute of Policy Studies

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Report of NIPS Seminar on

**Regional Environment
&
Imperatives of Security**

NUST Institute of Policy Studies

NUST | Islamabad

Contents

Experts	7
Executive Summary	8
Keynote Address by Chairman JCSC General Nadeem Raza	11
▪ <i>Geopolitical Environment</i>	
▪ <i>Nuclear Environment</i>	
▪ <i>Way Forward</i>	
Seminar Proceedings	
1. Hybrid Warfare and Security Imperatives of Pakistan	16
▪ <i>Economic Warfare as Instrument of Hybrid Warfare</i>	
▪ <i>Economic Warfare against Pakistan</i>	
i. The International Monetary Fund	
ii. The Financial Action Task Force	
iii. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor	
iv. The Socioeconomic Conditions of Karachi	
▪ <i>How to Counter the Hybrid War</i>	
2. Indian Extremism and State-Sponsored Terrorism in IIOJ&K	25
▪ <i>Imperatives of Hindutva Ideology</i>	
▪ <i>The Case of IIOJ&K</i>	
Discussion Session	30
Gallery	32

Experts

Keynote Address

- General Nadeem Raza, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee.

Seminar Speakers

- Dr Ashfaque Hasan Khan, Principal, NUST School of Social Sciences & Humanities (S3H) & Director General, NIPS.
- Dr Asma Shakir Khawaja, Executive Director, Centre for International Strategic Studies, AJ&K.

Moderator

- Brigadier (R) Amir Yaqub, Director Operations & Collaboration, NIPS.

Members

- Lt Gen (R), Engr Javed Mahmood Bukhari, Rector NUST & Patron NIPS.
- Dr Osman Hasan, Pro-Rector Academics, NUST.
- Maj Gen (R) Abid Ejaz Kahloon, Pro-Rector Planning & Resources, NUST.
- AVM Dr Rizwan Riaz, Pro-Rector Research, Innovation & Commercialization, NUST.
- Mr Rao Sabir Ali Khan, Chief of Finance and Business Development, NUST.
- Dr Nabeel Hayat Malik, Former Chairman NESCOM.
- Dr Riaz Ahmad, Director Quality Assurance, NUST.
- Dr Adnan Maqsood, Director Academics, NUST.
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- Dr Iqtidar Hussain, Associate Director, Strategic Vision Institute.
- Dr Farah Naz, Assistant Professor, S3H, NUST.
- Ms Erum Zaidi, Deputy Director Intellectual Property & Commercialization, NUST.
- NUST officials, faculty and students.
- NIPS research, collaboration and coordination teams.

Executive Summary

NUST Institute of Policy Studies (NIPS) organized the seminar on “Regional Environment and Imperatives of Security,” on 3 June 2022. Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Nadeem Raza, Nishan-i-Imtiaz (Military), delivered keynote address during the seminar, and was welcomed by Rector NUST and Patron NIPS, Lieutenant General (R) Engineer Javed Mahmood Bukhari. The session was moderated by Brigadier (R) Amir Yaqub, Director Operations and Collaboration at NIPS. NUST’s Pro Rectors of RIC, Academics, and Finance, as well as scholars, students, and distinguished experts from different parts of the country participated.

This report provides details of the NIPS seminar on prevalent regional environment and imperatives of Pakistan’s security. Chairman JCSC cautioned that unnecessary and unfounded views on the strategic program should be avoided. As a matter of policy NCA is the right forum to issue specific responses or views when necessary. He made these remarks in the backdrop of recent irresponsible statements. Pakistan’s nuclear capability is the guarantor of deterrence and defense of Pakistan. Amongst the myriad national security issues, India’s terrorism in illegally occupied Jammu & Kashmir and hybrid war on Pakistan rank at the top.

While emphasizing the valuable contributions of NUST in the fields of science and technology, Chairman JCSC praised NIPS for being the frontrunner in high-quality policy research and advocacy on significant national and international matters.

Commenting on regional security environment, the Chairman JCSC – who is also the Deputy Chairman of the National Command Authority, the apex body dealing with nuclear and space matters – emphasized the changing dynamics of regional geopolitics and Pakistan’s resilience in the wake of hybrid warfare. He reiterated the significance of Pakistan’s nuclear capability as the guarantor of deterrence and defense of the motherland.

The Chairman JCSC said, “Pakistan’s nuclear program enjoys across the board support of all political parties and the people of Pakistan. The NCA, with all its political and military leadership, stands firm for the strategic program.” He asserted that national

security is indivisible and assured that under no circumstances shall Pakistan allow a compromise on its nuclear program.

He said, "Pakistan is a confident and responsible nuclear power. It pursues the policy of full spectrum deterrence within the precincts of credible minimum deterrence. Our national security and safety architecture meets all national and international obligations and caters for all kinds of scenarios."

Chairman JCSC concluded, "As a norm in other nuclear-capable nations, unnecessary and unfounded views on the strategic program should be avoided. When necessary, NCA is the right forum to issue specific responses or views."

The seminar also comprised speeches by two experts. Dr Ashfaq Hasan Khan covered salient aspects of "Hybrid warfare and Security Imperatives of Pakistan." He focused on the economic dimensions of the issue. Dr Asma Shakir Khawaja presented her well-researched work on ideology of Hindutva and "Indian Extremism and State-Sponsored Terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir."

The report is a key resource for the policy, think tank and media experts as it gives the first-hand account of the seminar.



Keynote Address

Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee

General Nadeem Raza



It is a matter of immense pleasure to visit NUST. I thank General Bukhari for his dynamic leadership in positioning NUST at 355th ranking amongst top universities of the world, 74th in Asia and top university of Pakistan. Thanks to excellent faculty and student body, the University has risen in its progressive and innovative outlook.

Likewise, NUST Institute of Policy Studies is one of the few think tanks that are doing excellent policy research, analyses and advocacy. I see tremendous unrealized potential here.

I also appreciate the physical and virtual presence of think tank experts from Balochistan, Sind, AJ&K, Gilgit-Baltistan, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Islamabad. As gatekeepers of knowledge, you have an instrumental role in policy advice and advocacy. We need more of that.

Geopolitical Environment

Today's seminar on regional environment and imperatives of security is timely. I will share few thoughts on the strategic dimensions of the environment. The post Second World War global order is tenuous and in flux. The situation is dynamic and hostile.

The imperatives of maintaining traditional and non-traditional security of Pakistan are significant. We face the challenge of maintaining balance and seeking sustainable development in a polarizing world that is steeped in intense competition to gain competitive strategic advantage over each other. To gain advantage, the toolkit of warfare includes undermining cohesion, erosion of economy, and the political and social resilience of adversaries.

In the information age, disinformation has been democratized. Our detractors tailor their inimical activities by remaining below the obvious detection and response thresholds. They also rely on speed, volume, and omnipresence of digital technology. This universality of information and fast technological developments have changed the character of warfare and politics. The leading trend of strategic environment is to prevent kinetic war-fighting response and competing below the detection thresholds is the name of the game.

Therefore, our enemies would like to break our will power. They would also leave no stone unturned to affect our international relations. This is best achieved through intelligence operations and strategic communication. Wars are being played out in cognitive domain over global media networks. Trends of last three decades provide several proofs. In 2021, a European NGO exposed Indian 15-years long campaign to discredit Pakistan and influence decision-making in 110 countries.

India's Srivatsa Group and ANI resurrected 10 NGOs and dead persons, stole identities, and created 750 fake media outlets and 550 domain registered names. I urge you to beware of these games being played even today on your cellphones, laptops, and other digital information sources. The cyber warriors of our adversaries are involved in activities that include fake specialized media that are repackaged, distorted and amplify disinformation.

There have been unsuccessful efforts afoot to constrain Pakistan's strategic program. Due to the great power rivalry and unilateralism, maintaining strategic stability remains an

enduring challenge. The global-power competition is impacting South Asian region. Efforts to build a country as the Net Security Provider is one of the principal reasons of growing strategic instability in South Asia.

Nuclear Environment

In an environment of growing discrimination, the spigots of technologies have been opened for one State and denied to us. Technologies and knowledge denial is disturbing the relative power balance and increasing conventional forces and strategic forces asymmetry in South Asia.

As the premier institution of sciences and technology, the role of NUST in breaking the path towards indigenization and self-reliance is quite clearly cut out. Pakistan's nuclear program is the backbone of our security and a guarantor of peace and stability in the region. The strategic program began in the 1970s, when Pakistan was going through difficult times.

We overcame many challenges to develop the nuclear weapons capability, including a technological apartheid. Today, Pakistan's nuclear program enjoys across the board support of all political parties and the people of Pakistan. The NCA, with all its political and military leadership, stands firm for the strategic program. I assure you that national security is indivisible and under no circumstances shall Pakistan allow a compromise on its nuclear program.

When India resumed nuclear tests in 1998, Pakistan was left with no other option but to restore strategic balance. Our nuclear weapons are the guarantors of deterrence and defense of the Motherland.

Pakistan is a confident and responsible nuclear power. We pursue the policy of full spectrum deterrence within the precincts of credible minimum deterrence. Pakistan has a robust nuclear safety and security architecture, which meets all national and international obligations and caters for all kind of scenarios. Our nuclear security regime has five pillars:

- i. First, a well-defined, robust command and control system.

- ii. Second, a multi-layered defense for the entire spectrum of any nuclear threat – insider, outsider, or cyber.
- iii. Third, a rigorous regulatory regime that encompasses all matters related to nuclear safety.
- iv. Fourth, a comprehensive exports control regime.
- v. Fifth, international cooperation, consistent with our national policies and interests as well as international obligations. Strategic capability's less appreciated dimension is that it plays a pivotal role in socioeconomic development Pakistan and the attainment of UN's Sustainable Development Goals.

The critical areas include medicine, agriculture, and energy. It makes a significant contribution towards socioeconomic development. Peaceful applications of nuclear energy predate the weapons capability of Pakistan. In 1957, we were amongst the founding members of International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA). In last seven decades, we have harnessed nuclear technology in diverse areas, including cancer diagnosis and treatment, public health, agriculture, environment protection and industry.

- vi. Six, nuclear power plants are producing 3,530 megawatts of clean nuclear energy. We have a vision of producing 44,000 MW of this environmentally clean energy by 2050. Four agriculture centers have been established in the provinces that use nuclear energy for optimization of important crop varieties, development of better methods for conservation of inputs and products, in addition to maximum use of innovative technologies.

Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission has established 19 hospitals that offer cancer treatment to around 0.8 million patients annually. Pakistan has invested extensively in developing indigenous capabilities and human resource to sustain our civil nuclear program. State of the art training facilities and institutions have been established, which impart high level education to scientists and engineers that form the backbone of our nuclear program.

Way Forward

During the last fifteen years, Pakistan has successfully fought a raging militancy and terrorism through determination and national resolve. Alhamdulillah, we are a resilient nation and will Insha'Allah overcome all challenges. One can only surmount the economic difficulties through secure and stable environment. Nuclear program is a principal mean to that end.

The nation is ready and willing to sacrifice anything for the security and sovereignty of the country. Under no circumstances shall we ever compromise on our core national interests. Our security is indivisible and will not be traded. Let me end here by quoting our great leader Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah, who said:

“The story of Pakistan, its struggle and its achievement,
is the very story of great human ideals.**”**

Seminar Proceedings

1. Hybrid Warfare and Security Imperatives of Pakistan

Dr Ashfaque Hasan Khan¹



Economy is now the new battlefield. How to damage the target country's economy has emerged as a strategic objective of its adversaries. The main objective of this strategy is to incapacitate the ability of the country to strengthen its national security. This is done by weakening its economy, institutions and governance capacity. In the non-kinetic domain, economic warfare forms an important component of hybrid war.

Economic warfare thrives in an environment of rampant corruption by elites, bad governance, cronyism and poverty. Why should we worry about our economy and why should we give importance to economic warfare? It is because of the undeniable fact that

¹ Principal NUST School of Social Sciences and Humanities, and DG NIPS.

a country's economic strength has a direct bearing on its military strength. A strong economy can ensure a strong defense, which in turn, enhances a country's power and strengthens national security. Weak economy generates violence, conflict, social unrest, and political turmoil, and hence, weakens national security.

In today's world, a country with strong economy irrespective of its size commands respect in the comity of nations and can also influence international politics as well as the foreign policy of other countries. Likewise, a country with fragile economy commands little respect – even its friends may avoid it. Paul Kennedy, the British historian who specializes in the history of international relations and economic power, said that:

“ A nation's military strength rests on its economic strength. ”

Robert McNamara observes that:

“ Security means development and without development there is no security. ”

Hence, the economy of a State matters for its security. If economy is weakened, a State's security will deteriorate. Since economy is now the new battlefield, we have to win this battle by strengthening economy.

In recent years, the concept of war has changed from conventional to unconventional, as the former has become financially expensive and lethal in terms of human loss. In Frank Hoffman's view, hybrid war is the combination of regular, irregular, guerrilla, terrorism, cyber, and information warfare. It also includes economic coercion, sabotage, and religious exploitation. Ethnic and political fault lines are used by both State and non-State actors. Moreover, manipulation of election results and financial, diplomatic, and political support to local opposition parties are also used as instrument of hybrid war

The main objective of hybrid war is to make the opponent internally weak and compel it to accept the aggressor's terms and conditions and adjust its behavior in line with the aggressor's desire. It is not a new concept. Sun Tzu, the ancient Chinese military strategist, stated in his famous *The Art of War* some 2000 years ago, that:

“
The supreme art of war is to subdue the enemy without fighting;
[that] supreme excellence consists in breaking the enemy’s resistance without
fighting a war; [and that the] best war is not having to fight. The best
victory is to see the economy to collapse from within.”

Economic Warfare as Instrument of Hybrid Warfare

Economic warfare has emerged as an important instrument of hybrid war. It is commonly argued that international funding institutions (IFIs) are used as vehicles through which economic coercion is being used on vulnerable States. The erosion of economic strength of any country is perhaps the most important element and likely the hardest to reverse once it is accomplished.

Joseph Stiglitz, a Nobel Laureate in Economic Science, has squarely blamed the American Treasury for damaging East Asian Economies in general and Indonesia in particular through IMF during the East Asian Financial Crises of 1996 and 1997.

Economic Warfare against Pakistan

The economic warfare against Pakistan has been launched since 1988 and 1989. It involves four key instruments:

- i. The International Monetary Fund (IMF)
- ii. The Financial Action Task Force (FATF)
- iii. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC)
- iv. The socioeconomic conditions of Karachi

i. The International Monetary Fund

Economic coercion or warfare is imposed on “targeted” countries through the IFIs. The IMF plays a strong role in this regard. Its Programs are ingeniously designed by experts in a manner that once a country gets the support, it never comes out as a healthy economy. Countries like Pakistan, Egypt, Ukraine, Argentina, Chile, Brazil, Philippines, Uruguay, Haiti, Senegal, and many more have remained under the Program for decades.

The irony of this support reflects in creation of a State's dependency on IFIs. Rising debt and growing poverty are natural outcomes of the Program.

Pakistan is the only nuclear power which has sought financial support from the IMF with greater regularity. Out of 190 member countries of IMF only a few get its financial Programs. Since inception, Pakistan has gone to the IMF for 22 times, but from 1988 it happened for 18 times. Barring four years (2004-08), Pakistan has been taking the same medicine from the same doctor for 33 years in a row and with each passing day, Pakistani's economic health continued to deteriorate. It is essential to ascertain why a country's economy deteriorates under the IMF Program. The case is linked with the set of its policies, commonly known as Washington Consensus that includes:

- Tight monetary policy (rising discount rate)
- Tight fiscal policy (austerity policy)
- Market-based exchange rate (devaluation)
- Raising utility prices
- Prices of utilities including gas and electricity

How the IMF Prescription Damages the Economy

a. Tight Monetary Policy

It means raising the discount rate. The implications include discouraged private sector investment; slow economic activity, i.e., low economic growth; less job creation; and rise in unemployment and poverty. On the budget side, there will be an increase in interest payment; current expenditure; and total expenditure. On the revenue side, there will be slower economic growth and tax collection. Thus, revenue does not grow as fast as expenditure and public debt increases due to rise in budget deficit and more borrowing to finance the deficit.

b. Tight Fiscal Policy

It involves austerity by cutting government spending. By raising interest rate (from tight monetary policy), we discourage private sector spending. By pursuing austerity policy, the government is also cutting expenditure. Hence, both private and public sector cut spending and there is no major push to revive the economy. Economic growth slows

down, increasing unemployment and poverty – a fitting recipe for social unrest in the country.

c. Market-Based Exchange Rate

It encompasses devaluation which results in increased inflation, building the case for increased interest rate. The landing cost of all imported inputs, such as raw materials, machinery, equipment, POL products and imported gas, increases. The overall cost of production also increases making the industry non-competitive. There is an impact on public debt too. One rupee devaluation currently adds to roughly PKR 90 billion in public debt without borrowing a single dollar. Increase in public debt means increase in interest payments as well as in current and total expenditures.

PAKISTAN'S FISCAL VULNERABILITY						
Year	Gross Revenue	Net Federal Receipt	Interest Payment	NFR Adjusted for Int. Payment	Defense Spending	NFR Net of Int. Payment was Sufficient to Finance X % of Defence
2006-07	1234	834	369	465	250	186
2012-13	2775	1560	991	569	541	105.2
2016-17	4549	2583	1348	1235	888	139.1
2017-18	4696	2479	1510	969	1030	94.1
2018-19	4436	2038	2091	-53	1147	-
2019-20	5782	3278	2620	658	1213	54.2
2020-21	6269	3528	2750	778	1316	59.1
2021-22 (Budgeted)	7909	4497	3060	1437	1370	104.9

Source: Fiscal Operations, Ministry of Finance, Islamabad/Pakistan. Impact of Interest rate hike and devaluation on country's National Security.

Phase I

The cost Pakistan has paid during July 2018 to March 2020 (21 months)

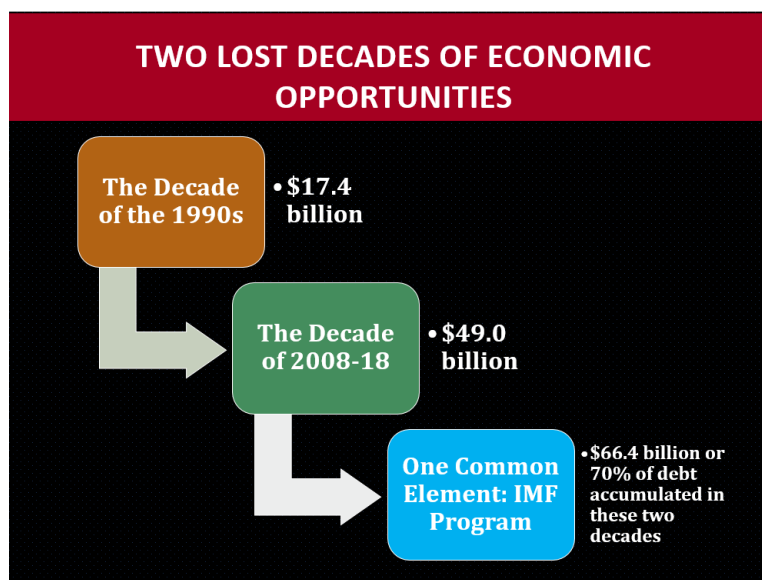
Under the current IMF Program, the State Bank of Pakistan raised discount rate from 6.5 percent in June 2018 to 13.25 percent in July 2019 and kept at 13.25 percent until February 2020. It added PKR 1687 billion to the interest payment. The Pakistani rupee increased from 121.5 per dollar in June 2018 to 166.4 by March 2020, adding PKR 4666 billion to

public debt. These two policies alone added PKR 6354 billion, i.e. USD 40 billion to public debt.

Phase II

Since 2 May 2021, Pakistani currency is in a free fall regime. It was PKR 152.3 per US dollar on 2 May 2021 with forex reserves standing at USD 15.77 billion. Today the exchange rate is more than PKR 200 per US dollar with forex reserves standing over USD 20 billion. It has added PKR 1980 billion in public debt without borrowing a single dollar. With a weighted average interest rate on the dollar component of public debt of 4.0 percent, it has added PKR 79 billion in second phase in interest payment. Altogether, the devaluation has cost PKR 2059 billion or USD 12 billion to our economy in the last few months. Until October 2021, Pakistan paid a cost of USD 52 billion in terms of rise in debt and interest payment.

The situation has damaged the economy and created serious national security issues. Rising utility prices have increased cost of production, affecting industries' competitiveness and exports. Empirical evidence suggests that increase in discount rate cannot control inflation and devaluation of currency cannot increase exports.



ii. The Financial Action Task Force

The FATF was established by G-7 Summit held in Paris in 1989 as a watch dog on global money laundering and terrorism financing. Pakistan was placed in its grey list in June 2018. Inclusion of a country in grey list means increased monitoring, that the said country has committed to address the strategic deficiencies swiftly within the agreed timeframes, and is therefore, subjected to increased monitoring.

Pakistan took its placement in grey list seriously and made tremendous progress in anti-money laundering and combating the financing of terrorism (AML/CFT), demonstrated through concrete, tangible and verifiable actions acknowledged by the FATF. Pakistan completed 26 of the 27 action items (over 96 percent compliance) in its 2018 action plan.

While Pakistan has been sincerely and constructively engaged with the FATF, the latter, with the passage of time, has proved to be a political agenda instead of a technical forum. It has been misused against Pakistan by India in collaboration with some Western powers. This sentiment reflected in Indian foreign minister Subrahmanyam Jaishankar's statement published by the Hindustan Times on 18 July 2012, that the "BJP government led by Narendra Modi ensured that Pakistan remained in grey list of the FATF," that "due to [them] Pakistan is under the lens of FATF," and that "[India has] been successful in pressurizing Pakistan... and Pakistan's behavior has changed because of [India's] pressure" (Hindustan Times, July 18, 2021).

In its June 2021 meeting, the FATF handed over six more points of action to Pakistan. Given the performance of Pakistan, there was no justification for keeping it in FATF's Grey List. India and some Western powers want that the sword of the FATF must continue to hang over Pakistan. Although the Plenary held in June 2022 has shown some softness, Pakistan must take an aggressive stance in FATF while taking following actions:

- Dossier prepared for India's terrorist activities and terror financing in Pakistan must be presented in FATF and pursued aggressively.
- The issue of sale of Uranium in open market in India must be raised in FATF aggressively.

iii. The China-Pakistan Economic Corridor

CPEC is the flagship project of China's Belt and Road Initiative (BRI) and is considered central to China-Pakistan relations. By changing geo-strategic environment where China is emerging as economic and military power, particularly because of BRI, CPEC has emerged as storm in the eyes of many powers. India is bent upon destroying CPEC and several Western powers are making serious efforts to derail it and BRI through hybrid war. India has been sponsoring and conducting terrorist activities in Pakistan, particularly at the sites of CPEC.

iv. The Socioeconomic Conditions of Karachi

The best strategy of the enemy in economic warfare is to erode economic strength of the "targeted" country by systematically destroying its physical and human infrastructure of business and growth hubs. Karachi is one case in point. It is the economic hub of Pakistan; hosts two seaports (Karachi Port and Bin Qasim Port) and 12 industrial estates; and contributes 23 percent to industry, 19 percent to services and 15 percent to the country's overall GDP.

The size of Karachi's economy was estimated at USD 164 billion in 2019. It is the financial capital and largest stock exchange of Pakistan. 50 percent of Pakistan's exports of goods and services originate from here. 80 percent multinational companies are headquartered here. With such an overwhelming contribution to the national economy, it has become a target of hybrid war.

Any strategy to target Karachi would not only damage the city's economy but also its contribution to national economy. Its infrastructure has been deliberately and systematically destroyed. Today, Karachi lacks electricity, gas, water, roads, highways, solid waste disposal facility, and any system for proper drainage and sewerage, garbage collection, and mass transport. Most importantly, no one owns Karachi. Given the fast deteriorating infrastructure the city of Karachi appears to be heading towards becoming a "failed city." The enemy of Pakistan is winning the hybrid war in Karachi. Unfortunately, those who matter in this country have chosen to remain a silent spectator. The economy of Pakistan is sinking gradually. Hence, to save Pakistan, Karachi has to be protected and developed first.

How to Counter the Hybrid War

In essence, following steps will help Pakistan to counter hybrid war:

- Pakistan must not get the 23rd Program of IMF.
- CPEC has significant potential to keep Pakistan away from the IMF Program.
- The FATF issue must be pursued aggressively.
- Indian terrorist activities and sale of nuclear material (Uranium) in open market must be raised in international forums of influence.
- A strong and financially independent local government of Karachi is the best immediate solution.

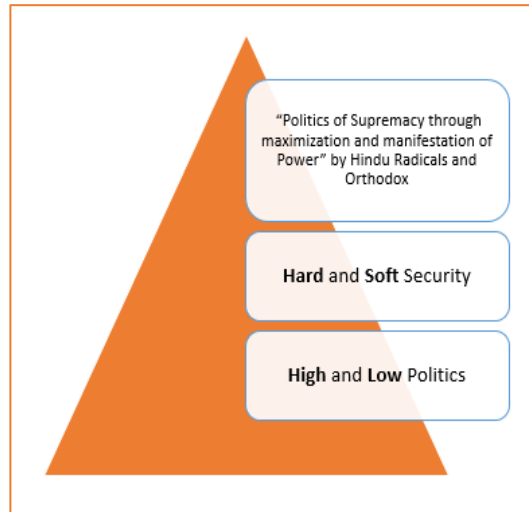
2. Indian Extremism and State-Sponsored Terrorism in Indian Illegally Occupied Jammu and Kashmir

Dr Asma Shakir Khawaja²



For last seventy-four years, India's Hindutva-driven regime is conducting terrorism and is keeping the people of occupied territories under siege. The radicals of the regime maximize their power through political means.

² Executive Director, Centre of International Strategic Studies, AJ&K.

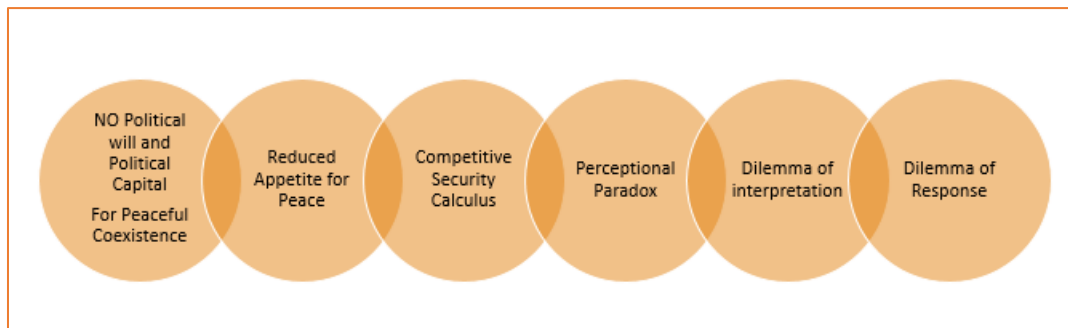


Hindutva

Imperatives of Hindutva Ideology

India has striven to become the regional power and Hindutva is a tool. Like White Supremacists, Hindutva’s ideologues safeguard the Brahmans and paint their gods white. Hindutva seeks to construct an exclusive society in India through religious, political, and social polarization. Illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir is the only Muslim majority State colonized by India.

Hindutva began with the invasion of Aryans, who established a vast Vedic civilization. Akhand Bharat is the central idea of Hindutva’s political thought, and it is a secret duty of every Hindu to fight for it, even against Pakistan. The illegal occupation of Kashmir is the manifestation and symbol of Hindutva’s coercive power and religious nationalism.



Hindutva in the Spotlight

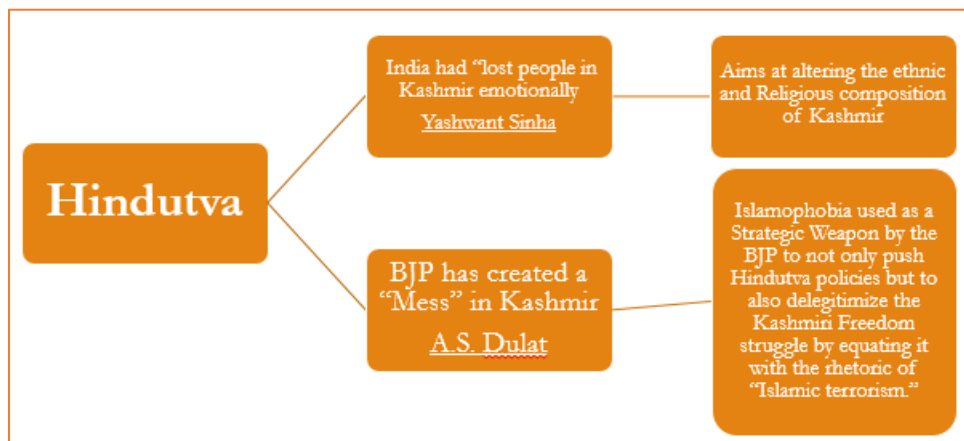
The Case of IIOJ&K

Inter alia, India wants to make Kashmir a buffer zone with China. That is why no one in India and among its allies talks or thinks in terms of peaceful resolution of the Kashmir conflict. In India, there is decreasing political will and capital for peaceful coexistence with non-Hindus.

Hindutva relies on competitive security calculus instead of security through cooperation. It creates a perceptual paradox to even victimize Muslims and Pakistanis.

India has lost the support of even its likeminded Kashmiris because it is altering the ethnic and religious composition of Kashmir. Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) has created a mess in Kashmir and has used Islamophobia to delegitimize the Kashmiri freedom struggle by equating it with the rhetoric of Islamic terrorism.

India seeks dilution of intensity of Kashmir freedom struggle through State-sponsored terrorism. New Delhi is using its own resources and institutions to terrorize Kashmiris through constitutional changes, ethnic and religious cleansing, creating fear, political remapping, use of excessive torture and violence, human rights violations, economic terrorism, identity politics, electoral engineering, and forceful constitutional changes.

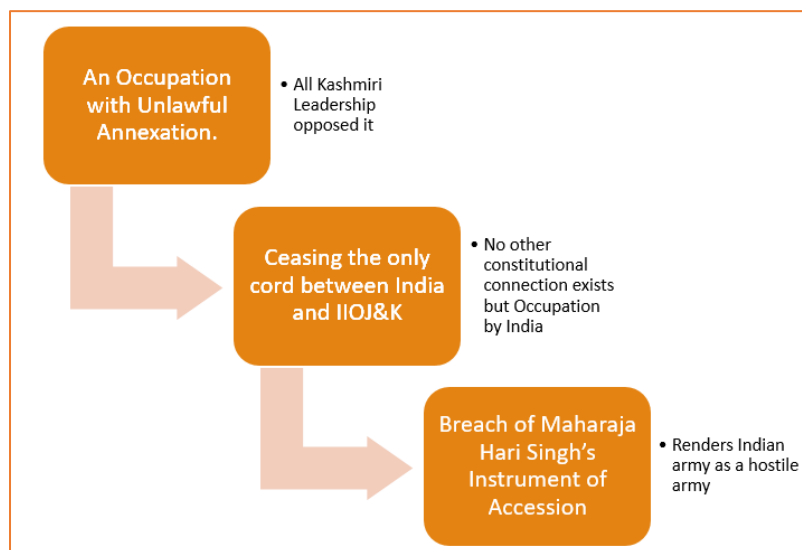


Hindutva and Kashmir

The revocation of Article 370 of Indian constitution led to an occupation with unlawful annexation and all Kashmiri leadership has opposed it. Indian State-sponsored terrorism has created a social trauma in illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir through Indian

Army. Indian occupying forces arrested 13,000 individuals in IIOJ&K. In less than a year, 13,000 people have gone missing who pelted stones in defense against occupation forces. The BJP regime has imposed 518 internet shutdowns and has seriously undermined freedom of speech and expression. Kashmir is considered the least reported conflict of the world and one of the most dangerous places for journalists. India ranks 150 out of 180 countries in World Press Freedom Index 2022.

The nexus between colonialism and capitalism has affected Kashmiris' livelihood. The economy of illegally occupied Jammu and Kashmir in core sectors has witnessed a steep decline. The rate of unemployment in IIOJ&K is 25 percent, whereas in India in general, it is 7.6 percent. During the initial five months of Modi's second regime, the economy of Kashmir lost USD 5.32 billion. Besides, more than 100,000 Kashmiris lost their jobs in handicraft, tourism and information technology sectors.



The Impact of Revocation of Article 370 of Indian Constitution

India has resorted to extreme torture of hapless Kashmiris in violation of the laws of war. In so called dead-eye epidemic, there have been around 30,000 cases of Kashmiris losing their eyes to pellets fired by Indian occupation forces. India only acknowledges that 300 Kashmiris suffer dead-eye epidemic. Even this figure is unacceptable and inhuman. India also uses rape as a weapon of war. The Indian occupation forces raped at least 11,247 women, and 22,941 were made widows. An issue of half-widows is really chronic. These women are called half widows because their husbands have been abducted by occupation forces and there are no traces.

The violence against women increased by 11 percent since 2020. The use of torture by Indian occupying forces against abducted Kashmiris is common practice. Some of the techniques are stimulated drowning, stripping of flesh with razors, piping petrol into inner body, and amputating limbs of suspects and prisoners who are fed their own flesh. Under the Indian Armed Forces Jammu and Kashmir Special Powers Act (1990), the occupation forces enjoy virtual blanket immunity to any accountability. Only 75 cases were registered against them, but they were not persecuted.

Resorting to false flag operations is a favorite tool in Indian terrorism kit. Between 2014 and 2019, there were 19 false flag operations. For instance, an Indian retired general publicly admitted that Chitti Singh Pura incident of 2000 was a false flag operation designed to pre-empt the visiting American President not to raise the issue of Kashmir with his Indian counterpart.

Likewise, attack on the Indian parliament, Jammu and Kashmir Legislative Assembly car bombing, Godhra train incident, Uri attack, Mumbai, Pathankot Airbase attack and Pulwama attack were false flag operations to strengthen the counterterrorism legislation.

Indian government has woven legal frameworks such as Public Safety Act 1978 for its illegal activities. These laws allow the Indian Army and paramilitary forces to arrest any person for several years, to destroy any property, and to martyr a Kashmiri without any legal document. Demographic manipulation is also rife. India is diluting the relevance of ethnic Kashmiris in IIOJ&K. In May 2021 Indian government's website referred to the population of Jammu and Kashmir as predominantly Hindus. As per the 2011 census of Jammu and Kashmir, 68.31 percent were Muslims and 28 percent were Hindus.

BJP is working on religious cleansing through fanning Islamophobia, to incite Hindutva radicals for violence against Muslims. The movie "Kashmir Files" is one of those examples. Delimitation of Kashmir is another effort to further disempower Kashmiri Muslims. The Delimitation Commission was established by BJP in March 2020 and was released in May 2022. The Commission is creating seven additional constituencies; six in Jammu and one in Kashmir to convert these into a Hindu majority State.

To increase the Hindu parliamentary members, six constituencies for Jammu and one in Kashmir Valley will raise seats from 83 to 90 and number of seats in Jammu from 37 to 43. In Kashmir Valley, the seats are being increased to 47, facilitating the political victory of BJP and giving the right to vote for non-Kashmiris.

After the revocation of Article 370 of India's Constitution, all political allies of BJP left them in Indian occupied Kashmir. Still, the valley would be divided into different Kashmiri political parties and they will seek power through the seats and members of Jammu. Every constituency in illegally occupied Kashmir was limited to 1.4 lakh and in Jammu to 1.2 lakh population for political engineering to render them ineffective. Jammu region, with 44 percent of population has 48 percent seats. Likewise, Kashmir valley with 56 percent population has 52 percent seats.

The fascist Hindutva regime is applying multi-dimensional, multi-layered and multipurpose State-sponsored terrorism, which requires a similar response, first from Kashmiris and then from Pakistan. Indian State-sponsored terrorism is a violation of international law and international humanitarian law. Therefore, it should be challenged in ICJ and ICC. Yasin Malik is illegally detained under those inhuman illegal laws created by the occupying forces in Indian occupied Kashmir. This situation is a source of strategic instability in South Asia. It is a cause of humanitarian crisis. The Delimitation Commission looks similar to Radcliffe Award that only led to the genocide of Muslims, instability, and long-standing conflicts in this region.

Discussion Session

The enemy wages hybrid warfare both from within and outside a region. State and its citizenry must learn to maneuverer and stay cognizant of the ongoing propaganda in media, such as the one Pakistan is facing against the Armed Forces.

Asia is divided into two parts – doers and talkers. South Asians are talkers while East Asians are doers. Pakistan is facing problems in gaining dividends of CPEC, simply because so much noise was made before achieving anything tangible. Moreover, Pakistan has progressed over the years but enjoys lesser acknowledgment worldwide. It is also because of a war that India is constantly waging against Pakistan both in kinetic and non-kinetic domains. Apart from being the member of U.S.-led Quad group, India has invited Western fury after abstention on Ukraine in the UN. Such a neutrality on an issue of utmost geopolitical significance might not play favorably in the long-term.

Social media is the biggest source of information today, particularly for our youth, and its credibility is seldom questioned. However, it's also the biggest source of faking information about sensitive subjects of national interest and security, such as the issue of Kashmir.

Various Indian attempts to disrupt peace are being incorrectly equated with Pakistan's justified and constitutional steps for national development. For instance, the Indian revocation of Article 370 cannot be equated with the decisions of the government of Pakistan for Gilgit Baltistan (GB). Kashmir and GB are two different territories and their people possess different cultures and traditions. The abolishment of Article 257 of Pakistan's constitution in 1974 aimed at better constitutional cover and rights for GB, while Article 370 of Indian Constitution was an agreement between pro-Hindustan Kashmiri leadership and Nehru.

Although it is a war crime to change the demography of a disputed region, India is swiftly working on this agenda in IIOJ&K. Propaganda, disinformation and fake news are the new normal tools for enhancing its power and influence. The long-term damaging impact of such actions on regional stability cannot be ignored, as they affect Pakistan and the greater region and exacerbate security dilemma of other States.

A culture of savings and austerity has to be inculcated and nurtured in Pakistan by simple means to address the challenge of national debt. For instance, around USD 152 billion being spent per month on airline travel and tickets can be saved. Pakistan has less than USD 10 billion in reserves. Restrictions on unnecessary international travels, expensive tickets, and policies encouraging work from home will save finances and millions of liters of petrol per day. Moreover, to provide jobs for 2 million youth entering the market, Pakistan's economy must grow by 7 to 8 percent per year.

Gallery













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