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# THE AUSTRALIAN

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## BIGGEST TANK BATTLE SINCE WORLD WAR II PAKISTANI VICTORY Huge losses on both sides

From the WORLD-CABLE SERVICES in NEW DELHI  
and RAWALPINDI, Bombay

Pakistani forces have repulsed a massive Indian armored assault in the greatest tank battle since the African desert campaign of World War II.

In a desperate, two-day battle among the maize fields of West Pakistan, the Pakistani forces have turned back an Indian force estimated at 50,000 men supported by hundreds of tanks and heavy artillery pieces.

Refugees in thousands are fleeing the roads leading from the main cities of the Punjab — Lahore, the main north of Lahore.

INDIA'S VERSION of the battle leading to the Pakistani victory was reported as the most substantial question of the war.

PAKISTAN'S VERSION of the battle was reported as the most substantial question of the war.

THE UNEDITED accounts of events in that although Pakistani forces have suffered heavy losses, they have managed to repel the Indian assault and the Indian forces are retreating.

which may prove the decisive battle of the war.



### RIVER THEIR LAST BATTLE

INDIA'S VERSION of the battle leading to the Pakistani victory was reported as the most substantial question of the war.



### Australia will give away £60m this year

Australia's foreign aid commitments this financial year will rise by about 20 per cent, with most of the extra money directed to South-East Asian countries, including Papua-New Guinea spending and defence material, the aid bill will approach 600 million.

Excise duties will rise by about 15 per cent, with the Customs Plan involving the State.

ACTU CLASH TODAY

### DRUG PRICE CUT WILL SAVE £2.6m

Price reductions on a number of drugs will cost £2.6 million from the cost of Australia's National Health Scheme.

The Minister for Health, Mr. Hawke, announced the reduction yesterday, following negotiations between the Government and drug manufacturers.

### State basic

### Wage up

Basic pay for public servants will rise by 1.5 per cent, the Minister for Public Service, Mr. McEwen, announced yesterday.

Bassey to re-marry





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## 1965 WAR FIFTY YEARS AFTER

"The Indian Navy's 50th anniversary of its 1965 victory over the Pakistani Navy"

On 12 September 1965, the Indian Navy's 50th anniversary of its 1965 victory over the Pakistani Navy was celebrated. The Indian Navy's 50th anniversary was celebrated on 12 September 1965, the day when the Indian Navy defeated the Pakistani Navy in the 1965 Indo-Pakistani War. The Indian Navy's 50th anniversary was celebrated on 12 September 1965, the day when the Indian Navy defeated the Pakistani Navy in the 1965 Indo-Pakistani War.

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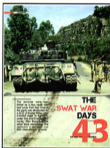
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# 50<sup>th</sup> Defence Day

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# Fifty Long Years

In spite of both external and internal challenges, this 6 September we celebrate the *Golden Jubilee* of the Defence Day with a renewed confidence and self-belief that we are a nation no different from 1965. The September is characterized by unflinching spirit of sacrifice for the Motherland, national unity and resolve attributed to the people and the Armed Forces of Pakistan. We are fighting a war on our Western front, witnessing continuous provocations on the Eastern front, and at the same time combating internal challenges, yet as a nation we symbolize resilience, courage and optimism. We are the nation that has withstood all challenges with immense fortitude, and the will to fight and succeed. The same spirit and state of high morale was witnessed throughout Pakistan on this Independence Day.

On 6 September 1965, the enemy crossed the international borders without any prior warning violating the Geneva Convention. The enemy dreaming to celebrate in the Lahore Gymkhana could never even dare to cross the BRB Canal. The force that planned to capture Sialkot; found it miserably pinned-down with burning knocked-down tanks, scattered dead and abandoned Prisoners of War. In this war, our valiant armed forces defeated a much bigger enemy intoxicated by power and arrogance.

In September 2015, we face a new set of challenges. Failing in conventional mode, our enemies have resorted to 'proxy wars'. This is the indirect approach which uses both hard and soft power. This new mode of confrontation involves all means including support to anti-state elements, abetting terrorism, providing fuel to political violence, attacks on very basis and ideological foundations of the nation, and cultural invasion etc. But despite this all, we are overcoming these troubles highly successfully.

We Pakistanis as a nation have travelled a long way in these 50 years. We are a nuclear power, possess advance missile technology and proud of our battle-hardened military; fully capable and determined to take on all challenges. The successes of Zarb-e-Azb are a befitting response to all the plans of putting Pakistan in a dilemma by opening the Western front. Indian's negative designs in Balochistan are also well checked. The militants will be fully eliminated soon. Peace has returned to Swat; FATA is witnessing last blows to the enemy; and, in Karachi the people are already rejoicing peace.

Today as a nation we stand in unison with spirits rejuvenated and hopes rekindled.

Long Live Pakistan!

*Kamran Kiani*  
ed.english@hllal.gov.pk

بِسْمِ اللَّهِ الرَّحْمَنِ الرَّحِيمِ

# 1965 WAR FIFTY YEARS AFTER

"At about 1300 hours on 6th September, General Officer Commanding 15 Division, Major General Niranjana Prasad, reported that the situation in his Sector was desperate on account of heavy casualties and that no further offensive action was possible..... I was astonished by his appearance. He seemed to be drained of all will and vision. His attitude was passively negative and there was the unmistakable air of the defeatist about him. He stated his inability to undertake any further offensive action on the plea that his formation had lost all capacity for operations."

Lieutenant General Harbaksh Singh, WAR DESPATCHES Indo-Pak  
Conflict 1965, p 91-92.

I [Corps Commander XI Indian Corps] visited 4 Mountain Division this afternoon from 1415 hours to 1615 hours (on 7 September) and met the GOC at his HQ. Most of the officers in the HQ and the GOC were wearing long faces. The troops I saw on my way to the HQ appeared slack and generally uninterested.

Lieutenant General Harbaksh Singh, WAR DESPATCHES Indo-Pak  
Conflict 1965, p 100-101.

"In the midst of this grim crisis on 10 September, Army Chief Chaudhuri asked Harbaksh Singh whether our forward positions should not be readjusted and established behind the Beas as the enemy armoured division might breakthrough."

Lieutenant General Brij Mohan Kaul, Confrontation with Pakistan, p 38

میرے خاک و خون سے تو نے یہ جہاں کیا ہے پیدا  
صلہ شہید کیا ہے؟ تب و تاب جاوداں!

"The human heart is the starting point of all matters pertaining to war."<sup>2</sup>

## HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVE

### Kashmir War of 1947-48

The heart of the matter which caused the Indo-Pak wars in 1947-48 and in 1965 was Kashmir.

On 26 October 1947, V. P. Menon, advisor to the new Governor General of India, placed before Mountbatten, a paper purported to be the instrument of accession signed by a vacillating but now frightened Hari Singh, the last ruler of the State of Jammu and Kashmir. This enabled the Dominion of India to employ its military power to help an 'endangered state' to preserve its integrity. The very next day, on 27 October 1947, Indian Air Force transport aircraft carrying Indian troops landed at Srinagar airport beginning the military occupation of Kashmir which lasts till today. Pakistan barely two and a half months old tasted the first Indian aggression.

At partition India had inherited two-thirds of the well organized, well equipped and well experienced British Indian Army. Pakistan's share was not only meager, but far from being a cohesive organization and spread all over the Subcontinent. Consequently when India began its military occupation of Kashmir in October 1947, there was nothing in the field to



Lt Gen Mahmud Ahmed, Retd

<sup>1</sup> Kuliyat-i-Aqbal (Urdu), 1979 Edition, published by Sheikh Ghulam Ali and Sons, Publishers, Lahore - Hyderabad - Karachi, Poem: 11, Page 307

<sup>2</sup> Maréchal de Saxe, Reveries on the Art of War, (Preface), 1752

resist it. Having quickly captured the Valley of Srinagar and pushed out the ill-equipped freedom fighters from all the heights which overlook the Valley, the Indian forces began to expand in all directions to annex the whole of Kashmir. It was not until May 1948 that the first few regular units of the Pakistan Army could reach Kashmir for the support of the hard pressed freedom fighters. Indian advance was slowed down and eventually brought to a halt but not before a considerable portion of Jammu and Kashmir territory had been lost. Cessation of fighting came about on January 1, 1949 and the positions held by opposing forces became the Cease Fire Line inviolated by UN Military Observers Group. The Line of Control dividing Kashmir today is more or less the same Cease Fire Line.

To the world in general, India repeatedly announced its pledge to hold plebiscite thereby allowing the 77% Muslims of Kashmir to decide their own future. But at home the Indian government consolidated its military hold by systematically removing all impediments that made the State of Jammu and Kashmir an entity separate from Indian Dominion. Thanks to her duality combined with vigorous diplomatic labours by early 1964 the world had grown sufficiently accustomed to the ground reality in the north-western part of the Subcontinent to look on it as a mere spectator. Ironically a military dictator of Pakistan tried in vain to resolve the dispute through negotiations with a democratically elected government of India which was inclined towards belligerency. The India-Pakistan Talks which began in 1962 ended inconclusively. To add injury to insult, when Pakistan vociferously protested at a meeting of the Security Council against India's blatant amalgamation of the disputed State, the Indian representative in the UN announced arrogantly, that Kashmir had become an integral part of India on 27 October 1947 when the Maharajah of Kashmir had signed the

instrument of accession and that, "You cannot make more complete what was already complete."<sup>3</sup> This meant that henceforth India had no intentions of holding plebiscite or of negotiating the dispute over Kashmir. The Indian government had calculated that in not too distant a future her five years re-armament programme started after the disastrous 1962 border war against China would clearly tilt the military balance in her favour so that even if the Kashmir problem lingered, India would have overwhelmingly military might to back her political arguments.

#### Rann of Kutch Conflict: April-June 1965

Like the annual cycle of the monsoons, matters began to heat up in the Subcontinent in early 1965 when India established a border post in a disputable part of Rann of Kutch. Meetings between the officers of Indian border police and Pak Rangers ended inconclusively when India refused to dismantle the contentious post. On 9 April regular troops of the Pakistan Army attacked to remove the disputed post. In the ensuing tension both sides brought in additional forces and skirmishes continued until June. In fact on 24 June, the PAF fighters forced down an IAF Ouragon aircraft flying armed reconnaissance mission near Badin. "The cessation of hostilities finally came into effect on 1 July with the signing of the Kutch agreement on 30 June but by then the storm clouds were gathering over Kashmir."<sup>4</sup>

#### Escalation in Kashmir: July-August 1965

Disturbance in Indian Held Kashmir was the result of Indian intransigence combined with harsh rule following the theft of the Holy Relic from the shrine at Hazratbal in Srinagar. The Indian Army went on full alert in July 1965 when a Kashmiri shepherd of Gulmarg reported presence of 'strangers' (actually Kashmiri freedom fighters) in the

neighbouring hill meadows (locally called *margs*) where he was grazing his flock. A widespread crackdown by the Indian regular forces in Kashmir valley could not completely quell the insurrection. During the last week of August 1965, the Indian Army undertook three major attacks across the Cease Fire Line, viz, one in Tithwal area against Pir Sahaba and two attacks, one each from Uri and Punch aimed at eliminating the Bedori Bulge. All Indian attacks were partially successful; in Tithwal area, Pir Sahaba was captured by 25 August while in Bedori area the Indians occupied Haji Pir Pass on 28 August. Pakistan responded to the Indian aggression across the Cease Fire Line on 1 September with a powerful thrust consisting of infantry and armour supported by artillery in the area of Chhamb aimed at Akhnur. The Indians were completely surprised by the size and direction of the Pakistani riposte. The immediate Indian reaction appeared in the form of six Vampires of IAF which arrived over the battlefield of Chhamb late in the afternoon that day. Despite heavy odds, two F-86 fighters of PAF took up the challenge and in the ensuing aerial combat shot down four enemy aircraft in quick succession; the remaining two Vampires survived by vanishing over the pale horizon.

In New Delhi on 2 September the Indian Prime Minister ordered a reluctant Indian Army Chief to attack Pakistan itself in order to thwart the menacing operation which was likely to amputate Indian Held Kashmir altogether. The Indian forces took four days to move to the West Pakistan border and launch the famous attack on 6 September 1965.

#### WAR ACROSS INTERNATIONAL BORDERS

##### Comparison of Forces

By 1965 the Indian Army had expanded considerably and was well on its way to modernization. The land forces were grouped into four commands, Western, Eastern, Central

<sup>3</sup> Brines, Russel, *The Indo-Pak Conflict*, Pall Mall Press, London, 1968, p. 236; *Maréchal de Saxe, Reveries on the Art of War*, (Preface), 1752.

<sup>4</sup> Mahmud Ahmed, *Lieutenant General, Illusion of Victory*, Lexicon Publishers Karachi, 2002, p. 9.

and Southern. Of these, the Western Command was responsible for West Pakistan while the Eastern Command was responsible for NEFA and East Pakistan. The Indian Army comprised five corps of which three (I Corps, XI Corps and XV Corps) were committed against West Pakistan. The strength of infantry formations had nearly been doubled from ten divisions to twenty divisions with the raising of nine new mountain divisions as part of the Indian five years re-armament programme started immediately after the 1962 debacle.

Bulk of the Indian Army grouped under the Western Command was employed against West Pakistan which is where all the major fighting took place. There was virtually no military action in East Pakistan. The forces arrayed against West Pakistan comprised the Indian armoured division and one independent armoured brigade as well as thirteen out of nineteen infantry and mountain divisions and six out of eight independent infantry brigades. To contest this massive Indian juggernaut Pakistan had only one and half armoured division, six infantry divisions and two independent infantry brigades; there was only one infantry division to defend the whole of East Pakistan against the India Eastern Command.

#### Indian Army's Offensive Plan

As unbelievable as it may seem today, the Indian offensive plan in 1965 was neither bold nor spectacular nor imaginative. Of the two offensive formations, Indian I Corps was launched in Sialkot Sector and XI Indian Corps launched in Lahore Sector. The tasks of both these corps was simply advance into Pak territory up to the BRBL Canal (Bambanwala Ravi Bedian Link Canal) and destroy all bridges over it to preclude the possibility of any Pakistani offensive. In the Lahore Sector from Maqbool Siphon to Hussainiwala Headworks, the BRBL Canal flows close to border. However,

in the Sialkot Sector it lies well away from the Working Boundary which meant that the Indian I Corps would have to cover much greater distances inside Pakistan.

#### The Lahore Front

Indian XI Corps' offensive which commenced around 3.30 a.m. on 6 September consisted of three main thrusts, each with an infantry division along axes Wagah-Atari, Barki-Hudiara and Kasur-Khem Karan; a fourth thrust with a brigade size force was launched from Dera Nanak towards Jassar Bridge. Despite the advantage of initiative and surprise, the Indian advance was characterized by extreme caution. Pakistani forces held firm in their defensive positions inflicting heavy casualties on the advancing enemy. In the skies overhead the PAF Shaheens ruled supreme exacting a heavy toll of Indian formations on the move in depth. On the ground below, Pakistan artillery impacted with paralyzing effect. As early as afternoon on 6 September, this brave and magnificent Pakistani combined arms employment had spread panic among the Indian forces of which Lieutenant General Harbaksh Singh writes unabashedly:

*"At about 1300 hours on 6th September, General Officer Commanding 15 Division, Major General Niranjan Prasad, reported that the situation in his Sector was desperate on account of heavy casualties and that no further offensive action was possible..... I was astonished by his appearance. He seemed to be drained of all will and vision. His attitude was passively negative and there was the unmistakable air of the defeatist about him. He stated his inability to undertake any further offensive action on the plea that his formation had lost all capacity for operations."*<sup>5</sup>

Indian 15 Division had barely recovered from its clumsy start when a bold counter-attack by Pakistan's 10 Division on 8 September once again

sent the Indian troops reeling back toward the border. Withdrawing in alarm and confusion Major General Niranjan, GOC 15 Indian Division abandoned his jeep, with his flag and star-plates on full display, and preferred to retreat on foot! After a day or two however, XI Corps again regained its mental balance and the enemy was able to rally and resume the attack towards the BRBL Canal but now only on two axes Wagah-Atari and Barki-Hudiara; the situation on the third axis, i.e., Kasur-Khem Karan has been covered separately below. On the Barki-Hudiara axis Indian 7 Division was able to close up with the Canal only after the fall of Major Aziz Bhatti *Shaheed, MH*, and with him the fall of Barki village on 10 September. Thereafter the enemy remained contented with ransacking and looting villages lying abandoned between the border and the BRBL Canal. On the Wagah-Atari axis, Indian 15 Division was re-enforced by a para brigade and the enemy troops eventually reached the Canal on the GT Road painstakingly by capturing the village of Dograi only a day before the Cease Fire.

*Withdrawing in alarm and confusion Major General Niranjan, GOC 15 Indian Division abandoned his jeep, with his flag and star-plates on full display, and preferred to retreat on foot!*

#### Kasur-Khem Karan Area

As mentioned above, the third prong of XI Indian Corps was initially directed along axis Khem Karan-Kasur. Quite like its northern neighbour on the main GT Road (Wagah - Atari axis), Indian 4 Mountain Division also lost its zest and élan as soon as it tasted the very first few salvos hurled at them by the Pakistani artillery. The situation prevailing in the enemy's camp is best described by Lieutenant General Harbaksh Singh, C-in-C Western

<sup>5</sup> Harbaksh Singh, Lieutenant General, WAR DESPATCHES Indo-Pak Conflict 1965, Lancer International II-3 Gulmohar Park, New Delhi, 1991, pp. 91-92.

Command himself:

"In the early hours of the morning of 8 September I received a very alarming report in the form of a handwritten letter through a special officer courier, from General Officer Commanding XI Indian Corps who had visited the formation (4 Mountain Division) on the afternoon of 7<sup>th</sup> September 1965. An extract from the letter is given below:<sup>9</sup>

I visited 4 Mountain Division this afternoon from 1415 hours to 1615 hours (on 7 September) and met the GOC at his HQ. Most of the officers in the HQ and the GOC were wearing long faces. The troops I saw on my way to the HQ appeared slack and generally uninterested. On enquiry I came to know the following:

The strength of the six infantry battalions had been reduced to an overall total of about three and a half battalions in 24 hours of action commencing 0400 hours 6<sup>th</sup> Sep. This reduction was partially due to enemy action but mostly due to desertion.

The rot started with 13 DOGRA, who without orders left the position allotted to them without any enemy pressure except perhaps shelling. GOC 4 Mountain Division halted them as they were coming back. During Night 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Sep they all disappeared except the Subedar Major and the CO's party. This rot quickly spread to the other infantry units. 4 Mountain have the following battalions under it at present:-

18 Rajputana Rifles

4 Grenadiers

7 Grenadiers

1/9 Gorkha Rifles

9 JAK Rifles

13 Dogra

Of these, only 4 GRENADIERS and 1/9 GORKHA RIFLES are intact. I am told by the GOC that the CO of 9 JAK RIFLES left his position, without orders, on the Night of 6<sup>th</sup>/7<sup>th</sup> Sep taking a company of infantry with him. 7 GRENADIERS are only about two companies strong. 18 RAJPUTANA RIFLES has about 10 per

cent desertions and the GOC thinks that this unit is cracking up. I am further given to understand by the GOC that desertions are restricted to infantry units only and no other arm or service in the Division is affected.

Because of the situation not a single task given to 4 Mountain Division in the current operations has been carried out. No bridge on the ICHHOGIL (BRBL) Canal in 4 Mountain Division Sector has been blown up. The GOC had to readjust the position of 7<sup>th</sup> Sep. When I visited him today he was arranging the preparation of a defended sector in the ASAL UTTAR Area.

The morale of the Division being what it is, it is my considered view that any defenses held by the present infantry units in 4 Mountain Division cannot withstand even slight enemy pressure. This is a most serious situation in the present stage of operations. I recommend:

(a) That 4 Mountain Division be immediately replaced by some other formation for carrying out the role given to them.

(b) Except for 4 GRENADIERS and 1/9 GORKHA RIFLES the four infantry units of 4 Mountain Division as given in Para 4 above should be disbanded.

I request that you pay a visit to this formation at your earliest convenience to see at first hand its state of morale and the competence of its commander.

It was privilege and an honour to have you here on the epoch making day - 6<sup>th</sup> Sep 1965.

With warm regards

Thus the commander of Indian Western Command once again found himself seized with the onerous and odious task of rallying his shaky and unsteady formations. On the morning of 8 September he rushed to the HQ of 4 Mountain Division located at Gharyala (north east of Khem Karan) just in time to arrest a rapidly deteriorating situation. No soon had he reconciled to the idea of 4

Mountain Division giving up its offensive role and assuming a defensive task, than the Indian Western Command C-in-C was confronted by an even more serious

The Indian 1 Armoured Division advanced with two tank regiment groups and made good progress until they ran into 'Men Of Steel' belonging to 25 Cavalry at Phillaurah where the advancing Indian armour units were effectively checked.

crisis. Pakistan had launched its armoured division against the very formation he had just visited and stabilized.

**Pakistani Offensive in Khem Karan Area**

Even before absorbing the full impact of the sudden Indian attack across the international borders on 6 September morning, Pakistan's high command ordered its own offensive to commence as early as night 6/7 September from Kasur towards Khem Karan and beyond. The plan was bold and spectacular in conception but alas not so in its execution. Pakistan's 11 Division responsible for defense of Kasur Sector was assigned the task of providing a bridge-head in the area of Khem Karan from which Pakistani 1 Armoured Division was to debouch and advance along the west bank of River Sutlej and cut off the GT Road Jullundur-Amritsar at Jandiala Guru. The bridgehead was successfully established and sufficiently enlarged with the capture of Khem Karan on 8 September. The breakout by armour that began on 9 September made reasonably good progress with 6 Lancers reaching as deep as Valtola Railway Station. The crisis which prevailed in the Indian Army Headquarters at that time is described by General BM Kaul:

'In the midst of this grim crisis on 10 September, Army Chief Chaudhuri asked Harbaksh Singh whether our forward positions should not be readjusted and established behind

<sup>9</sup> Ibid, pp. 100-101.

the Beas as the enemy armoured division might breakthrough.<sup>7</sup>

Inexplicably however, in the evening Pakistani tanks were withdrawn for night leaguer, relinquishing all the gains of that day. The offensive was resumed on 10 September only to stall on account of disorientation and lack of sufficient information about the enemy in front. By 12 September the GHQ felt compelled to transfer 1 Armoured Division to Sialkot where the situation was deemed desperate.

### Operations in Sialkot Sector

In the Sialkot Sector, Indian I Corps much like its neighbouring XI Corps, attacked on a broad front keeping no reserves for exploiting deep. The Indian attack on Sialkot front began on night 7/8 September, i.e., two days after their attacks in the Lahore Sector. This was due to longer time taken by Indian I Corps for its movement and assembly rather than any finesse or attempt at achieving strategic surprise. 26 Indian Division (belonging to I Indian Corps) attacked on two axes, Jammu-Sialkot and Bajrargarhi-Sialkot. After some early success 26 Division's steam ran out and its attack ground to halt only a short distance from its starting point on the Working Boundary near Suchetgarh. Here it remained during the remaining days of the war. A bold counter-attack by Pakistan's 15 Division launched on 9 September caused some disarray among Indian troops. However, 26 Division launched a fresh attack but not until 18 - 21 September when it was reinforced by a brigade size force. Launched north of the Suchetgarh - Sialkot axis, the fresh enemy attack met initial success only to peter out eventually.

The main thrust of I Indian Corps was launched with three divisions including their armoured division well east of Sialkot, from the area extending from Maharajke to Degh Nadi. 6 Mountain Division and 14

Division were to establish a large bridge-head in the area Maharajke-Charwa-Nakhal from which the Indian 1 Armoured Division was to breakout on 8 September morning towards Phillaurah-Chawinda. In the event however, 14 Division could not reach its operational area in time to establish its part of the bridge-head. Consequently the Indian 1 Armoured Division entered Pakistani territory east of Charwa without the benefit or safety of a bridge-head! The Indian

**Defence of Sargodha was vital for PAF to remain an effective force. The Shaheens rose to meet the Indian aerial onslaught and shot down eleven enemy aircraft for the loss of only one; there was absolutely no damage to the Sargodha airfield.**

cavalry, "..... crossed into Pakistan early in the morning at a trot, and finding no opposition en route broke into a canter which changed into a gallop as the leading units gathered speed."<sup>8</sup>

The Indian 1 Armoured Division advanced with two tank regiment groups and made good progress until they ran into 'Men Of Steel' belonging to 25 Cavalry at Phillaurah where the advancing Indian armour units were effectively checked. In an attempt to manoeuvre around the flanks of the Pakistani opposition, the Indian units mistook each other for Pakistani tanks and opened fire which though very accurate proved fatal for both the enemy tank regiments. This involuntary fratricide added more casualties to the list already made large by the Pakistani tanks. Assuming erroneously that his flanks were vulnerable, the Indian armour commander ordered both his leading tank groups to turn about and withdraw. One of the two groups was tasked to withdraw and thwart a Pakistani thrust suspected to be moving towards a village in their rear called Pindi Bhago. This new Pakistani

threat injected more panic among the Indian troops who were already experiencing jitters induced by confounding confusion:

*"The order to go back to village called Pindi Bhago was misunderstood by some who mistook it to mean, 'hurry back to your own village' (apne pind ko bhago)! They (17 Poona Horse Group) started heading for the international border in a hurry."*<sup>9</sup>

It took the Indians nearly two days to disentangle and resume their offensive. In the meantime the nascent Pakistani 6 Armoured Division which was still going through the process of transformation from an independent brigade into a division was deployed to defend the area between Sialkot and Pasrur. However, before the Pakistani formation could complete its deployment, the Indians launched a fresh attack on 11 September resulting in the capture of Phillaurah. Unfortunately the Pakistani troops at Phillaurah were engaged in an ill-timed redeployment operation when the full weight of nearly three Indian tank regiments fell on them. It was perhaps the impact of this Indian thrust at Phillaurah that obliged the GHQ to pull out 1 Armoured Division from Khem Karan on 12 September and redeploy it in the Sialkot Sector. The Indians did not exploit their success at Phillaurah as expeditiously as they could have. Their next attack directed at Chawinda materialized two days later on 14 September only to be beaten back. Then the Indians took another two days to prepare before launching a renewed attack on Chawinda on 16 September with even worse results. Having received severe mauling at the hands of Pakistani ground forces and PAF since 8 September, the Indian 1 Armoured Division pulled out of battle altogether.

The task of capturing Chawinda before the imposition of Cease Fire was ultimately given to 6 Mountain

<sup>7</sup> B M Kaul, Lieutenant General, Confrontation with Pakistan, Vikas Publications, Delhi, India, 1971, page 38.

<sup>8</sup> Mahmud Ahmed, op cit, p. 395.

<sup>9</sup> Bhupinder Singh, Lieutenant Colonel (Retired), 1965 War - Role of Tanks in India-Pakistan War, BC Publishers, Pattalia, India, April 1982, p. 190.

Division. "Never before had the Indians attacked so desperately nor were they more comprehensively defeated. The affront suffered by the Pakistan Army at Khem Karan was suitably avenged at Chawinda. In fact the defeat of the Indian Army in Sialkot was far greater in magnitude than the failure of Pakistan's offensive north east of Kasur."<sup>10</sup>

Running silent, running deep and operating alone, the submarine GHAZI did not lag behind in action. Having returned to port on 14 September for repair of an ECM defect, GHAZI sailed out again on 16 September with the task to patrol off the Kathiawar coast. On night 22/23 September it encountered enemy activity and fired its torpedoes badly damaging INS BRAHMAPUTRA.

#### NAVAL OPERATIONS

Pakistan Navy was a tiny force compared to its Indian counterpart. Besides an aircraft carrier with thirty combat planes, the Indian Navy comprised two cruisers, three destroyers and sixteen frigates. Against this armada, the Pakistan Navy had only one cruiser, five destroyers, two frigates, four gunboats and one submarine.

A flotilla of surface ships comprising destroyers and frigates was deployed to patrol the Arabian Sea off Karachi to keep the enemy at bay while the lone submarine GHAZI positioned itself off Bombay bottling up all the Indian naval vessels anchored in that harbour. This afforded an opportunity to the Pakistan Navy to launch an offensive strike against Dwarka without any fear of interference from the enemy navy. Accordingly at 6 p.m. in the evening on 7 September, one cruiser accompanied by five destroyers and a frigate set course for Dwarka with the Indian naval radar station located there as the target. The Pakistani task force arrived at its designated position by midnight and shortly

thereafter opened fire. Although effectiveness of this firing activity could not be ascertained, it definitely raised the morale of the Pakistani sailors who though few in number had given a befitting reply to the India aggression across the international borders.

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The leadership and sailors of Pakistan Navy relied on imaginative planning and extra-ordinary boldness in operational execution sustained by high level of motivation. Their courage adequately compensated the enemy's maritime numerical and qualitative superiority. The outcome of hostilities at sea was inversely proportionate – moral victory of the small Pakistan Navy over the much bigger Indian Navy.

#### PAF VERSUS IAF

IAF enjoyed an overall superiority in number of aircraft as well as in air support infrastructure (bases and radars etc). Against approximately IAF 30 squadrons the PAF had only about twelve squadrons. However, what PAF lacked in quantity, the Shaheens made up in quality. A sizeable number of PAF's front line aircraft were armed with air-to-air missiles which IAF did not have. Besides this technological edge, the PAF displayed remarkable level of professional training and a very high degree of personal motivation, courage and valour at all levels throughout the short but intense war.

The skirmish in Rann of Kutch followed by the insurrection in Kashmir had obliged both air forces to maintain a high level of alert from April through August 1965. As

mentioned above, the IAF lost four out of six Vampire aircraft on 1 September in their very first aerial combat with the PAF. This victory not only boosted PAF's morale tremendously but also transformed the total air power situation in Pakistan's favour. On 5 September, IAF suffered another blow to its prestige when a Gnat aircraft was forced by PAF fighters to land at Pasrur airfield. Thus by the time the Indian Army attacked across the international border, IAF's morale was already considerably diminished. The PAF followed up its early successes with pre-emptive air strikes on 6 September against Indian air bases at Pathankot and Kalakunda destroying 24 enemy aircraft and damaging seven. Nevertheless the enemy air force launched a series of air strikes on 7 September at the pivotal air base of Sargodha. Defence of Sargodha was vital for PAF to remain an effective force. The Shaheens rose to meet the Indian aerial onslaught and shot down eleven enemy aircraft for the loss of only one; there was absolutely no damage to the Sargodha airfield. Thereafter IAF gave up daytime raids altogether and resorted to night sorties without achieving any meaningful result. A tiny PAF had attained a decisive victory over a much larger adversary long before imposition of Cease Fire on 23 September.

#### ANALYSIS OF THE WAR

The Indian Army's plan lacked finesse in conception and was bereft of boldness in conduct. The advantages of surprise and superior size were squandered at the hands of rather clumsy execution choked with caution punctuated with fits of utter

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<sup>10</sup> Mahmud Ahmed, op cit, p. 482.

panic. Incredible as it may seem both offensive corps (I and XI) attacked on such broad fronts as to be completely ineffectual; both these Indian corps committed all their forces at the very outset retaining nothing in reserve! XI Indian Corps employed all its three divisions on 6 September at the start of the offensive; all the three divisions in turn committed nearly all their brigades at different points. The only element of XI Corps not committed on 6 September was 2 Independent Armoured Brigade. Similarly, Indian I Corps operating in the Sialkot Sector also committed all its three divisions including 1 Armoured Division at six points starting from Jammu-Sialkot axis all the way to Degh Nadi; the fourth division (14 Division) could not be committed because it was not able to complete its movement in time. The result of such over-extended deployment was that the Indian Army was stretched along a wide frontage without being strong anywhere to achieve meaningful results.

#### Outcome of the War

Essentially the Governments and the military on both sides were dissatisfied with the outcome of the 1965 War though the general public of both Countries claimed and continues to claim complete victory.

Pakistani people's claim to victory is absolutely justified; with much lesser population (one fifth of India's), smaller armed forces (less than half of the Indian army and miniscule air force and navy) and fewer resources they had not only held the Indian giant at bay and frustrated his reprehensible designs but also caused him to panic on several occasions.

What has India to boast about? That in a fit of nervous fright her 'seasoned' political leadership turned

volte-face on its pledge of plebiscite and instead decided to wage war only to retain its military hold over Kashmir? That its armed forces though much bigger in size failed to achieve their objectives suffering disproportionate attrition in the bargain? Hardly anything much to boast about for the biggest democracy in the world.

Ironically the war in 1965 was initiated by a civilian democratic government of India which ostentatiously avowed peace and the principles of Satya (truth) and Ahimsa (kindness) but was inwardly belligerent while a 'military dictator' in Pakistan who, far from being a war monger, had bent all his militaristic energies before 1965 to persuade India to the table.

History's verdict ought to be dispassionate:

*"The Indo-Pak War of 1965 may be summed up as a war of lost opportunities, a war of reactions and a war of disillusionment. ... what did the two countries achieve through war..... In the case of Pakistan, if it was solution of Kashmir, then we failed; if it was to de-freeze the issue, then the means employed and the risks taken were grossly disproportionate to the results achieved..... In the case of Indians, if their aim was to save JHK, by attacking Pakistan they succeeded but at a cost disproportionate to the gains; if their aim was capture of Sialkot, Lahore or Kasur, then they too failed totally; if their aim was to cause attrition to the Pakistani Armed Forces then the Indians suffered no less than us".<sup>12</sup>*

In fact Indian losses in military material, especially in personnel, tanks and aircraft far exceeded those of Pakistan. While his candor is to be

appreciated, Lieutenant General Harbakhsh Singh, GOC-in-C Western Command seems to shift the responsibility for the Indian Army's failure from the higher military leadership to the shoulders of subordinate commanders:

*"The Press..... carried banner headlines describing our armour actions as comparable to some of the greatest tank battles of World War II. The action at PHILLORA, it was claimed, surpassed even the sensational feats of ROMMEL at the height of his glory..... This was all very complimentary and it was also natural that in the first flush of victory we should be carried away by sentiments in which cold logic found no place..... when the dust settled down and the achievements .... were viewed in their correct perspective, stripped of the aura of sensation, the initial feeling of exaltation gave way to one of disillusionment..... The sense of disillusionment deepened to chagrin when ..... it was revealed that a decisive victory slipped out of our hands due to poor leadership on the battlefield"<sup>12</sup>*

#### Future Outlook

War should not be regarded as an event but rather as an ever enduring human obsession constrained only by time and space dimensions. Dedication to peace does not automatically obviate incidence of war. Therefore while we must reconcile ourselves to its inevitability we must also always have the determination and reliable means to deter it. Barely six years after 1965, Pakistan again found itself engaged in another war with India which ended with ignoble and fateful results because we were a house divided. The laurels won in September 1965 were of little consequence in

<sup>11</sup> Mahmud Ahmed, op cit, p. 533.

<sup>12</sup> Harbakhsh Singh, op cit, paras 130-131, p. 159.

December 1971. Conversely, we should not allow the setback of 1971 to weaken our resolve to re-dedicate ourselves to the true cause set by our noble ancestors. As Muslims and as Pakistanis, we need to be very clear in our minds about who we were, who we are and, who we want to be. Correctness of answers to these questions will rectify our direction as individuals and as a people:

صورتِ شمشیر ہے دستِ قضا میں وہ قوم  
کرتی ہے جو ہر زمان اپنے عمل کا حساب!

The causes of Muslim decline in India (and elsewhere) must be studied with greater diligence than may have been done by us in the past. We lost the Subcontinent to the British because Muslim rule had festered with abject degeneration and frailty for nearly half-a-century - from 1707 to 1757 which the English found opportune to exploit to their advantage. We forgot who we were and what our true destiny was and thus fell victim to a fate of our own making:

افسوس صد افسوس کہ شاہیں نہ بنا تو  
دیکھتے نہ تری آنکھ نے فطرت کے اشارات!  
تقدیر کے قاضی کا یہ فتویٰ ہے اسلے  
ہے جرمِ سینی کی سزا مرگِ مغابات!

The period from 1757 to 1947 is one long heart-rending episode of retreats and defeats of Muslims in the Subcontinent; seven years after 1757, the British annexed the whole of Avadh followed by Mysore in 1799. Perhaps Tipu Sultan could have saved his kingdom and retained his crown –

he only had to bow before British supremacy. He did not – he chose martyrdom instead! The upheaval in 1857 gave the British the excuse to deliver *coup de grace* ultimately:

’تن تقدیر ہے آج ان کے عمل کا انداز  
تھی نہاں جن کے ارادوں میں خدا کی تقدیر  
تھا جو ناخوب، بستہ دیرج وہی خوب، ہوا  
کہ غلامی میں بدل جاتا ہے قوموں کا خمیر‘

#### The Ultimate Truth

We only need to look through annals of history to realize that Muslim destiny is struggle and perseverance against staggering odds. Although even today Kashmir ostensibly is the focal point of Indo-Pak rivalry, in reality this territorial dispute is not the cause but merely a tangible manifestation of a much older and deeper conflict between truth and falsehood. The very basis of our faith is Ultimate Truth–Oneness of Allah and the finality of Muhammad’s (PBUH) prophethood. Thus Muslim belief system is fundamentally irreconcilable to any belief system which conflicts with the Ultimate Truth:

بہلِ دونی پسند ہے حق لاشریک ہے  
شرکت میانہ حق و باطل نہ کرتبول!

But Muslims beware; our uncompromising belief system **does not forbid** normal human relations based on equality with the rest of mankind. We need our non-Muslim friends today just as our noble ancestors did in times gone by:

’Those friends thou hast, and their adoption tried,

Grapple them to thy soul with hoops of steel‘<sup>17</sup>

The crucial clause here is, ‘their adoption tried’. In other words we must nurture such friends whose reliability and sincerity in fulfillment of mutual obligation has been tried and tested over time. The Holy Qur’an makes it mandatory to fulfill all obligations of treaty or agreement regardless of creed. It is well known that it was for fulfillment of his treaty with the pagan tribe called Banū Khuzā’ah, that the Holy Prophet(PBUH) marched on Mecca, his home town, and against pagan Quresh, his own tribe!

As true Muslims our struggle **must not be to seek past glory** but only sincere fulfillment of our destiny as defined in the Holy Quran – establishment of justice, enjoining righteousness and thwarting transgression. Belief is one part of the faith – its practical fulfillment is the crucial component.

But this is a subject which demands exclusive and comprehensive treatment.



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<sup>13</sup> Kulyat-i-Iqbal - Masjid-i-Qutaba, Page 393

<sup>14</sup> Kulyat-i-Iqbal - Abul Ma’ari, Page 449

<sup>15</sup> Kulyat-i-Iqbal - Tan ba Taqdeer, Page 478

<sup>16</sup> Kulyat-i-Iqbal - Tipu Sultan ki Wasaiyat, Page 535.

<sup>17</sup> Shakespeare, HAMLET, Act I, Scene II, advice by Polonius to his son Laertes.

# 1965 War Chronology of Events

## The Vale of Kashmir

July 1947 – 1 January 1949:	Military occupation of Kashmir and war in Kashmir.
July 1953:	Sheikh Abdullah's cabinet dismissed
February 1954:	Ratification of accession by Bakshi Ghulam Muhammad
1960:	Indian Supreme Court assumes jurisdiction over IHK
1962-63:	Indo-Pak talks
27 December 1963:	Holy Relic stolen from Hazratbal shrine in IHK
December 1964:	Articles 356 and 357 of the Indian Constitution enforced in IHK

## Rann of Kutch Conflict

6-7 March 1965:	51 Brigade moves to Rann of Kutch area
14 March 1965:	Indians construct Sardar Post
9 April 1965:	51 Brigade's attack on Sardar Post
19 April 1965:	50 Indian Para Brigade moved from Agra to Biar Bet area
23 April 1965:	6 Brigade's raid on Saira Bet and Gullu Talai
26 April 1965:	Biar Bet captured by Pak troops
April – May 1965:	Indian and Pakistani forces deployed on borders
30 June 1965:	Rann of Kutch Agreement; forces withdrawn from borders

## The Wail of Kashmir

May 1965:	Indians occupy posts across CFL in Kargil area
15 August 1965:	Pak artillery bombardment in Chhamb area
24-25 August 1965:	Indians attack Pir Sahaba in Tithwal area
26 August 1965:	Indians attack Bedori Bulge
28 August 1965:	Indians occupy Haji Pir Pass
1 September 1965:	Pakistani operation launched in Chhamb area
	First aerial combat between IAF and PAF
2 September 1965:	Capture of Chhamb and change of command in Chhamb area
5 September 1965:	Capture of Jaurian

## War Across International Border

5-6 September 1965:	Pakistan Army occupies defensive positions on the borders
6 September 1965:	Indian Army attacks in Jassar, Lahore and Kasur areas.
	PAF strike on Indian air bases
Night 6-7 September 1965:	Bridge-head operation launched by 11 Division in Kasur area
Night 6-7 September 1965:	105 Brigade attacks in Sulemanki area
7 Sep 1965:	IAF launches retaliatory strikes at Sargodha Air Base
Night 7-8 September 1965:	Indian I Corps launched in Sialkot area
	PN bombards Indian naval radar installation at Dwarka
8 September 1965:	Indian 1 Armoured Divisions launched in Sialkot area
	Indian 11 Division launches attack against Gadra Salient
	5 Armoured Brigade launched from Khem Karan
	10 Division counter attack against Indian 15 Division
9 September 1965:	6 Armoured Division takes up defensive role in Sialkot area
10 September 1965:	4 and 5 Armoured Brigades' operations beyond Khem Karan
Night 10-11 Sept 1965:	Indians capture Barki
11 September 1965:	Battle of Phillaurah
	Pak offensive in Khem Karan called off
12 September 1965:	Pak 1 Armoured Division moved to Sialkot
	Indian attack in Khem Karan beaten back
14 September 1965:	First Battle of Chawinda
16 September 1965:	Second Battle of Chawinda
18 September 1965:	Move of HQ 8 Division to Sialkot
Night 21-22 Sept 1965:	Third Battle of Chawinda
	Last Indian effort to capture Khem Karan
	Battle of Dograi
Night 22-23 Sept 1965:	PN GHAZI torpedoes INS BRAHMAPUTRA
23 September 1965:	Cease Fire
24 Sep to 16 Oct 1965:	Fighting continues in Kashmir
5-10 January 1966:	Tashkent Talks
25 Feb 1966:	Withdrawal of forces to pre-5 August 1965 positions

بَيْتُكَ الْإِسْلَامِي



## WE SALUTE OUR ARMED FORCES

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## COAS VISITS DE-RADICALIZATION CENTRE, BARA

Besides rooting out terrorism from the country through military operations, Pakistan Army also took initiatives for de-radicalization and rehabilitation of particularly those who decided to renounce militancy. Pakistan Army has established many de-radicalization and rehabilitation centres in FATA. During his visit to one of such vocational training centre in Bara, COAS General Raheel Sharif complimented the tribal brethren for their support in eliminating terrorism. COAS appreciated those who have surrendered and renounced to be part of anti-state elements anymore and are ready to contribute for peaceful Pakistan.





## COAS VISIT TO SHAWAL VALLEY

On August 27, Gen Raheel Sharif, COAS visited Shawal Valley, North Waziristan and spent whole day interacting with troops actively participating in operation Zarb-e-Azb. COAS directed the troops to comprehensively cleanse the terrorists from hideouts and also commended them for extraordinary operational achievements.



# 50 Years Ago **IN** Lahore and Sialkot



**Brian Cloughley**

**E**

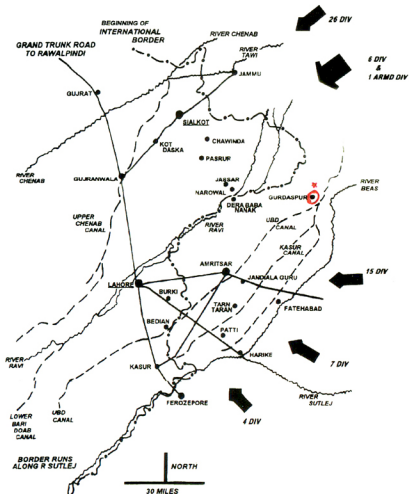
xactly fifty years ago Pakistan Army distinguished itself in the 1965 War with India. There are many accounts — and disagreements — about the causes of that conflict, and it is not my intention to go over well-worn country, but it is appropriate at this half-century anniversary to reflect on some aspects of the war itself, most notably the fighting in the Lahore and Sialkot sectors. The following descriptions are taken from my book on Pakistan Army which is to be published again, updated and much revised, in New York in October this year.

Several people have expressed disagreement with some of my descriptions which I obtained from reminiscences, published and unpublished, and from official sources, and there can be no objection to that, as we all have our points of view about battles. What cannot be denied, however, is the fact that the greatly outnumbered army of Pakistan fought courageously and well.

It was apparent that India's priority was the Akhnur area and it was essential to relieve Pakistani pressure in that sector. If Pakistan Army had cut the road leading to Indian-administered Kashmir and established a defensive position of even modest dimensions it would have been difficult to dislodge them, and had the army managed to advance only another ten miles, matters might have been critical for India. The Indians, however, had contingency plans for an attack in Punjab "based on the hypothesis that Pakistan would have the initiative in launching an attack in Kashmir with possible diversionary attacks in other sectors."

India's advance was blunted and the defenders were able to hold their positions and prevent penetration of the vital ground between Sialkot and Lahore. It appears that the Indian aim was simply to attack where it considered the enemy was weak and to gain as much ground as possible while endeavouring to keep their enemy off balance. Exploitation would come later, were either the Lahore or the Sialkot offensive to be successful. This is a perfectly understandable aim, and one that might just have been achieved had it not been for the stubborn resistance and remarkable gallantry of numerically inferior Pakistani formations.

# SIALKOT AND LAHORE



Source: *A History of the Pakistan Army Wars and Insurrections*, Brian Cloughley, Oxford University Press, 2<sup>nd</sup> Edition Year 2000, p83

This 1949 plan, approved by the Indian Cabinet, was president. Among other things it stated:

*In the event of such actions Indian troops in Kashmir would seek to contain the opposing forces while the main Indian field army made a determined and rapid advance towards Lahore and Sialkot, with a possible diversionary action towards Rawalpindi or Karachi to prevent a concentration of Pakistani forces in the major operational theatre in the West Punjab. The primary aim of this strategy was to inflict a decisive defeat on Pakistan's field army at the earliest possible time and, along with the possible occupation of Lahore, to compel the Pakistan government to seek peace.*

Although India's immediate concern was to prevent Pakistan severing the link with the north, the aim of their advance into 'West' Punjab was clear: to defeat the Pakistani army. On September 6 at 0530 hours their forces crossed the border towards Lahore; on the night 7/8 September, the advance began in the Sialkot sector. The main battlefields were to the south and east of these cities.

India's XI Corps mounted an offensive about fifty miles wide on the Lahore front along three main axes:

- 15 Division from Amritsar astride the Grand Trunk Road leading to the heart of Lahore;
- 7 Division north-west on an axis leading from the Patti area to Lahore via Burki; and
- 4 Mountain Division north-west from the Harike area towards Bedian/Rohiwal (near Kasur) with the Ferozepur-Kasur Road leading to Lahore approximately on the left flank.

Headquarters I Corps moved from Delhi only on September 3, 1965 to command the operation in Sialkot sector, which involved 1 Armoured Division, 6 Mountain Division, and 26 Infantry Division. 14 Division was brought from Saugor in central India but had been attacked by the PAF en route and had received severe blows that rendered it temporarily

off balance. The axes were:

- 26 Division striking south-west astride the Jammu-Sialkot road; and
- 6 Division and 1 Armoured Division (the latter the main threat to Pakistan) moving further south of 26 Division from the Jammu area towards Chawinda. In describing these battles, it is pertinent to keep in mind the observations by the historian Dr. Anthony Wright that:

*An initial difficulty in discussing both the Lahore offensive and the later one against Sialkot is the disputed nature of India's overall objectives. There can be no doubt that India's immediate objective was to relieve the pressure on Akhnur and that it decided to achieve this by mounting operations against the territory of West Pakistan. It is the territorial goals within West Pakistan of these operations that the belligerents dispute. Indian and Pakistani accounts not only contradict each other but are sometimes also internally inconsistent; neither government has published nor assisted in the publication of a balanced study of the war. Instead, semi-official, selective accounts have been put out which play up successes and gloss over failures.*

Terrain is always important to both attacker and defender but the nature of the country around Lahore was especially significant, there being a major obstacle in the shape of the Ichogil Canal, also known as the Bambanwala-Ravi-Bedian-Depalpur (BRBD) Canal, east of Lahore, which runs north-south for some 65 miles from the Upper Chenab Canal to the River Sutlej, passing underneath the River Ravi. This, and the many other irrigation canals in the area that had been constructed in the time of the Raj and later, assisted and hindered both sides, but overall the Ichogil was an asset to the defenders — which it had been designed to be when it was built immediately after partition. It was a

India's central axis in the Lahore sector was directed north-west towards Lahore and was intended to cross the BRBD Canal near Burki, a hamlet about 400 metres on the eastern side of the canal defended by a company of 17 Punjab, part of the two-company covering force of 13 Infantry Brigade. The company commander, Major Aziz Bhatti, thoroughly deserved the award of the Nishan-i-Haider, and his men also fought bravely.

medium-sized obstacle, having steep walls of about 4 metres in height, being about 3 metres deep (depending on the width), and from 25 to 40 metres wide. There were ten bridges and two other possible crossing points formed where the canal narrows to pass under rivers. To the layman it may seem like a formidable blockade; to well-trained troops, however, it was not an impassable obstacle and could be overcome with care and good equipment to establish a series of crossing points, if attempts at rushing the bridges failed. Not a pushover, especially if facing well-established defences, but not a barrier on the scale of the river Jhelum or the Ravi.

The first Pakistani elements to detect the attack were parties of Rangers who were quickly overrun by the Indians who also ran into parts of 10 Division's screen, which at that time was not fully deployed. Major Arif Jan and his thirty soldiers from various units held their position around Wagah to literally the last man. That the screen was not where it should have been when it should have been was the fault of the superior headquarters, not the commander of the division. Orders for 10 Division to move out of barracks were not received until the afternoon of September 5.

Deployment began shortly after midnight, just as the Indians were

preparing to move. By dawn on September 6, according to a British intelligence report written in 1966:

*When the forward elements of the Pakistan Army were concentrating behind the BRBD canal preparatory to taking up defensive positions they found with astonishment that the Indian Army forward elements were on the opposite bank. Frantic efforts were then made to blow the bridges, some of which had been prepared for demolition. All were eventually blown except for that carrying the Grand Trunk Road, where the proximity of the Indians prevented further engineer effort. There then followed a tactical operation which possibly changed the course of the battle. The GOC 10 Pakistan Division appreciated the urgency of demolishing the bridge and accordingly ordered a counter-attack in broad daylight across the canal using the bridge to the north where the siphon carried the canal under the River Ravi. This move was carried out by 17 Baluch with a squadron of tanks in support and though some losses were suffered, the Indians, threatened in their flank, withdrew and the bridge was blown.*

The 15 Indian Division advance towards Lahore from Amritsar was led by 54 Brigade, made up of 3 Jat, 15 Dogra, and 13 Punjab infantry battalions. The advance was slowed by intense Pakistani artillery fire directed by forward observers whose accuracy was assisted by prominent concrete pillars along the border. These had been positioned over the years by survey units for just this eventuality. 3 Jat pushed ahead and crossed the bridge over the BRBD Canal at about 1000 hours on September 6, but were repulsed by 3 Baloch in fierce fighting around the Bata shoe factory and withdrew to the area of Dograi on the east bank. They were followed up by 3 Baloch and about fifty men got trapped on the west of the canal when Pakistani sappers blew up the

bridge (and most of the other as well) during the night of September 6/7. Throughout the day the PAF conducted ground attack missions on elements of 15 Division with considerable effect, thus lessening the pressure on 10 Division's forward localities.

India's 50 Paratroop Brigade moved up on September 7, to relieve 54 Brigade which had shot its bolt. Its forward troops had been permitted to advance beyond artillery range and suffered more casualties than would otherwise have been the case. It is amazing that 3 Jat were allowed to cross the main obstacle and, apparently, establish a bridgehead,

closer to the front line. Whatever the cause, the battles on the line of the canal were savage. 50 Brigade attacked the isolated group of 3 Baluch on 7 and 8 September but failed to dislodge them. The commander of 15 (Indian) Division was replaced (coincidentally as later his counterpart in the Pakistan 15 Division was removed from the Sialkot sector), for failure to reinforce success in crossing the canal and for withdrawing under pressure. 'Under a new GOC,' says a neutral country's intelligence report, 'the Indian forces on this axis probed and counter-attacked continuously up to September 23, but made no headway.'



Pakistani Soldiers on Captured Indian Tanks

without armour and artillery as far forward as possible. It can be assumed only that either no orders were given to CO 3 Jat concerning his limit of exploitation, which is so unlikely as to be discounted; or that he advanced without orders to do so, which indicates a breakdown of command, which there was not; or, and this seems most likely, there was lack of coordination between artillery and armour with the infantry. It appears that artillery fire could be brought down as far west as the canal line to support 3 Jat's advance, but no gun positions had been made available

This is correct as far as it goes, but the battles were see-saw, with both sides' infantry and armour attacking and counter-attacking under artillery fire and suffering heavy casualties whose evacuation was extremely difficult.

Gallantry was not as one-sided as claimed by the historian Gulzar Ahmed. Describing the Batapur-Dogra fighting, he wrote:

*The Indian commander now calculated the economics of killing Pakistani soldiers in terms of rupees and felt that considering the family pensions and children's allowances to be paid to the families of the dead*

it was cheaper to confine to artillery shelling. It was also a safer method of passing the day.

This type of diatribe does not benefit a gentleman and is regrettable as it demeans the soldiers of both sides, who fought bravely and with skill. It is true that an Indian writer states, 'in a series of actions up to 18 September, battalion and brigade commanders in 15 Division sector displayed a conspicuous lack of the killer instinct and a marked disinclination to take risks,' but attacks were put in against 16 Punjab and 18 Baluch on 12 September and again between the 14 and 16 and on the night of the 21/22 September. All were repulsed, but 3 Jat's attack of 22 September, just before the cease-fire, got through to Dograi. Risk-taking succeeded in the end; but over five hundred men (about 250 from each side) died for the sake of a few square miles of ground.

India's central axis in the Lahore sector was directed north-west towards Lahore and was intended to cross the BRBD Canal near Burki, a hamlet about 400 metres on the eastern side of the canal defended by a company of 17 Punjab, part of the two-company covering force of 13 Infantry Brigade. The company commander, Major Aziz Bhatti, thoroughly deserved the award of the *Nishan-i-Haider*, and his men also fought bravely.

Claims that the area of Burki and Nurpur/Hudaira (half-way between the border and the BRBD Canal) was strongly defended appear incorrect. If an examination is made of units available to Pakistan Army on 6-10 September, and where they were in other sectors according to Indian and independent sources, it can be calculated that the Burki-Nurpur area was not well-defended — indeed, to the point of indicating poor planning. There were, however, about a dozen pill-boxes camouflaged to resemble huts, each occupied by three-man heavy machine-gun teams, and the area was mined.

Perhaps it should have been obvious that the three main roads leading to Lahore from India would be important to an advance because

the bridges crossing the BRBD Canal along these routes would be of a higher load-carrying capability than any others in the area. Militarily, it was not exactly brilliant to choose them as axes because, if an advance is aligned to a straight-line road (thus making it easier for planners and logisticians to calculate the times and places of the attacking troops to facilitate the business of movement, communications and resupply), once it is detected by the opposition it can work to the advantage of the defender rather than the attacker. HQ 1 Corps Pakistan Army did not appear to realize this tactic, although it certainly was gauged correctly by the PAF, whose attacks were devastating.

Gulzar Ahmed observed that 'The battle of Burki shall ever remain an epic story of intense heroism, cool courage and dauntless spirit of a handful of men opposing immensely larger forces,' and that summed it up very well.

It appears that the Indian advance towards Lahore via Burki was slowed by Pakistani troops and the Rangers in the Nurpur-Hudaira area and along the axis to the canal at Burki, but that their numbers were not as large as claimed by some commentators, although there was a strong Pakistani artillery presence in the shape of two regiments, one each of field and medium guns, and a battery of 8-inch heavy guns. The Nurpur-Hudaira area could be seen from specially-constructed observation posts in Burki, and artillery observers directed fire on the advance to the rear and flanks. The reason for the advance being slow is probably that forward troops were hesitant about pressing on through or around the opposition, not realizing that the area was very lightly defended. In difficult country with poor observation, as in the flatlands around Burki, it is not possible to assess immediately what size of force might be blocking an advance. A quick platoon attack might flush out an infantry section placed specifically to delay an advance, and after having done so another platoon can press on without the momentum of the advance having been interrupted for any appreciable time — or the

intended 'quick' platoon attack might run into a battalion, in which case there is always a muddle in trying to extricate the unfortunate platoon whose commander was simply bearing in mind Field Marshal Slim's dictum that the first duty of an advance guard is to advance.

The Indians did not advance quickly and could not take Burki on the run. The Pakistanis failed to reinforce the company at Burki and relied on artillery to break up the attacks, which it did for the initial three days. 'Enemy artillery,' says one Indian commentator, 'fired more than 2000 shells in 30 minutes,' but at 2000 hours on 10 September the Indians put in a brigade attack (4 Sikh and 16 Punjab) which succeeded in reaching Burki. The bridge across the canal had been blown and, in spite of drawing up to the canal, the Indians could not force a crossing. There was stalemate on the central axis, as on the northern.

India's advance was blunted and the defenders were able to hold their positions and prevent penetration of the vital ground between Sialkot and Lahore. It appears that the Indian aim was simply to attack where it considered the enemy was weak and to gain as much ground as possible while endeavouring to keep their enemy off balance. Exploitation would come later, were either the Lahore or the Sialkot offensive to be successful. This is a perfectly understandable aim, and one that might just have been achieved had it not been for the stubborn resistance and remarkable gallantry of numerically inferior Pakistani formations.

The war ended on September 23, 1965. Both countries' economies were badly affected and their defence forces had suffered casualties and losses. There was no victor, in the classic sense of the word, but important military lessons had been learned. Let us hope that, fifty years later, they will not have to be put into practice.



The writer is a France-based retired officer of Australian Army and is an expert on South Asian affairs. He is also author of various books, and contributes extensively in international media. beeculf@gmail.com

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# The Spirits Undaunting:

Remembering the Fighting Spirit of Pakistan Armed Forces in 1965 – Indo-Pak War

Our army museums have the war trophies in the form of Indian captured tanks, vehicles, RRs and above all the jeep of Major General Niranjn Prasad GOC 15 Indian Division which he abandoned with maps on Wagah–Lahore axis after a very bold counter attack by Pakistani reserve brigade of 10 Division personally led by the Brigade Commander Brigadier Qayum Sher, a courageous and competent commander of his time.



**Brig (R) Usman Saeed**

**A**rmed forces' officers and men are trained and motivated worldwide for combat but their real worth for combat can be judged during war only. The army that possesses brave and the best fighting machines stand out distinctly as fear of death becomes irrelevant and the mission supreme – no matter what intensity of combat operations and the size of opposing forces confronted with.

History is replete with war accounts where smaller armies having best fighting stock of officers' corps and men defeated much larger armies through brilliant display of courage and skills of warfare. To name few battles from the annals of military history include: Battle of Yarmuk (636AD) between the Byzantine Empire (strength 400,000) and the Arab army (strength 40,000), decisively won by the latter. The



Crusade wars (1095-1099) and (1147-49) where the crusaders had fielded much superior and bigger armies were defeated by the Muslims. The Turkish War of Independence (1919-23) fought against the Allies (British, French, Armenians, Italians, Greeks etc. of strength one million) ended up with victory for numerically much inferior Turks. Shahab-ud-Din Ghori (1192) and Ahmad Shah Abdali (1761) defeated much bigger Hindu armies. French Army was defeated by Vietnam guerilla forces in the battle of Dien Ben Pho (1954).

Pakistan has been up against numerically superior army of India. Both the countries have fought three wars primarily on Kashmir issue. India

claims occupied Kashmir on fictitious instrument of accession while Pakistan claims Kashmir on principles of partition of the subcontinent that makes Kashmir inalienable part of Pakistan. The first Indo-Pakistan War of 1948 forced India rush to UN Security Council for ceasefire. She promised to hold plebiscite under the supervision of the UN in Kashmir but failed to honour her commitment. India spared no effort to strengthen military deployments inside Kashmir to crush the freedom movement with force. Pakistan like a hapless spectator observed Indian atrocities inside Kashmir and insensitivity of the international community to address the long standing issue. The situation was viewed in Pakistan with great

public discontent and frustration.

Pakistan exercised restraint during the Sino-India war of 1962, although opportunity emerged to enter the forces in Jammu-Kashmir when bulk of Indian Army was moved to fight Chinese offensive. India went into deep shock. The defeat affected international image of Indian army and it was now viewed as a weak and demoralized military. It was natural for Pakistani leadership to consider exercise of military option for Kashmir like China and more so when diplomatic efforts had clearly failed. The operational plans were drawn up by Pakistan to provide support to the Kashmir Freedom Movement and defreeze the issue internationally for a final resolution. Pakistan was left

with no option but to help Kashmiri brothers due to dishonourable conduct of India (by not fulfilling plebiscite promises) and indifferent attitude of the international community.

In April 1965, a military encounter took place between the Indian and Pakistani troops in Rann of Kutch where India suffered casualties and withdrew few miles from their forward positions established in territories under claim of Pakistan. Victory in the Rann of Kutch made Pakistani nation jubilant. Indian Prime Minister threatened Pakistan of a war at a time and place of Indian choice.

In the first week of August 1965, Operation Gibraltar was put into execution. The plan envisioned attack by infiltration by highly motivated irregulars. Ceasefire line was crossed in 9 groups comprising 5 companies each through multi-prong routes leading to Srinagar, Nowshera, Rajauri, Bandipur, Qazinag, Titwal, Gurais, Kel and Kargil. The operation could not unfortunately achieve the desired results despite successful penetration and had to be called off. The Commander-in-Chief PAF, Air Marshal Nur Khan stood out for extreme bravery when he personally accompanied C-130 flight for hazardous aerial drop mission near

It is relevant to mention that skirmishes and fighting along Kashmir front had been a pattern in the past and was not a legitimate cause to spread the war across the international border; that too without any prior warning. This was a sheer violation of international norms and the Geneva Convention.

Srinagar for the infiltrated force. The C-130 aircraft had no night flying capability and had to rely on Doppler navigation system for night flying in mountainous regions of Kashmir. The PAF mission remained successful and in fact contributed positively during

exfiltration phase of the force.

During Operation Grand Slam (August 1965), Akhnur, the main artery for India to access Occupied Kashmir was to be captured by powerful ground and air offensive. The first phase of offensive was launched by 12 Division. It was a major breakthrough and a success. Our heavy calibre artillery, M-47 tanks and the PAF steamrolled resistance by Indian army and forced the retreat turning into rout. Indians left field artillery guns in Chamb (25 pounders) that enabled Pakistan to raise one artillery regiment. It was in Chamb, where Major (later Major General) Nasir-Ullah Baber, HJ, SJ mistakenly landed his helicopter inside Indian position but kept his cool. He ordered Indians to surrender being surrounded and marched them to Pakistani positions. The second phase was launched by the 7 Division. It advanced with lightning speed and reached at the outskirts of Akhnur. The fighting was in progress when India started an all out war crossing the international border. It is relevant to mention that skirmishes and fighting along Kashmir front had been a pattern in the past and was not a legitimate cause to spread the war across the international border; that too without any prior warning. This was a sheer violation of international norms and the Geneva Convention. Notwithstanding, many young officers of Pakistan Army displayed exceptional courage and won gallantry awards during Akhnur offensive. Amongst the recipients was Captain Shabbir Sharif (later major Shabbir Sharif Shaheed *Nishan-i-Haider* 1971 war) who won Sitara-i-Jurrat (SJ) in one of the combats in this sector.

On September 6, 1965, India first launched a secondary effort in Lahore Sector with two infantry divisions supported by air force. In those days no worthwhile obstacle system existed between the border and the Bambawala-Ravi-Bedian (BRB) Canal. Therefore, Indian advance up to BRB Canal experienced lighter opposition from the Pakistani troops. By September 7<sup>th</sup>, 1965, Indian formations reached BRB Canal but

timely demolition of bridges by Pakistan Army-Engineers made their crossing impossible. For the next 17 days India kept on attempting to gain foothold across BRB Canal but was of no success. Battle accounts of Batapur, Dograi, Barki and Hudaira near Kasur in Lahore Sector were extremely motivating and indeed inspirational. Major Aziz Bhatti embraced *Shahadat* in Barki sector and earned *Nishan-i-Haider*. PAF dog fights over Lahore air space with Indian Air Force (IAF) fighter aircrafts, in which Indian planes were shot down by our valiant pilots, were breathtaking that people still cherish. Indian dreams to have drinks in Lahore *Gymkhana* on September 7, 1965 was shattered. Pakistan Air Force and Artillery hunted the Indian Army troops stranded between the BRB and the border. The entire area was littered with destroyed Indian tanks, vehicles and corpses.

On night of September 8, 1965, India launched the main effort comprising an Armoured Division and 2-3 Infantry Divisions in Sialkot Sector. Concurrently, an effort was launched from Rajasthan in the southern desert regions of Pakistan. This Indian offensive was beaten off by irregular warriors known as Hurs from the desert region. Hurs chased retreating Indian forces and occupied large part of Indian territory in Rajasthan. Pakistan was ready to fight Indian offensive in Sialkot Sector. Sufficient artillery, armour and infantry was de-inducted from Akhnur and concentrated in Sialkot. Indian armour and infantry divisions encountered fiercest resistance from Pakistan and despite force ratio predominantly in their favour could not breach the defence lines near Chawinda. This town came under international focus where the biggest tank battle was fought between the newly raised Pakistani Armoured Division and the Indian counterpart. The integrated employment of artillery, air and armour inflicted heavy attrition to Indian offensive formations throughout the next two weeks and Indian operations came to a standstill.

Pakistan had by now established

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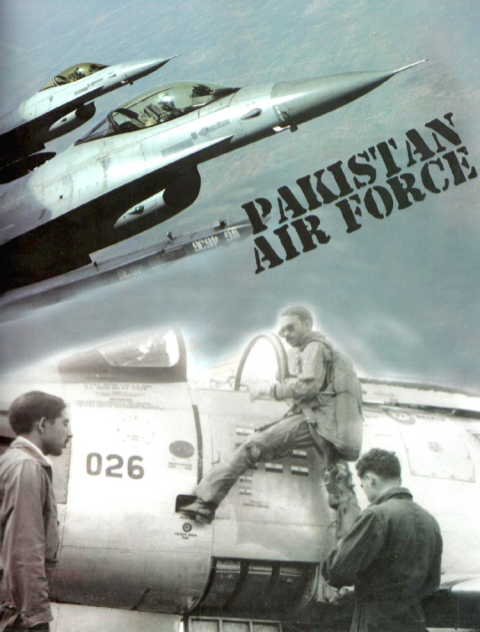


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# PAKISTAN NAVY





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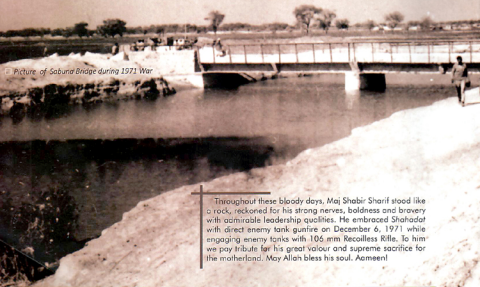
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# MEMOIRS OF SABUNA BUND BATTLE

**SULAIMANKI-FAZILKA SECTOR  
3-6 DEC 1971**



**Brig (R) Farooq Afzal  
(Tamgha-e-Jurat)**



**Picture of Sabuna Bridge during 1971 War**

Throughout these bloody days, Maj Shabir Sharif stood like a rock, reckoned for his strong nerves, boldness and bravery with admirable leadership qualities. He embraced Shahadat with direct enemy tank gunfire on December 6, 1971 while engaging enemy tanks with 106 mm Recoilless Rifle. To him we pay tribute for his great valour and supreme sacrifice for the motherland. May Allah bless his soul. Aameen!

# T

he evening of December 3, 1971 will be remembered as the Blitzkrieg action all along the battlefront of Sulaimanki-Fazilka Sector. Although, it was an Independent Brigade Group action but the battle on ground was at company level within the framework of a battalion.

6 Frontier Force Regiment (6 FF) tasks were achieved with lightning speed, accuracy, surprise and shock effect. The enemy had no option except either to surrender or abandon their strongly held positions. Even, their strong canal-cum-bund based fortified defensive position (Sabuna Bund) once ruptured and penetrated, the enemy ran leaving all intact in their heavily prepared position including marked maps, weapons and ammunition, clothing, medicine, cash currency and even was unable to detonate fully armed charges to blow off the Gurmukhera Bridge.

B Company under command Maj Shabir Sharif captured the Gurmukhera Bridge on Sabuna Canal fully intact with a strong fighting patrol of 14 men led by then 2<sup>nd</sup> Lt Farooq Afzal. 6 men out of total 14 received fatal bullet injuries and embraced Shahadat on the deck. The remaining men kept fighting with the enemy. Sensing the situation, Maj Shabir Sharif immediately moved the remaining company on the Bund. Maj Shabir personally cleared number of enemy bunkers with hand grenades and other available weapons. Many enemy soldiers were killed, few captured and made prisoners of war. The enemy panicked and started running

in different directions. The bund was cleared off the enemy after capturing every trench by the attacking troops of B company. The company heavy weapons and F Echelon were in the fire base and still had not moved forward as it was dark and the area was heavily mined and still held by the enemy. Their forward positions were very discreetly and silently bypassed which shocked the enemy once they found our troops holding the Gurmukhera Bridge on the Sabuna Canal.

On hearing the artillery shelling all along the international border, the villagers in the zone of battle started evacuating, carrying all what they could bundle on their carts and on their bodies. Our presence on

the Gurmukhera Bridge was a great surprise for the runaway civilians. Many of them were old aged men and women, some young carrying their babies pleading for mercy and safe passage. None was harassed nor stopped rather all permitted to go and clear the area. Islam teaches us tolerance, patience to forgive and let

go unarmed civilians. A very large number of villagers

including a newlywed couple were overwhelmed being released unharmed with all their belongings.

Soon enemy tank noises were heard coming from the direction of Fazilka-Sulaimanki (metal road) in the south heading towards the Gurmukhera Bridge along the bund and also from the eastern direction of Gurmukhera village. The attacking troops of T-54 tanks were shot and destroyed by 3.5 inch Rocket Launcher and Energa Grenade from very close ranges (20-30 yards).



**Major Shabir Sharif  
Shaheed (Nishan-i-Haider)**

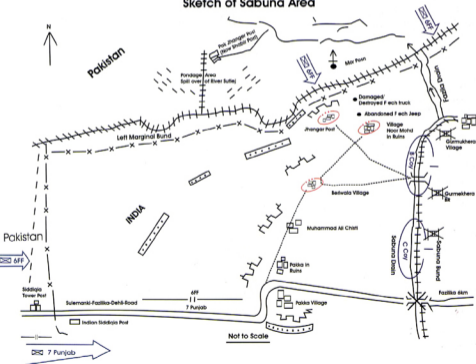
The tanks kept burning like a ball of fire till dawn December 4, 1971. The same night enemy launched a quick counter attack supported by heavy artillery and tank fire but repulsed with heavy casualties. C company under command then, Captain Talat Omar had arrived and taken position along the Sabuna Bund securing our right flank.

The dawn of December 4, 1971 was a new day for B company to celebrate their victory on Sabuna Bund. As the sun began to rise, a large number of enemy troops with their personal weapons raising white flags and hands up started approaching Gurmukhera Bridge. These were the elements which were hiding in the villages or in the cover of crops in

the fields, and, could not manage to escape. These men included one officer, one Junior Commissioned Officer and twenty soldiers. We had no other option except to line them up across the Sabuna Bund facing left Marginal Bund towards Pakistan. They were ordered to march with hands up facing the international border to report Subedar Shalesta Gul who was Mortar Platoon Commander deployed opposite Indian Jhanghar Post. They were also cautioned that the entire column of troops was under constant watch and direct observation covered by machine gunfire from both the ends if any individual attempted to escape. Believe it, the entire group reached and reported at the mortar platoon location without any escort

en route. No sooner when the squad of prisoners cleared the area, Indian Air Force (IAF) became active with their bold sorties. IAF Hunters, Gnats and Canberra were flying freely overhead to locate, fire and destroy targets. It was very demoralizing since our troops were still unprepared for the air strikes. Indian aircrafts fired machine guns and rockets on Sabuna Bund but fortunately no damage was done. They even rocketed Sabuna Bridge but missed. Napalm bombs were dropped around our Sadiqia Tower Post which was densely covered with wild growth and elephant grass. Despite free hand and no opposition except for few machine guns on anti-aircraft roll, the Indian Air Force failed to inflict major damages.

### Sketch of Sabuna Area



Later, in one of their air raids they managed to damage a portion of the Sulaimanki Headworks bridge which was repaired immediately. An Indian aircraft was also shot by a *Mujahid* Force anti-aircraft gunner who was manning the gun on top of the headrail on the bridge.

December 4, 1971 morning remained hot and active with enemy artillery carrying out ranging for harassment and to register deeper targets. B company was still awaiting the reinforcements when the F Echelon truck hit the minefield in the vicinity of Indian Jhangar Post. It was followed by M-48 RR Jeep laden with remaining all types of ammunition. Naik Chinnar Gul who was at the wheels panicked and inadvertently bogged the jeep. Major Shabir Sharif seeing the situation from the bund ordered me to retrieve the jeep before it was hit by the enemy air strike. I immediately responded and rushed across Sabuna-Gurmukhera Bridge, dodged enemy's direct fire with stealth and making full use of available cover on the ground. On reaching, I found both front tyres and a bumper fully bogged in a freshly watered field. Since I was alone, I had no other option except to reverse the vehicle with full throttle using 4x4 reverse gear. With *Bismillah*, I started the engine and with a big jerk, it moved out and I managed to recover the vehicle. As soon as I moved the vehicle, the enemy's Observation Post (OP) which was observing from a vantage point started bringing artillery fire on my location. Luckily no round landed near me to cause damage or injury. With great precaution and speed, I was racing towards the bridge on Sabuna Bund. All this was being watched by Maj Shabir Sharif and other soldiers on the Bund. As I reached near the Bridge, the enemy started firing with small arms through the gap of the bund which was then not fully covered/protected. After a little pause, I again throttled the jeep, drove over the bridge and parked it securely along the bund.

I was congratulated by Maj Shabir Sharif for the small little valour. The next two days of the battle were hotly contested on Sabuna Bund. Maj Narian Singh from 4 Jat Regiment confronted Maj Shabir Sharif in the

of ordnances buried in the Bund held by our troops. Many bodies got mutilated because of direct artillery hits. However, no body of the martyred soldiers was left on the battlefield.



**Standing at Sabuna Bridge**

(From left to right) Lt Saleem Aziz (6FF), Capt Talaat Omar, SJ (OC C Coy, 6FF), Staff Capt 105 Brigade, and 2/Lt Hassan Ali Raza (6FF)

hard hitting counter attack on the night of 4/5 December. The Indian company commander was killed by Maj Shabir in a hand to hand fight before he could open fire. In the process Maj Shabir was also badly wounded by the phosphorous grenade which was lobbed by Maj Narian Singh. Despite my repeated requests in the morning, Maj Shabir Sharif never went back to receive first aid or medical treatment. After the war, it was discovered that the Indian company commander was awarded *Vir Chakra*. His dead body was returned after the ceasefire with honour in a simple ceremony. With him many other dead bodies were returned which remained under the debris of sand, mud, piles of emptied and destroyed wooden/steel boxes

Numerous counter attacks supported by armour and air were launched to recapture the Bund, which were comprehensively defeated. Throughout these bloody days, Maj Shabir Sharif stood like a rock, reckoned for his strong nerves, boldness and bravery with admirable leadership qualities. He embraced *Shahadat* with direct enemy tank gunfire on December 6, 1971 while engaging enemy tanks with 106 mm Recoiless Rifle. To him we pay tribute for his great valour and supreme sacrifice for the motherland. May Allah bless his soul. Aameen!



# An Eyewitness to India's Role in East Pakistan



**Brig. (Retd) Liaquat Bokhari**  
(Sitara-e-Jurat)

**D**uring his visit to Bangladesh in June 2015, Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi has openly admitted that India played an important role in breakup of East Pakistan in 1971 – in a way he was admitting that India was involved in the massacre of West Pakistanis in 1971. Posted as Commanding Officer of 4 Army Aviation Squadron in Dhaka, where I remained from January 1971 to the fall of Dhaka on 16 December 1971, I am witness to India's role in this war. In the past 44 years, a lot has been written about 1971 War but the majority of the analyses have been conducted by those who weren't in East Pakistan during the riots and fighting, and, were unaware of the actual conditions. Instead of an accurate assessment of the armed forces performance, these people have constructed a narrative contrary to the reality and ignored the soldiers who withstood horrifying conditions

and fought bravely with the Indians and the Mukti Bahini. During 1971 war, on the one hand military was facing paucity of weapons, tanks and airplanes, and on the other hand, the leadership could not compete with the constant meddling and political manipulation by India. It did not take any timely steps to counter Indian propaganda, too.

The Awami League won 160 seats and the PPP won 81 seats in the general elections in December 1970. Upon winning the elections with a heavy mandate, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman demanded that Awami League be invited to form the central government. When President Yahya Khan, the supreme leader of the country at that time, hesitated, a wave of resentment spread across entire East Pakistan. These sentiments were fully exploited by fifth columnists and

Indian agents. The political struggle by a political party was deliberately shaped to become violent and anti-Pakistan. Indian intelligence agencies especially focused on students. Indians spewed their hateful propaganda against Pakistan, brainwashed the young minds and then started supplying them with weapons and ammunition to carryout sabotage activities. India took maximum advantage of the situation and provided the Bengalis with economic aid and used poisonous propaganda against Pakistan. Indian propaganda slowly convinced the Bengalis that they had more cultural similarities with India, which was their friend whereas West Pakistan was withholding their rights. Sheikh Mujibur Rehman had the complete support of the very powerful Student League. Paltan Maidan, Dhaka, which

was the centre of political activity, was under the complete control of the Awami League and Bengali students. These institutions became hub of violent activities.

In reality, the civil militia of Mukti Bahini was being trained by the Indian Army. With the help of the Indian Army, they managed to destroy all the bridges of East Pakistan. Railway lines, roads and river transport were also rendered ineffective. Only the orders of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman, who was under complete Indian control, were obeyed and all the recommendations of the Pakistani administration were completely ignored. Many Bengali officers from Eastern Command were continuously sending important documents to the Indian Army. In these conditions, on 25 March, the Army experienced a grave setback. The entire East Bengal Regiment (EBR) and East Pakistan Rifles (EPR), who numbered 120,000, rebelled. 80,000 Mukti Bahini, in which Indian soldiers were also implanted, began to massacre West Pakistanis. For this purpose, elaborate slaughter houses and riverside torture centres were made. Apart from those loyal to Pakistan in few big cities, the remaining East Pakistan was under the control of rebels supported by Indian soldiers. In Dhaka University's Iqbal and Jagannath hostels, West Pakistani students were kidnapped, molested, and later brutally killed.

To re-establish control over the perilous situation and run the civil administration of East Pakistan, a division of Pakistan Army armed with weak and old vintage weapons was forced to contend with internal and external threats. Attacks on the Pakistan-India border by Indian forces had become a routine occurrence and internally, the army had to fight the rebel Bengali units and the Mukti Bahini which had the latest weaponry provided by India. Pakistan Air Force was as good as nonexistent in East

Pakistan. In Dhaka, there was only one squadron of 14 old F-86 planes.

In 4 Army Aviation Squadron, I had a force of only three cargo and two small helicopters to provide weaponry to 14 Division's positions spread all over the thousands of miles long India-East Pakistan border, evacuate the wounded to hospitals, conduct operations with the commandos, and transport West Pakistani women and children to camps in Dhaka.

In comparison to the combined force of Indian soldiers and Bengali rebels, Pakistan Army had a much smaller number. In response to Indian Army heavy concentration in selected battle zones, Pakistani forces were spread thin and stretched over hundreds of miles long border. Even then, Pakistani soldiers fought spiritedly for a long time, fully prepared to die while fighting. But unfortunately, instead of help and support, we received hate and resentment from the local population that had been influenced by poisonous Indian propaganda. To fight against the enemy was easy but to fight one's own countrymen was very difficult.

On 23<sup>rd</sup> March (Pakistan Day), Sheikh Mujibur Rehman announced a day of protest in East Pakistan. On TV, Firdous Begum repeatedly sang Bangladesh's song of independence, "Sonar Bangla". Pictures of Quaid-i-Azam were burnt. Pakistani flags were also removed, burnt and replaced with flags of Bangladesh. Bengali shopkeepers refused to sell West Pakistanis daily supplies. Shops belonging to West Pakistanis were looted, set on fire and their owners were killed. This all happened as followers of Chankia had sown the seeds of hatred in the minds of Bengali masses. Indian poisonous propaganda done over the years had been able to change brothers into opponents.

On 27 March, 1971, Major

Ziaur Rahman, who did staff course with me from Staff College Quetta (he later became the President of Bangladesh and was killed by his own soldiers) called his Commanding Officer in the office and shot him dead. After that, he declared the independence of Bangladesh and himself as the Commander-in-Chief of the Bangladesh Armed Forces. There, he murdered all the West Pakistanis including their families with extreme brutality.

In light of my personal experience being in East Pakistan during 1971 war, I believe that Indians are coward on the battlefield, but apt at conspiracies, spreading unrest in other countries and stabbing them in the back. How India created differences and split between political parties and spread hatred among common masses of East Pakistan is no secret and how All India Radio and press communicated misleading assertions about the legitimate government which resulted in a mass rebellion in East Pakistan.

The initially weak insurgency with active Indian involvement to help anti state elements became stronger with the growing propaganda. The Indian agencies had established a separatist movement through their cells in East Pakistan and trained Mukti Bahini in camps within Indian territory adjoining East Pakistan. But then conspiracies and persecution of disadvantaged Muslims has always been a cornerstone of Indian policy! The past cannot be forgotten!

✖✖

Brigadier Liaquat Bokhari (Sitara-i-Jurat) was posted to Dhaka in January 1971 and remained there till the Fall of Dhaka. He was awarded Sitara-i-Jurat for his bravery and valour during the 1971 War.

# ZARB-E-AZB:

## THE OPERATION THAT CHANGED THE COURSE



Khalid Muhammad



We can safely say that the operation itself has broken the back of the TTP operationally and strategically: the loss of the bases in North Waziristan and Tirah Valley, the elimination of public support among the residents of FATA, and the elimination of the munitions and bomb making factories. Additionally, with the leadership of the TTP, Lashkar-e-Islam and Jamaat-ul-Ahrar fleeing across the border to Afghanistan, there is a confusion among the fighters still trapped in FATA. The result has given Pakistan many months of peace and the opportunity to eliminate all the facilitators and financiers of these monsters.



From Tirah Valley to Swat, Waziristan to Karachi, the armed forces have been intertwined in winning battle after battle in the domestic war that had engulfed the nation. We can honestly state that the armed forces have successfully defended Pakistan's sovereignty, but the war is far from over.

When we look at operations like Rah-e-Nijat, Rah-e-Haq, and Zarb-e-Azb, we need to be careful in understanding that military operations have a different measure of success compared to political rehabilitation campaigns. In a military campaign, the armed forces are primarily interested in the re-capture of territory and the elimination of the threat. In rehabilitation campaigns, the goal is to rejuvenate the areas, eliminate the opportunities that these groups thrive on, and give the

nation a peaceful existence.

Both are essential to the overall success, otherwise short-term gains are lost and skirmishes increase. While many would like to point the finger at the armed forces for the military campaign, what they fail to understand or accept is that without Zarb-e-Azb, the terrorists could have still be attacking Pakistan at will.

Let's talk about how we got here and what we have achieved.

#### The Watershed Moments

When discussing Pakistan's fight against terrorism, we can point to watershed moments, which redefined the entire war. In terms of our fight against terrorism, we can identify three specific watershed moments – 9/11, Lal Masjid and Peshawar Army Public School.

We all understand the crater that was created in world peace on

September 11 and the mandate that was given to the Bush administration in the United States. We all understand that this one act of terror turned the US administration and its citizens squarely against Muslims because the Western media refused to identify the differences between the terrorists and the true Muslims. The importance of that statement also relates to the internal problems that were faced by all the Muslim countries due to poor media reporting.

Many have argued that former President General (r) Musharraf pushed Pakistan into someone else's war, but let's be clear for once. Let us assume that Musharraf and his advisors had said no to the US coalition and becoming a frontline state in the Global War on Terror (GWOT). The world already – though wrongly – believed that Pakistan, its

armed forces and the ISI was fostering and exporting terrorism, a "fact" that has been repeatedly stated in the global media after every terror attack.

Should not an intelligent, logically thinking human being actually believe that Pakistan in that case would not have been a target of the US in this war?

The second watershed moment was the Lal Masjid buildup and the operation. Most of us still remember the black masked faces of the Lal Masjid Brigade rampaging through Aabpara Market shutting down DVD and music shops, barber shops and anything else they felt was against their interpretation of Islam. These same people, and I use that term very loosely, also took to kidnapping police officers, salon owners and many others to force them to accept the Lal Masjid interpretation of Islam, otherwise they would face the consequences of an over-radicalized imam. Ghazi Rashid, the leader of the Lal Masjid Brigade, followed the same leadership model as Fazlullah in Swat – strike fear into the hearts of those who disagree with you.

Ghazi Rashid famously told the Musharraf government and the international media about the 50,000 suicide bombers they had trained and spread across Pakistan to wreak havoc on the nation if the government took any steps to stop them. Many of the militant groups around FATA also took oaths of allegiance to Ghazi Rashid, promising to stand firmly alongside throughout the fight.

This was a watershed moment for the entire nation, whether they realized it or not, and that moment still exists today. Before the operation started, the entire nation was against the actions of the Lal Masjid Brigade. They were vocal and were angry when they demanded the government to take action against the terrorists. The newspapers were filled with articles decrying the "inaction" of the Musharraf government, and the constant questions about how the *masjid* was able to get such weaponry in the country's capital, the obvious finger being pointed was at the ISI, rather than the weak policing across the country.

We would remise if we didn't point out an exchange of dialogues between President Musharraf and a famous anchorperson. He asked General Musharraf why his government had not taken action against Lal Masjid. Musharraf's response was as calculated and correct as we would expect from an Army Chief – "I know that today you are asking me to take action, but I know the day that I do, you will be the first to criticize me and my government for doing what you asked us to do."

And that is exactly what happened days later when the Army took up positions outside Lal Masjid. When the first bullet was fired from Lal Masjid, the media's position turned against and suddenly the terrorists became innocent victims of a "brutal government and military". What people forgot that same "brutal government" facilitated the escape of over 700 people from the *masjid*, without forcibly arresting them for their involvement in terrorist activities. What the people didn't know was that many of the students inside Lal Masjid were being held there by force. The public opinion shifted and the operation, while extremely successful, was used against the government in the civilian courts, as if they had murdered innocent people without remorse or reason.

We still, to a great extent, haven't recovered from that positional shift because it involved a solidification of a mindset.

For eight years, there wasn't a day that people didn't fear a potential attack outside their school, home, office or busy market. The terrorists had succeeded in striking fear into the hearts of media personalities who needed to broadcast the national narrative. The people of Pakistan became the victims that were never spoken, never considered and never acknowledged. The government had spent one year negotiating with the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), which had emerged as a coalition of terror groups after the Lal Masjid operation, to avenge their fallen brothers. The negotiations had caused splinter groups to emerge from the

mainstream TTP that were more brutal than the TTP itself.

Then, the morning of December 16, 2014 came at Army Public School in Peshawar. As the children were seated in the auditorium, terrorists broke through the gates and opened fire on the innocent children, teachers and administration. There are rumours that some of the terrorists had lists of names and they sought out the children that matched those names. This was the third watershed moment for Pakistan.

If the attack on Army Public School was an attempt to shake the military and the confidence of the nation, it catastrophically failed to deliver. Rather than finding fear, the attack had galvanized the nation into taking serious and decisive action against the individuals who had attempted to take Pakistan hostage. While politicians were still trying to wrap their heads around what had happened, the armed forces had already opened up attack plans and were hitting terrorist hideouts, munitions depots and assets within hours of the APS attack.

#### Operation Zarb-e-Azb (15 June 2014)

Operation Zarb-e-Azb is a conglomeration of lessons learned during Operation Al Mizan, Rah-e-Nijat and Rah-e-Haq, not to mention other operations that have taken place over the past 14 years throughout the country. Rah-e-Haq

India's Line of Control violations are nothing more than an attempt to draw Pakistan's attention away from the real fight within the country. India's own strategy of using proxies against Pakistan has failed miserably since Zarb-e-Azb started and now the Indian government and military have reverted to ad hoc military planning and boisterous claims of being able to break Pakistan at will.

and Rah-e-Nijat showed us the difference between having the public support in an area. During the first operation in Swat, the armed forces didn't have much of public support, as a result, the terrorists were being given safe haven by the citizens of the district. During the second operation, the public support was eliminated through the acts of the TTP itself and resulted in a completely different battle.

We can safely say that the operation itself has broken the back of the TTP operationally and strategically: the loss of the bases in North Waziristan and Tirah Valley the elimination of public support among the residents of FATA and the elimination of the munitions and bomb making factories. Additionally, with the leadership of the TTP, Lashkar-e-Islam and Jamaat-ul-Ahrar fleeing across the

border to Afghanistan, there is a confusion among the fighters still trapped in FATA. The result has given Pakistan many months of peace and the opportunity to eliminate all the facilitators and financiers of these monsters.

What is also interesting is the strategic shift of the Government of Pakistan to support the armed forces both in the battlefield and in the courtroom. The same government that we watched bumble through the negotiation process has stepped up and given the country, the Pakistan Protection Ordinance, the still toothless National Action Plan, the 21<sup>st</sup> Amendment to the Constitution of Pakistan establishing military courts and a concerted narrative to garner more public and moral support for the operation and the military itself.

The public support for the operation and the military is crucial, as

we have seen through the watershed moments. Without public support, the operation, either militarily or politically, will never achieve the final result. As we have seen in the past, the media of Pakistan tended to walk a fine line between supporting the national narrative and giving airtime to the known terrorists. This was also evidenced after the APS attack when the media discussed the validity of the terrorist argument of killing children because they were of fighting age. These conversations and arguments don't happen when media is doing its job responsibly. Since the start of Zarb-e-Azb, we have seen the military leadership gaining more popularity. We have seen the international media doing their best criticising Pakistan from different positions, but they have been unable to shake the resolve of the nation. However, the "do more" mantra has disappeared



*The problem, that Pakistan is most concerned with, is in Afghanistan. With a weak government in Kabul, in-fighting among the leadership and a serious attempt by the Indian government to re-establish the proxies they once enjoyed in Kabul, few predict that Afghanistan is a powder keg waiting to explode.*

### Where Do We Go From Here

There are three distinct types of people involved in this war. There are the participants; whether in uniform or enemy combatants, standing on either side of the battlefield, fighting for what they believe. There are spectators; the general public and media, who watch the carnage on television and take sides based on the limited information they receive. Finally, and most importantly, there are the victims who pay with their limbs, lives and family members for being at the wrong place at the wrong time. The global audience watches the show from the comforts of their living rooms, but they aren't interested in the victims, they are interested in the fight. They see things in black and white, good versus evil, and us against them.

For us, we don't have the privilege of black and white, good versus evil, because we have a nation that is divided along ethnic and religious groupings. We must see things in shades of grey, who could potentially be a problem in the near future or long-term, but those shades of grey must not become the determining factor in where our fight against these terror groups leads. Instead, we must be looking at the next logical step in the expansion of the operation.

Over the past six months, we have seen the Karachi Operation kick off with great success in arresting and silencing terrorists embedded within political parties, the religious

community and the general public. The Sind Rangers, against all obstacles from the provincial government, have achieved what was needed for Karachi, without the political point scoring. While the largest political parties in the province are arguing about the scope and the tenacity of the operation, the Rangers continue to silence threats to the peace of the city. This operation must continue to a logical conclusion, even if it means declaring some political parties as enemies of the state for their support of militant gangs and terrorists.

In Balochistan, the armed forces and para-military have ramped up their operations against the separatist groups and leaders, drawing intelligence and operational information from those who have been captured and questioned. We have also seen number of fighters surrendering their weapons because they understand that once the Pakistan Army enters the battlefield, as planned by the top command, they will not have the opportunity again.

Throughout Punjab, we are witnessing the successes of Intelligence Based Operations (IBOs) in taking down extremist and terror networks that have become an albatross around Pakistan's neck in the international community. Southern Punjab, the home base of many of the extremist groups has been quietly targeted and lead is being taken by the armed forces, causing the same confusion in the fighters that we are seeing in the TTP currently. Malik Ishaq and his top commanders being eliminated is evidence of the success of the operations, whether through police or military action.

The problem, that Pakistan is most concerned with, is in Afghanistan. With a weak government in Kabul, in-fighting among the leadership and a serious attempt by the Indian government to re-establish the proxies they once enjoyed in Kabul, few predict that Afghanistan is a powder keg waiting to explode. The powder keg became more unstable over the past year with Daesh moving into the region, the Taliban losing the leadership of Mullah Omer and

al-Qaeda attempting to re-assess itself. This is all without considering the new oaths of allegiance from the TTP, Gulbadin Hekmatyar and other splinter groups to Daesh and the potential implications of their growth along our border. The US military command has also taken this extremely seriously with a recent statement that the emergence of Daesh in Afghanistan could slow the US troop withdrawal, planned for the end of this year.

India's violations of Line of Control are nothing more than an attempt to draw Pakistan's attention away from the real fight within the country. India's own strategy of using proxies against Pakistan has failed miserably since Zarb-e-Azb started and now the Indian government and military have reverted to ad hoc military planning and boisterous claims of being able to break Pakistan at will. This is the same country that hasn't been able to break the spirit and resolve of the Kashmiri people, but somehow believe that with 10 days of operations they can beat Pakistan's armed forces who have been fighting a continuous war for 14 years. The true test for the government will come at the United Nations General Assembly and its willingness to openly and publicly present the evidence that India is behind the instability and insurgencies in Pakistan.

With the world and regional players looking towards Pakistan to assist in stabilizing the region, Pakistan needs to deliver a clear message to everyone that any attempts to destabilize, infiltrate with proxies or attack on Pakistan will be met with a clear and forceful response, both militarily and diplomatically.

Our will to fight back with more ferocity will definitely deter all enemies of Pakistan.



Khalid Muhammad is a defence analyst, entrepreneur, and bestselling novelist. He can be reached @AgencyRulesPK on twitter and facebook.com/KhalidMuhammadOfficial.



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# THE SWAT WAR DAYS

Col Sajid Muzaffar Chaudhry

The terrorists were now holed up in two caves and had cover from fire. One of the party was eliminated by a JCO of Khyber Rifles, who crawled closer to the cave, under fire, and fired a RPG inside. Now there was the other cave remaining. The approach to this cave was over clear moonlit ground.



he day had just broken on June 5, 2009, and I was standing in the small bowl amongst boulder strewn hills which

had seen a fierce fighting the previous night. I recognized Capt Meraj's bullet proof jacket and bandolier the moment I saw it. It was lying where he had fallen, on the boulder strewn ground. I felt a tinge of pride in picking up the *shaheed's* equipment and personal weapon. I was after all, following an ancient ritual of the soldiers. The losses of the night lay heavy on my heart, but there was a satisfaction that we had killed all of the terrorists and retrieved the bodies and equipment of our comrades-in-arms.

When I picked up Capt Meraj's equipment, my mind went back few months when I had first met him.

"Sir, we have some officers of the Frontier Corps Special Operations Group (FC SOG) coming over to meet us. Would you like to see them?" asked the Battalion's Adjutant over the field telephone and I agreed readily. The FC officers turned up quickly and that is when I met Capt Meraj Muhammad for the first time. A physically fit and athletic looking young officer with a good military bearing and a dignified thoughtful expression on his face. He was accompanied by another officer of his outfit and we chatted for a while over tea.

"Capt Meraj, a Sword of Honour of his course, has been doing an excellent job with the SOG, and has

been selected for a short training course in the USA", one of my officers' filled me in by way of introduction. I asked Meraj about the SOG, and was impressed by the successful number of small tactical operations which they had conducted. Capt Meraj was one of the pioneer commanders of the SOG and was rightly proud of this honour.

As he started to get ready for departure, I noticed the somewhat different design of his bullet proof jacket. It was not the standard Army issue, and the bullet proof plate was of a smaller size than the standard design. I asked him about it out of curiosity and was told that they had been newly issued with this jacket. It was not a military grade jacket but was meant for use by para-military or police forces. He preferred this jacket because of its lighter weight and size that made it less cumbersome. I recalled that small conversation, when I picked up the same jacket on June 5, 2009.

The SOG party took off in their trademark silver coloured vehicles

The bodies of the terrorists were already putrefying, while the body of the Police sepoy was still fresh. Signs of shahadat, I thought.

in a streak of dust. When I was later posted to the FC myself, I learnt that it was a near impossibility in getting your FC driver not to press the throttle to the floor, and you could manage the feat only at the cost of a sulky driver. Seemingly reckless, they were highly skillful drivers, and would drive with passion and élan. The slowly rising dust plume of the vehicles merged with the high mud walls of the majestic Jamrud Fort, in beautiful contrast to the dazzling blue sky. The battlements of this ancient fort must have seen such scenes countless times, I thought.

I had recently been posted to my battalion, 3 Sind Regiment, which was based in Jamrud Fort, as second-in-command. As part of the formation reserve, the battalion had participated in quite a number of operations, by the time I joined. Most of these had been conducted under the operational command of the FC and there was a spirit of camaraderie with its units like the SOG as well as the leadership of the FC.

In April 2009 a major military

operation was launched to regain the areas of Swat and Buner from the terrorists. The secondary operation in Buner would be launched in an earlier timeframe to the main operations in Swat. Headquarters FC was made responsible for the conduct of operations in Buner, and our unit was given under command Headquarters FC. Operation Tor Tander II commenced on April 28, 2009, from the western direction of the district with the main attack on the Rustam-Ambela Axis.

By June 2009, a large part of the district had been cleared. The main route of Rustam-Ambela-Dagar was firmly under control of the Security Forces, and, Buner was considered to be stable enough to induct the Police Force for taking up its functions.

June 4 was a warm clear day. My battalion was involved in heavy fighting in the northern part of the district. The day's battle over, myself and the Commanding Officer (CO) moved back to our base. As we neared our camp, a unit signaller was standing on the road side with a wireless phone set. "Headquarters FC has been trying to call you", he told the CO. "What is it about?", inquired the CO. "There has been an ambush on an FC convoy, fighting is still going on" was all he knew. When the CO called up Headquarters FC, he was told that a Police convoy being escorted by an FC Quick Reaction Force (QRF) had been ambushed short of Ambela, that QRFs of SOG and 2 Wing Khyber Rifles had already been moved there, but fighting was still going on. Communication had been lost, and we were asked to go and ascertain the situation and help if required. The battalion being at the other end of the district, the QRF accompanying the CO and myself were the only combat troops readily available. We picked up the Regimental Medical Officer and his assistant, some extra ammunition, signal equipment and marched off

towards Ambela. The Subedar Major (SM) was told to thin out the nearest piquets and muster a force in the meanwhile.

When our QRF reached near Ambela, I could communicate on wireless with our hill top piquets. I asked the situation from the piquet Junior Commissioned Officer (JCO) who could hear the wireless traffic coming from the ambush site. He told me that there had been a number of own casualties including an officer. "Who is the officer?" I asked him. "Capt Meraj" replied the JCO after a small pause. Almost all of our men knew Capt Meraj of the SOG. It was a shocking bit of news.

We arrived at the ambush site in a grim mood. Dusk had set in by this time. The ambush had been carried out on the road while the fighting was ongoing on the adjoining hill. Sounds of intermittent gunfire greeted us. A number of FC soldiers, some of them wounded were on the road. A party of FC soldiers was bringing down a comrade on a stretcher. Our Medical Officer, Capt Amir sprung into action and started to check up the wounded soldier. "He's embraced *shahadat*", he announced. There was no visible sign of injury on the soldier and he looked warm and alive but Capt Amir was sure. The doctor and his assistant then proceeded to attend to the various casualties. They separated the serious casualties from the minor ones and prepared them for evacuation to CMH Mardan. These two dedicated men saved a number of precious lives that night.

An SOG JCO, whom we were well familiar with, approached the CO and myself. We asked about Capt Meraj. He took us to an ambulance parked close by. Capt Meraj *Shahheed* was lying in the ambulance covered with a white sheet. His face was very peaceful and calm, and it looked as if he was sleeping. I offered a silent prayer for him. My mind was filled with rage at the enemy who had

brought about an end to this dashing officer's life; not in open battle, but hiding and slinking behind boulders and using IEDs. Kipling's lament of a hundred year ago, came to my mind, "two thousand pounds of education, Drops to a ten rupee jezail..."

"We will avenge you," I made a silent promise to Meraj and came out of the ambulance. In battle, there are only the primary emotions of fear and anger.

"Where was he hit," I asked the SOG JCO. "On the side of the chest wall." The SOG JCO briefed us on the situation. The terrorists had exploded an IED device on the convoy. Capt Meraj's SOG was moved to the site. Meraj could have escorted the convoy to safety but his sense of duty did not allow the incident to go unchecked. He wanted to find out the perpetrators, and started searching the adjoining hill. His party was also accompanied by some police personnel. Unable to find the perpetrators, the party came back. Thereupon, it was revealed that DSP Farid Bangash *Shahheed* who had accompanied them was missing. Capt Meraj went back again and was in the lead. On the hill side, there was a small bowl shaped area surrounded by boulder strewn heights. The terrorists were lying in ambush in the small caves formed by the huge boulders. As Meraj descended into the bowl, he was fired upon. The brave officer engaged the terrorists till his last breath and shouted to his soldiers not to come towards him, as they would be in the line of fire of the ambusher. However, seeing their commander hit and wounded some of his soldiers couldn't resist and went forward to pick him. All of them were hit. The remaining SOG troops and the additional QRFs then laid a cordon around the bowl. All the terrorists were trapped inside this cordon now.

After this update, we started to climb towards the bowl. The

moon had started to rise by now. There was intense and chaotic firing all-around. Lead was flying like hail. Major Shaharyar of the FC, who had led a QRF was hit in the chest by five bullets. His bullet proof jacket had saved him. This courageous officer was in full control of himself, as he was led away by his men. Our CO's signaller was hit in the abdomen. He was evacuated to CMH Mardan, but embraced *shahadat* after few days.

The terrorists were now holed up in two caves and had cover from fire. One of the party was eliminated by a JCO of Khyber Rifles, who crawled closer to the cave, under fire, and fired an RPG inside. Now there was the other cave remaining. The approach to this cave was over clear moonlit ground. It was decided to exhaust the terrorist out instead of risking more lives. We settled in for a long wait. With taut nerves, everyone was on guard. At that moment, the surviving terrorist rushed out of his cave with a grenade in one hand and a pistol in the other. Sepoy Ajmal of 3 Sind reacted with lightning speed. He wrestled the terrorist to the ground, whereupon, the terrorist exploded the hand grenade which seriously injured him and also injured Ajmal's leg. Lt Ali of my unit, rushed towards the two, and finished off the terrorist. The last of the terrorists had been killed. We arranged for evacuation of their bodies to camp. The weapons and equipment of the casualties were strewn about. While our immediate task had been completed, we did not want to leave the site till securing all the weapons and equipment and decided to guard the site till day break. Meanwhile, some extra troops of our unit had arrived. At day break, with a fresh cordon in place, we searched the site. All the weapons and equipment belonging to Police, FC and own troops were recovered. I recognized Capt Meraaj's equipment and personal weapon, and retrieved it. Dead bodies of two more terrorists and a police sepoy were also recovered. The bodies of the terrorists were already putrefying,

while the body of the Police sepoy was still fresh. Signs of *shahadat*, I thought. Ten security force's personnel including five policemen had embraced *shahadat* that night. It included the outstandingly brave SHO of Police Station Rustam, Sub Inspector Sherullah Khan. 12 soldiers were injured.

It had been a costly night. We had lost a fine officer and some courageous men. But we also had the satisfaction of avenging them there and then, and not allowing the terrorists to retrieve the bodies of

their men.

Captain Meraaj gave his life responding to the call of duty. The hills of Buner are greener, and the waters of its springs sweeter because of the sacred blood shed by Meraaj, our soldiers and policemen that fateful night to cleanse this pure land from the evil of terrorism.

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# A Tale of Unconquerable Courage

Cdr (Retd)  
Muhammad Azam Khan

As the flames continued to rise and explosions from burning vehicles persisted, three college personnel lay dead along with two attackers whose shredded body pieces were strewn in a vast area. Amongst those who embraced *shahadat* was one Akhtar Hussain. Despite being an aged ordinary motor mechanic, Akhtar Hussain displayed extraordinary sense of responsibility. He did not let the attacker inside the gate since the latter was reluctant to prove his identity.

*"If anyone slew a person unless it be for murder or for spreading mischief in the land it would be as if he slew the whole people: and if any one saved a life, it would be as if he saved the life of the whole people. Then although there came to them Our Messengers with Clear signs, yet even after that, many of them continued to commit excesses in the land".*  
(Al-Quran, Surah Al-Maida, Verse 32)

**T**he city of Lahore woke up to a serene and sunny spring morning on Tuesday, the 4<sup>th</sup> of March 2008. Located in the plush and high security surroundings of General Officers Residence complex on Shahrah-I-Quaid-I-Azam, Pakistan Navy (PN) War College commenced its daily activities at 8 a.m. The gathering at the Naval institute at this time of the academic calendar was rather unusually large. Exercise *Difa-i-Behr* for the 37<sup>th</sup> PN Staff Course was entering its final stages with the concluding debriefing session planned for March 7. For the first time, faculty and members

from the PAF Air War College and faculty belonging to the Command and Staff College Quetta had joined their naval counterparts for a lively discourse on the subject exercise involving tri-service operations.

In accordance with the exercise programme, the debriefing session of the four syndicates was scheduled for the day in the college lecture hall. Starting at around 1245 a.m., it was the third debriefing session that was to prove fateful. It was during this very session that the life of the few was cut short and blighted for several others.

At around 1310 a.m. a violent ear-splitting blast shook the college building. So intense and powerful was the explosion that the huge window panes in the lecture hall imploded and flew like fragmented steel spikes. Several main wooden doors were uprooted and tossed away whilst false ceiling with most of the lighting fixtures fell on ground. A huge fire ball simultaneously went up from the rear gate of the college followed by a plume of smoke. The area, a parking place for official and private vehicles, was covered in thick black smoke.

As a split second reaction, those in the lecture hall rushed outside. Some others (outside the lecture hall) also hurried towards the site of the blast to see if any injured could be evacuated.

As Khalid Farooq sensed danger, he charged towards the attacker yelling and swearing to stop him. He knew fully well that in doing so he was going right into the jaws of death. Anwar ul Haq closely followed Khalid Farooq to stop the attacker in his tracks.

But before anyone could recover much less react, another blast (about 25 seconds later) rocked the college building. The explosion was much more powerful than the previous and as later reported, was heard far and wide in the city.

As the flames continued to rise and explosions from burning vehicles persisted, three college personnel lay dead along with two attackers whose shredded body pieces were strewn in a vast area. Amongst those who embraced *shahadat* was one Akhtar Hussain. Despite being an aged ordinary motor mechanic, Akhtar Hussain displayed extraordinary sense of responsibility. He did not let the attacker inside the gate since

the latter was reluctant to prove his identity.

Had Akhtar Hussain not questioned the first bomber for identity and opened the gate, the attacker may have dashed inside the college premises followed by the second striker (on motorbike) to blow up in sync and thus cause maximum casualties. Sadly in the end the efforts of Akhtar Hussain proved too little. The first bomber blew himself up ripping apart Akhtar Hussain and causing a huge breach in the gate.

At the instance of the first blast, Khalid Farooq MCPO and the duty Petty Officer, Anwar ul Haq were in the college parking area. Recovering from the shock and amidst the rising smoke and debris, the two looked for any casualties. But this tragically was also the moment when the second bomber (racing on a motor bike) appeared on the scene.

Emerging from the thick smoke cloud and breached steel gate of the college, the suicide attacker with explosive laden on the side bags of his motor bike drove in full thrust as he raced forward. As Khalid Farooq sensed danger, he charged towards the attacker yelling and swearing to stop him. He knew fully well that in doing so he was going right into the jaws of death. Anwar ul Haq closely followed Khalid Farooq to stop the attacker in his tracks.

In the aftermath of the attack one thing was quite clear – a major and much larger disaster was averted only on account of the remarkable sense of responsibility and heroic endeavour of Akhtar Hussain, Khalid Farooq and Anwar ul Haq. By giving the ultimate sacrifice, together the three perhaps saved many others and prevented scores of children from being orphaned. Although there could not be any independent confirmation but from the method and tactics involved, it was quite evident that the attackers had done meticulous planning. The twin attack botched only during the execution part as the three *Shuhada* proved to be a rock barrier for the attackers.



AKHTAR HUSSAIN SHAHEED



ANWAR-UL-HAQ SHAHEED



KHALID FAROOQ SHAHEED



# ZARB-E-AZB: A TALE OF VALIANT ARMY AGAINST TERRORISM

Prof. Khurram Ali Khan

few months but the dialogue process between government nominated committee and TTP delayed the offence. Imperatively, right after the pandemonium created by TTP marred this last opportunity for peace and there was no option left but a comprehensive military operation against the perpetrators of militancy and insurgency in Pakistan. After lots of deliberation and homework finally Pak Army launched full-fledged operation against militants in NWA. Pakistan Army being a professional force; their previous experience in other tribal agencies and Malakand Division helped them in this operation. Pakistan Army had cordoned off the NWA to avoid any escape by militants. However, the possibility of fleeing towards Afghanistan was not ruled out. Imperatively Pakistan had to share and coordinate its operation with the US and Afghan security forces. Only with an assurance of Afghan border secured by the US and its allies, we could obliterate transnational militants linked with Al-Qaeda and TTP.

Pakistan Army had a significant

**A**fter an initial reluctance, the Government of Pakistan decided to initiate an offensive operation in North Waziristan Agency (NWA) along Pakistan-Afghanistan border to eliminate terrorism. The operation in NWA has been code named as 'Zarb-e-Azb'. The operation commenced on June 15, 2014 as a renewed effort against militancy in the wake of the June 8 attack on Jinnah International Airport in

Karachi, for which the TTP and the IMU claimed responsibility. The major goals set for the operation were elimination of militant hideouts, sanctuaries, arms storage and training centres of different terrorist groups. The main targets were Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Punjabi Taliban, East Turkestan Islamic Movement (ETIM), Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan and Al-Qaeda and all militant outfits.

Pakistan military had been planning this operation from the last

presence in NWA hence it was expected that more than 30,000 troops would participate in this operation. Pakistan Armed Forces are equipped with Cobra gunship helicopters, JF Thunders, F-16 aircraft, surveillance drones, long range artillery, Main Battle Tanks and night vision capabilities. Pakistan Army's Special Services Group (SSG) also took part in this operation.

The SSG commandos played an important role in the success of previous military operations till then. It was expected that SSG would play a key role in this mission. If we analyze capabilities of Pakistan Army, then we can say that there is no match between Pak Army and TTP-led militants in NWA. Pakistan's ground forces with the close air support of gunship helicopters proved a lethal combination that ultimately caused massive damage and terrorist groups retreated towards Afghanistan. The world witnessed that Pakistan Army did all to get rid of all types of militants sanctuaries from NWA.

During Zarb-e-Azb, the command and control centres of Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan and other militant groups have been dislodged effectively. Without masterminds or command and control centres, the sleeper cells of TTP in major cities would be of little use. The NWA was the last sanctuary for the transnational militant organizations. Due to the presence of these militant groups in NWA, Pakistan faced worst terrorist attacks in last few years. The economic losses were gargantuan. Foreign direct investment declined in Pakistan. But after the success in NWA, an ameliorated security situation with improving respite, stability and steadiness in all walks of life can be clearly observed.

The operation being carried out successfully, improved Pakistan's image not only domestically but at global level. The perception at global level about Pakistan's alleged double game in the war against terror is now totally eradicated as the operation gave a clear message to the world

that Pakistan takes war against terrorism very seriously. The concept of good or bad Taliban does not exist at all. The military has carried out air strikes against every militant faction, whether it is against Pakistan or any other country. There are allegations on Pakistan that it has a soft corner for the Haqqani Network or Afghan Taliban but the reality is different from such allegations. The Haqqani network had been closely aligned with the Islamic Movement of Uzbekistan that saved IMU from total annihilation in SWA by late Molvi Nazir group in 2007. The Haqqanis brought Uzbeks to NWA after 2007 and provided them shelter and tactical support. The IMU has been involved in many high profile attacks against Pakistan. The IMU carried out attacks on Mehran Base, Peshawar Airport, Kamra Air Base, Bannu jail break and recently Karachi Airport. The Haqqani Network by all logics cannot be ally of Pakistan. This is the reason that Pakistan military has clearly conveyed this message to all militant groups in NWA to leave this area or die before the commencement of Zarb-e-Azb. Subsequently many militant groups fled the area. The key difference in fighting counterinsurgency in a foreign land versus your own land is time and legitimacy. Foreign forces are expeditionary forces, always running behind schedule. They are subjected to a time window and legitimacy problem. Our soldiers were not. Zarb-e-Azb is being seen as an eventually strategic game-changer for the region, which culminates with laws enacted, roads built, model villages constructed and borders sealed to buffer the endangered (Pakistan) from the embroiled (Afghanistan), finally de-hyphenating the American-manufactured security equation that is Af-Pak.

Till first anniversary of the launch of the Zarb-e-Azb, significant gains against the menace of terrorism were: 2763 terrorists killed, 837 hideouts destroyed and 253 tons of explosives recovered. There

have been significant achievements with "strongholds, communication infrastructure and sanctuaries" of militants largely cleared as "Operation Zarb-e-Azb moves to the last few pockets close to Pakistan-Afghan border."

A dramatic shift in institutional strategy dealing with terrorism took place last year that many attribute to Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Raheel Sharif and others to the collective decision by the Corps Commanders led by the Chief. The new strategy was considered necessary to quell the rising terror attacks in the country that were taking an increasingly heavy toll on human life as well as on individual and state-owned physical assets.

It is relevant to note that two commanders of the outlawed Baloch insurgent groups – Balochistan Liberation Front and Tanzeem-e-Lashkar-e-Balochistan – and 57 fighters laid down their arms during August 2015. It is logical to assume that their decision may reflect a dramatic change in how the province is being governed post-2013 election with a Baloch nationalist, Dr Abdul Malik, as the Chief Minister and with a change strategy. In a latest twist, Brahmdagh Bugti has also shunned the demand of free Balochistan and agreed to negotiate with the government. Khan of Qallat is also expected to end the self-exile and come back to his homeland. This is a positive development and a first step in the right direction; however, one hopes that efforts to engage the exiled Baloch leaders continue with the objective of bringing all into mainstream politics for that way lies prosperity of the country as well as the province.

Significantly, sources in private conversations acknowledge that the militant networks have been considerably degraded but maintain that a bigger threat is coming from urban-based groups linked to the Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP). The Karachi operation is continuing with the largest number of arrests of those affiliated with the TTP; irrespective

of the false claims made by some political parties. The Rangers were given the power to clean Karachi, under the administrative control of the Sindh government, however the frequent visits of the Prime Minister and General Raheel Sharif to Karachi and their briefing by Rangers on occasions without any representation from Sindh government is being seen as an operation fully supported by the centre and the establishment – the two organs that have proved effective in combating terrorism in this country. Be that as it may, more work needs to be done especially in south of Punjab irrespective of political considerations as well as in other urban centres where TTP encroachments are patently evident.

Currently, having fled military Operation Zarb-e-Azb, the militants – both local and foreigner – took refuge in the high altitude Shawal Valley of North Waziristan. Thick forest, treacherous terrain and deep ravines, it has everything they need to remain in business of fighting the forces.

But that was not to be – with rest of North Waziristan cleared of militancy, the Shawal Valley couldn't be left in control of militants to be used as a launching pad for forays into the cleared areas. After a heavy pounding from air to soften the targets, a ground offensive has been launched, and for all the reasons it is going to be very tough.

The Shawal Valley is the last hideout of militants and they would spare nothing to fight back. And for the forces the battle for Shawal has to be won whatever it costs, because without taking it back from the militants, the Operation Zarb-e-Azb remains incomplete. Obviously there are heavy battlefield casualties; the military losses include death of Lieutenant Colonel Faisal Malik who embraced martyrdom along with a soldier in a clash with terrorists. The militants' losses are reported to be in many scores. Located as it is on border with Afghanistan, the control of Shawal Valley is expected to shut the back door on the anti-Pakistan

militants who keep moving in and out at will fomenting trouble in the tribal areas.

A day before this clash, the Afghanistan-based terrorists had launched a rocket attack on a Pakistani check post martyring four soldiers. Given probability of militants fleeing the military action in Shawal Valley to seek shelter in adjoining region of Afghanistan, the government in Kabul should undertake a matching military action on its side. Since the licence to crisscross international border is one of the militants' potent weapons it is essential that appropriate steps are taken to enforce strict border control.

The nationwide campaign against militants, both enemy agents and religious fanatics, has entered the endgame stage, and it is succeeding. The networks of terrorists have been dismantled and presently no terrorist group is operating from the soil of Pakistan.

In Karachi, all encompassing improvement of 70 per cent has been recorded. Though much still to be done, the efficacy of National Action Plan (NAP) has greatly helped improve the law and order situation in the country. As many as 1,444 terrorist attacks took place in 2006; these spiked to 1,936 in 2009. The number of such attacks came down to 695 in 2015. Not that focus on foreign-funded terrorism has diffused throughout the country, but some of the recent incidents of terrorism tend to suggest that religious extremism happens to be the most potent threat to public peace in the country. The religious political parties had succeeded in somewhat blunting the bite of the National Action Plan, but not anymore. Likewise, the political parties, too, are being made to accept that they should jettison their militant wings and stand miles away from criminals and terrorists who enjoyed their patronage.

Zarb-e-Azb caused an internal exodus of local inhabitants. Fortunately repatriation of Temporarily Displaced Persons (TDPs) to North Waziristan has started this

March. A caravan of 26 vehicles carrying 219 TDPs belonging to 62 families left Bannu for Spin Wam and Shahmeri in North Waziristan on the first day. Stringent security arrangements were made on the Miranshah road from the Mirzail checkpoint to North Waziristan. Besides Pakistan Army, the political administration and the FATA Disaster Management Authority facilitated the process. About one million registered TDPs are living in camps and rented houses in Bannu district. Each family had been given 25,000 rupees as cash assistance and 10,000 rupees as transportation expenses. Food ration for six months and a kit containing non-food items would also be given to each household. Children under five years of age were administered anti-polio vaccines and under ten measles vaccines.

Operation Zarb-e-Azb got acknowledgement and praise from the various leaders and forums throughout the world. They appreciated the successes of Operation Zarb-e-Azb and Pakistan's efforts for regional stability. Showing solidarity with people of Pakistan, armed forces versus any challenge, these leaders praised the success of Zarb-e-Azb and termed it a hard blow for terrorists without any discrimination. They also praised national consensus to combat terrorism, Pakistan's resolve, efforts and sacrifices in fighting the menace of terrorism.

The whole nation is behind our valiant soldiers and military leadership who made possible for us to shun the fear that terror cast on our society. The civilian government and military leadership are undoubtedly on the same page and reading from the same paragraph.

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## PAKISTAN-INDONESIAN MARITIME COLLABORATION

Indonesian Navy Ship KRI Bangkarmasih-592 carrying 99 Naval cadets visited Pakistan to participate in various training exercises and other activities. Discussion on Maritime Security and Amphibious Operations was also held. Cadets from Pakistan Naval Academy also visited the ship. The current visit of Indonesian Navy Ship is of high significance as it will help in promoting peace and security in the region.



# Rising Above the Ordinary

*You decipher a military man's life, there is a narration of many heroic acts and unbelievable stories. Such is the life of a military man that makes him un-common among the common and extra ordinary among the ordinary. There are many unsung military heroes who now lay buried; dead in the ordinary sense but 'alive' in the real sense. Here you find few accounts from the life of those extraordinary men who chose death over life, said 'yes' to the call of duty – and now are 'alive' forever.*



**Maria Khalid**



Maj Usman Ullah  
(shaheed) wearing his  
father's uniform shirt.



**A**ugust 6, 2015, 1700 hours

*"I am going to Gilgit for a night for casualty evacuation. Will be back tomorrow Insha Allah."*

Col (retd) Hashmat Ullah read the message, looked at his younger grandson and mumbled to himself that 'he will have to babysit him again today', not knowing that it would become his duty for coming years.

Maj Dr. Usman's four years old son used to eat with his father every day and wouldn't eat if he wasn't around.

"We saw him growing up in a day. A day after he heard his father has died; he quietly ate all by himself", told Colonel (r) Hashmat Ullah in his deep voice and tearful eyes.

The military helicopter carrying Maj Dr. Usman and eleven other military men that was being used for rescue and relief operations in the flood affected areas crashed in Rani Bat area of Koh-e-Bhaingra hill, around 65 kms from Mansehra District in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. All the military men, including the pilots and medical team combine, who were to evacuate a critical patient from Gilgit to CMH Rawalpindi, were killed as the helicopter struck a mountain, caught fire, crashed and burnt the corpses beyond recognition. The helicopter, a Medical Evacuation (Medevac) version of MI-17, remained on fire for hours.

The helicopter had taken off from Rawalpindi for the hard-to-access villages nestled into remote hillside of Gilgit. The site of the crash was a mountainous area with dangers compounded by the difficult terrain for operating choppers. The helicopter encountered inclement weather phenomenon due to monsoonal buildups and crashed.

Sitting across from his mother, I found it hard to imagine her loss and contain the tears falling down my cheeks. It is a huge loss – a loss she would never overcome. "Military men brought the body to me for 10 minutes and then took it away for the burial. He has gone to Allah and our trial has begun", she said, her eyes reflecting the pain she was suffering from. "He used to wear his father's uniform shirt when he was young. Joining Army was his passion."

On August 10, 2015, his funeral along with the other martyrs was held at Chaklala Garrison. The Army graveyard was filled with people. A large number of people including General Rashid Mahmood, Chairman Joint Chief of Staff Committee (JCSC) and General Raheel Sharif, Chief of Army Staff (COAS) gathered to lay the valiant sons of soil to rest, now that they had fulfilled their duty.

His father then narrated this story

"When Usman Ullah was a child, he used to play with the batman and was very attached to him. We were collecting ration as his hometown Bhakkar was devastated by the flood in 1977. Usman had collected coins in his saving box which was a sum of 82 rupees. He was only four years old. That was the time when gold was 700 rupees per tola, now it is 60,000 rupees. He told the servant he should take the money because his house was broken." The story was punctuated with sobbing, pride and longing for his son.

After his demise a woman came and told them how he was treating a thalassemia patient that he never had told them. The treatment at the hospital was very expensive yet he was paying from his own pocket.

Among the people watching the transmission of this crash was a sweeper whose father Maj Dr. Usman treated free of cost. When he saw him in the news, he was overwhelmed with grief.

"He was our pride when alive, and now his name has become the nation's pride. The pain of losing a son who was our heartbeat would never be healed. When his helicopter crashed we received a letter congratulating him on passing Pulmonology exam with distinction", Col Hashmat told Hilal.

In a letter to General Raheel Sharif, Javid Kayani, the Deputy Medical Director at FRCS wrote,

"Major Usman Ullah was an Army Medical College (AMC) officer who received advance training in pulmonology at University Hospitals Birmingham. He was an outstanding physician who received wide praise from his supervising consultants." He went on to say, "His death is not only a loss for his family, the Army and the nation, but also for the medical profession."

For a couple of minutes we sat quietly in his drawing room, trying to hold our tears. There was a lump in our throats as they talked about Maj Usman, thinking about the cards life had dealt them. These letters are of great value and reassurance for

the grieving father that his son was indeed a hero. And he had always put the common good ahead of his personal concerns.

In another letter to Maj Gen Sukhera from Dr. Benjamin Sutton, the Consultant Respiratory Physician from UK wrote,

"I wanted to personally say that I found him a thoroughly decent human being when he was with us and became very fond of him. I asked him on a number of occasions to come and work over here with us but he was adamant that he would go back to Pakistan and serve with the military. I know that he wouldn't run away from his duties and it is ironic but perhaps fitting that he died doing something he was so dedicated to."

His dream to be wrapped in the green flag was greater and superior to all the possessions he had.

The pilot of the chopper, **Maj Muzammil Bashir** from the Baloch Regiment joined Basic Aviation Course in July 2005 and completed the flying course in 2006 with a distinctive display of performance both on ground and in air. Later in Quetta, he participated in various operations using the MI-17 helicopter endangering his life multiple times to



the call of duty. He flew extensively as he participated in flood relief operations.

"After a hectic day at work, we always cherished his smiles because in the time of need, he never considered it a duty but a source of fulfillment," said Major Sheraz Khurram, a colleague in Army.

Due to his excellent performance on MI-17, he was selected for the conversion of AH1F (Cobra) Helicopter. Major Muzammil Bashir started fulfilling his share of responsibility of bringing peace to the motherland by actively flying cobra helicopter and engaging the terrorists on the western front. For almost two years he was the Cobra Helicopter pilot before he was sent to Sudan on United Nations Peacekeeping Mission. He proudly represented Pakistan under the UN flag.

During Operation Zarb-e-Azb, he supplied necessary stores/medicines to the troops and evacuated casualties as he was posted to 27 Army Aviation Squadron. "He was a daring man who was never reluctant to endanger his life for saving others" said Maj Sheraz.

Muhammad Ali, his two years old son, says his father has gone to heavens but he will come back. Although still in shock and very quiet, his wife, Maria is satisfied that he was happy with her. Four days before his death, they spent 15 days together in Peshawar after a very long time. He had intended to keep every promise he made to her including the one about celebrating their ninth wedding anniversary on the 14th of August.

"He brushed off the scolding from everyone, the parents and sisters. There hardly was any reaction. He was so cheerful that life followed him wherever he sat," says his sister, Sumera Shaukat.

**How Maj Wasif Hussain Shah confronted militants and laid his life in Datta Khel in North Waziristan Agency during Operation Zarb-e-Azb.**



Maj Wasif's 3 years old daughter, Syeda Aroush Fatima at his grave.



When Major Wasif Hussain Shah, S.Bt. reported for duty in 32 Baloch Regiment in Datta Khel on October 12, 2014, and he was given the task to clear and establish posts at Zarramsar and Spairaghar. The first three days were difficult as there was no water to drink; no shelter and he spent the nights casually in open air. These areas were used by the miscreants to fire rockets at Datta Khel for the last many years. It was his exemplary courage, physical endurance and sacrifice for motherland that Major Wasif captured Zarramsar without any casualty. He established the posts, Obaid 1, Obaid 2 and Obaid 3, and chose Obaid 2 as his headquarter.

On November 15, 2014 at about 1730 hours, terrorists around 400 in number fired rockets and mortars at Obaid 3 Post. Disregarding his own safety, at 1750 hours, Major Wasif arrived at this post along with soldiers under intensive fire and surprisingly he was the first to reach Obaid 3 post. Major Wasif now in the forward trenches fired at the terrorists with his Light Machine Gun.

At about 1900 hours, the bunker of Major Wasif was surrounded by terrorists from three directions. His reflexes took over and he moved out of the bunker to fire directly at the terrorists. The terrorists who had suffered heavy losses fired a Rocket

Propelled Grenade from close range and a splinter of RPG pierced side of his face near his upper lip and after penetrating in the flesh came out from his neck. As Sepoy Ayaz who was fighting alongside Major Wasif embraced *shahadat*, Major Wasif also fell on the ground. He recited *Kalma-e-Shahadat* and closed his eyes.

"He fought like a lion from the forward most trenches and embraced *shahadat*. The presence of Major Wasif at forward most trenches was a source of motivation and high morale for his regiment," said his proud father, Irshad Hussain Shah, an Assistant Professor at Hazara University. "Major Wasif fought for a noble cause in line with the noblest traditions of Pakistan Army."

These are the stories of a few *shuhada* but are repeated every time a soldier embraces *shahadat*. The pain is immense, loss is huge but the pride is forever.

*Regard your soldiers as your children, and they will follow you into the deepest valleys; look on them as your own beloved sons, and they will stand by you even unto death.*

Sun Tzu



# COAS VISIT TO KARACHI

On August 25, Gen Raheel Sharif, COAS visited Karachi and was briefed about the significant improvement in security environments. COAS also approved increase in number of military courts at Karachi to handle pending/outstanding cases of terrorists. In addition to training imparted by Pakistan Army, Gen Raheel Sharif also handed over equipment worth Rs. 65 million to Karachi police.



# Memories of an Inspiring Battalion Commander

## Lt Col Haroon Islam Shaheed



Lt Col Amer Islam

**T**

he building of Ministry of Environment in Islamabad was set ablaze. This was July 2007. Terrorists had taken refuge in the religious seminary and were using hundreds of students as human shields. Lt Col Haroon Islam, the Commanding Officer of the Anti-Terrorist Unit was taking stock of the situation. Had the lives of innocent male and female students not been at risk, he would have preferred to charge on the target. The question of saving innocent lives had delayed the proceedings for more than a week and consequently, the terrorists had the audacity to set government buildings on fire. The Law Enforcement Agencies (LEAs) had surrounded this place which more looked like a battle front than a serene corner of the federal capital, Islamabad. The terrorists were using the sanctity of religion and religious sites to propagate their violence prone hate agenda. The whole national and international media was crying

for an immediate action against these armed extremists.

Amidst such a precarious situation, the genius of Lt Col Haroon came up with a plan, which was approved also. The plan aimed at sniping the armed terrorists in a synchronized action who had prepared fortified positions on the roof-tops and were occasionally lurking around to show their strength. The Commanding Officer himself positioned his snipers at surrounding dominating buildings and once they hit the 19 armed terrorist simultaneously, it broke their will. The very next morning, they agreed to let free the female students. The head count confirmed that over 900 females were freed, but still many students were forcibly locked inside the complex. Lt Col Haroon made yet another plan to help these hostages free from the captivity.

The new plan was to breach the perimeter wall of the seminary with a

view to make a way out for the detainees. He led the operation from the front, though in the capacity of Commanding Officer, he could have stayed in command post that was located at some distance. However, he did so to ensure that the execution was fool-proof and that he was willing to risk his life just as his other comrades did. He falls into the category of those battalion commanders who prefer to fight and die with their men. He took the risk of being vulnerable and it proved fatal. On July 8, 2007, two bullets fired by the terrorists from a short distance hit him; one proved fatal as it pierced straight through his neck. He embraced shahadat right then and a glorious chapter of Special Services Group came to an end.

His unit did not abandon the mission, however, and in the next two days the seminary was cleared of all active resistance.

Lt Col Haroon Islam had in his

personality an amazing contrast of a true believer, who in the words of Dr. Allama Iqbal, "is soft like silk in the company of friends, but hardens like steel in the war of good and evil". He was a true patriot and would never tolerate anything against Pakistan and its founding fathers. He was on crutches after he met a serious road accident and next week on the roadside, he could not resist taking on the man who was irrationally abusing Pakistan. I am the eye-witness. He always groomed his juniors to respect our national heroes and build a national character.

And above all, his un-matched motivation, dedication and passion to serve the motherland were his personality traits. Late Major General Amir Faisal Alavi, then General Officer Commanding of Special Services Group, once narrated this story. An

aircraft was hijacked and landed at Lahore Airport. Lt Col Haroon being the Commanding Officer of Anti-Terrorist Unit was tasked to conduct hostage rescue operation against the hijackers. His force was on board, flying towards Lahore. When enroute, Maj Gen Alavi, who was accompanying them, received news that the hijacked flight had been sent back to its original destination after refueling and that there was no need of operation anymore. According to Maj Gen Alavi as soon as he conveyed that news to Haroon, tears ran down his cheeks and he almost cried "Sir, this is unfair. After a long time, we had an opportunity to be in action and why authorities have now flown the aircraft away?". This is how much he loved being in action.

In fact, his whole life was full of action. He met three serious accidents

owing to his thirst for action and adventure; including one hang-gliding accident, second a road accident and third a fatal sky-diving accident, which almost left him with a diminishing scope of regaining fitness. But it was his firm resolve and commitment that he was on track and fit enough to command the Anti-Terrorist unit once again. His motivation level was beyond normal and enviable.

During Kargil Conflict, when he was a Major, commanding the Anti-Terrorist Company, he had no role to play as per the proceedings by the book. But he contacted his commander and volunteered to participate in the war. The Commander promptly refused to allow him, because that was not his duty as per the appointment he was holding. But after a lengthy debate, he finally succeeded to convince his commander that he and his snipers could play an efficacious role in the battle. His passion won and he alongwith his sniper team moved to the battlefield to snipe the enemy patrolling along Pakistani border.

The Operation Sunrise itself is a true example of his unparalleled motivation. During the breaching phase, he by virtue of his appointment was not required to move himself so close to the target, but he did and the gratuitous exposure led to his *shahadat*. He fulfilled his earnest desire, but Pakistan Army lost a very fine officer and a true leader, indeed. He often used to tell his wife that he had a strong desire to be honoured with martyrdom and that she must re-marry after he embraced *shahadat*. Such a strong conviction he had!

All ranks of Special Services Group still remember his lively talks, his warm hospitality, his charismatic personality and above all his inspiring leadership.

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# War of Narratives



Amir Zia

In today's context, these forces remain bitterly opposed to the Pakistan Armed Forces. For pseudo liberals, the security forces are the main stumbling block in their designs to make frontiers between Pakistan and India irrelevant. They justify their argument in the name of the so-called shared values, culture and history between the two states. The religious extremists stand at the other side of the pendulum and propagate that the armed forces are allies of the West and therefore, resorting to acts of terror against them remain justified.

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wo small, but motivated rival forces have long been trying to rule the public opinion in Pakistan. They are zealously pushing their competing narratives in schools, colleges, universities and seminaries to capture young minds. They are battling it out with each other in the mainstream media in an attempt to thrust their agendas. And they are trying to exploit the reach of the new media to propagate views and put across their messages. Despite deep fissures and countless variances within each of these forces, the westernized pseudo liberals and the religious extremists are two distinct groups, struggling to seize the national narrative.

But their ideological differences apart, these rivals also share some common traits.

For example, they both in their essence remain opposed to Pakistan and its basic idea apparently for conflicting reasons, yet aiming to achieve the similar outcome. If the so-called liberals think that the creation of Pakistan and the partition of British-India was a slip of history, the religious extremist, too, think in the same manner albeit under a different pretext. The religious extremists denounce the Freedom Movement and its achievement – Pakistan – because it clashes with their parochial, intolerant and theocratic worldview. Their rivals – the pseudo liberals – try to undermine the demand for a separate Muslim homeland in South Asia as a mere British conspiracy aimed at dividing India. By this naive assertion, they ignore the strong demands of political, economic and social rights of Muslims, which culminated with the creation of Pakistan. The two rivals also appear on the same page in their criticism of Pakistan's founding fathers and heroes of the Freedom Movement – from Sir Syed Ahmed Khan and Sir Allama Muhammad Iqbal to Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali

Jinnah. If for the religious extremists these leaders were too open-minded, progressive and modern, their rivals declare them conservative, communal and pro-British.

In today's context, these forces remain bitterly opposed to the Pakistan Armed Forces. For pseudo liberals, the security forces are the main stumbling block in their designs to make frontiers between Pakistan and India irrelevant. They justify their argument in the name of the so-called shared values, culture and history between the two states. The religious extremists stand at the other side of the pendulum and propagate that the armed forces are allies of the West and therefore, resorting to acts of terror against them remain justified.

The pseudo liberals criticize Pakistan and its security establishment for the alleged support to the religiously-motivated Afghan militants, while the religious extremists condemn and target the country exactly for the opposite reason; for fighting the Al-Qaeda-linked or inspired militants and destroying the safe havens of all foreign terrorists.

One can draw several other such parallels and dig deeper into the ideological stances of these two extreme views, which in a nutshell may appear contradictory, but aim to weaken and destroy Pakistan.

Many pseudo liberals, who also have been joined in by the leftists of yesteryears, will certainly raise eyebrows on what they might say the "audacity" of drawing similarities between them and their violent ideological rivals. Some can rightly say in their defence that unlike the religious extremists, they do not stand guilty of resorting to suicide bombings, explosions and acts of terrorism and sabotage, while others may like to draw attention toward

their services for the EU-inspired human rights causes.

All this may be true, but the thrust of the argument is to highlight the commonalities of the two rivals. As far as actions are concerned, besides ideology, they are the result of many other factors, including strategy, the class and social backgrounds of activists, their political orientation and commitment.

The pseudo liberals overwhelmingly comprise mainly of the westernized and well-off middle, upper middle and elite classes, while the religious extremists draw most of their foot soldiers from the lower classes, especially from the rural areas and bank on select motivated individuals from the middle and upper-middle class as their ideologues, masterminds of complicated operations.

Both these rivals enjoy much more reach and clout in the traditional and the new media than their actual size in the society.

For instance, pseudo liberals dominate the English-language press, which despite the small size, is seen influential because of its reach in the corridors of power. The so-called

The state should ensure its monopoly over violence. The Operation Zarb-e-Azb and the crackdown on criminals and terrorists in Karachi are aimed at achieving this goal. Support to these causes is vital in the battle of ideas to achieve the goal of a peaceful and stable Pakistan as envisioned by its founders.

liberals freely run propaganda campaigns against the core national interests from undermining the Kashmir cause to that of the criticism on the country's nuclear programme mainly in the English-language press, which serves as the main vehicle to highlight their small protests, conferences and other activities. They resort to propaganda against the country's security agencies and the armed forces and try to portray them as rogue institutions. They also indulge in foreign-inspired advocacy campaigns in the name of human rights – by which they basically mean rights of criminals and terrorists. The organized, EU-backed campaign against the resumption of death penalty after last December's barbarity at the Army Public School Peshawar is a case to point. As the national consensus stood solidly behind awarding capital punishment, the self-styled rights' groups launched a drive to save the life of the child killer Shafiq Hussain by twisting facts and distorting evidence to prove that he was a juvenile when he kidnapped a seven-year-old boy and murdered him after sexual abuse. Their aim was to undermine Pakistan's judiciary. Due to public pressure, the child killer was finally hanged to death in Karachi after evading death warrants at least half-a-dozen times.

Although the religious extremists do not have a direct clout on the traditional media, their apologist and allies in the mainstream religious and political parties help support their narrative. They urge for talks with terrorists – responsible for killing thousands of Pakistanis, including officers and soldiers of the armed forces – in the name of peace. There also are blatant attempts in the media to justify taking up arms against the state and arguments to support the policy of appeasement and reconciliation with the local and foreign terrorists, trying to run a state within the state. Such voices have bigger influence on the Urdu-language media, which has become a tool to propagate hate speech, intolerance, conservative ideas and ideals and twist the vision of Pakistan by attempting to paint

it as a theocratic state. Such ideas are also reinforced by many pulpits and seminaries as well as big and small religious groups. Their narrow, myopic, flawed and confrontationalist interpretation of the sacred religion of Islam creates favourable ground where extremist ideas breed and grow.

The extremists also have an organized propaganda machinery of their own and have mastered the art of using the new media. They are not just banking on the written word to disseminate propaganda, but use audios, videos and photographs through dedicated or third party websites and countless fake accounts on the social media. If any of these accounts get blocked, a new one is created under another fake identity.

However, the pseudo liberals and the religious extremists remain a minority in this country of more than 180 million people. Yet they have managed to create a lot of dust, which tarnishes Pakistan's image and creates despondency, negativism and anger in the society.

Ironically, the rational Pakistani nationalist narrative is missing from both the traditional and the new media. Even if it exists, it is disorganized and finds little space, though it articulates the aspirations and will of overwhelming majority of Pakistanis.

What does this nationalist narrative mean in a nutshell given Pakistan's present day challenges?

Firstly, it represents modernity rooted in our tradition, culture and religion. The same way, Pakistan's founding fathers conceived and articulated it by investing in the modern education starting from Aligarh, Sindh Madrassatul Islam, Islamia College Peshawar and other modern education institutions, which in turn became the vanguard of the freedom struggle.

Secondly, it means rising above the bigoted sectarian, ethnic and provincial divide and promoting national cohesion and unity. This again remains the crux of the message of Pakistan's founders, who managed to unite Muslims of South Asia for a single cause regardless of their

class, ethnic, sectarian or provincial background.

Thirdly, it is establishing the writ of the state and rule of law in the country. This means zero-tolerance for armed groups and bands of non-state actors operating under any pretext. The state should ensure its monopoly over violence. The Operation Zarb-e-Azb and the crackdown on criminals and terrorists in Karachi are aimed at achieving this goal. Support to these causes is vital in the battle of ideas to achieve the goal of a peaceful and stable Pakistan as envisioned by its founders.

Fourthly, it should aim at making Pakistan's defence impregnable against any direct aggression as well as the indirect soft invasion diluting our national cohesion and unity. This means unflinching support for the guardians of Pakistan's frontiers – the armed forces – and countering those individuals, commercial organizations and media ventures working against Pakistan's core interests.

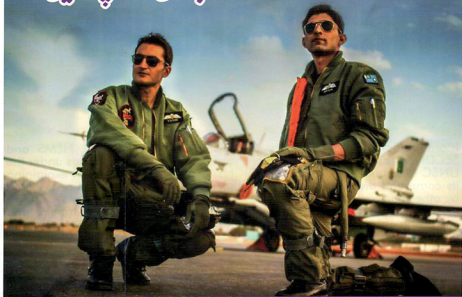
And fifthly, it should promote the idea of economically prosperous, progressive and strong Pakistan to ensure not just the wellbeing and upward social mobility of citizens, but also guarantees peace and stability in the region. This was the dream of Quaid-i-Azam Muhammad Ali and his companions.

The first key to achieve these goals is to aggressively and unapologetically dominate the battle of narratives and counter those tiny organized minorities of pseudo liberals and the religious extremists, who are trying to weaken Pakistan. It is time for the Team Pakistan to rise, make a difference and win this battle.



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# FIRMLY SECURE

Islamabad's transparent policy about its NCA, SPD, PNRA, NEMS and SECDIV; its practical initiatives to carryout international obligations under the UNSC Resolution 1540, CSI and GICNT; its relative openness in explaining its command and control structures that goes beyond the practice adopted by other nuclear capable states; its commendable Export Control Act 2004; its constructive participation in the three Nuclear Security Summits; and establishment a state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence vindicate that Pakistan's Nuclear Security is unquestionable.



**Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal**



Pakistan's nuclear programme has prejudicially been portrayed in the international media since 1970s. Ironically, many security analysts deliberately conceal the reality and twist the facts to generate sensation about the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear programme. The anti-Pakistan nuclear programme lobby, especially in the aftermath of September 11, 2001, has been frequently pronouncing detrimental judgments against the safety and security of the programme in both print and electronic media. Its primary objective is to persuade the international community about the inability of the Pakistani nuclear establishment to protect its nuclear infrastructure from the transnational terrorist groups. Instead of critically examining the safety and security apparatus of country's nuclear facilities, nuclear arsenal and nuclear related institutional arrangements for the sake of objective analysis; the anti-Pakistan lobby is merely relying on the baseless concocted stories and fictitious hypothesis. Without realizing that a nation which develops its indigenous nuclear fuel cycle and successfully manufactures and tests nuclear weapons is capable enough to secure its nuclear

facilities and arsenal from terrorist groups' attacks as well as from external powers' incursions into the country's nuclear weapons' locations. Though this subjective maligning campaign has failed to cap the progressive trajectory of Pakistan's nuclear programme, yet it has fashioned negative caveats about the country's nuclear infrastructures' safety and security.

The nature of subjective criticism; conspiracy theories hatched against Pakistan's nuclear civil and military programmes; and above all the fear of nuclear/radiological terrorist attacks necessitate serious analysis of the subject, i.e. safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear weapons. It seems appropriate to critically examine the measures that Pakistani nuclear establishment has taken over the past more than one decade to ensure safety and security of its nuclear assets. Therefore, the following discussion is an attempt to present briefly the realistic-cum-objective account of the puzzle to keep the record straight. Indeed, the following deliberation on Pakistan's nuclear safety and security programme would be useful to provide an overview of Pakistan's efforts in the field of nuclear security that have been recognized by the international community and various international agencies, including the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA) – a global nuclear watchdog that looks after issues related to the peaceful use of nuclear technology.

Importantly, the Pakistani nuclear establishment has institutionalized highly secured systems, which have been improved gradually to thwart internal and external security challenges to its nuclear infrastructure and arsenal since the very beginning of the nuclear weapon programme. Immediately, after the nuclear weapons' tests in May 1998, the Government of Pakistan announced its National Command Authority (NCA) which comprises the Employment Control Committee, the Development Control Committee and Strategic Plans Division (SPD) – the secretariat of the Authority. The periodic meetings of the NCA, and

briefings organized by the SPD reveal that a range of overt and covert measures were adopted to guard country's nuclear programme. A few of explicit measures are spelled out in the following paragraphs.

First, the nuclear assets – both civilian and military – safety and security are ensured by the NCA through its secretariat, SPD. Notably, the SPD works on behalf of the NCA, which increases its role in the nuclear decision-making. It is headed by a serving Lt General of Pakistan Army – Director General of SPD – who is the focal person to ensure the safety and security of both civilian and military components of the country's nuclear programme. Precisely, the SPD is a custodian of Pakistan's nuclear programme. In addition, separate strategic forces commands have been raised in all the three services. The services retain training, technical and administrative control over their strategic forces. These arrangements institutionalized the safety and security mechanism of the country's nuclear weapons.

Second, the custodian's of the weapon programme had established a 'Security Division' that today has more than 25,000 trained personnel at its disposal to guard the nuclear assets. The division is solely responsible for the security of all nuclear assets in Pakistan, and has specially trained combat troops to handle various kinds of contingencies. It also has its own academy to provide specialized training to the newly inducted troops. These trained soldiers are far superior to terrorists and certainly capable to guard both nuclear weapons and sensitive nuclear facilities from terrorists' attempt and external powers' incursions into the nuclear weapons' locations. Thus, presently, Pakistan has not only a robust command and control system in place; but also has trained personnel to protect its nuclear assets from diversion, theft and accidental misuse.

Third, the NCA decided that nuclear weapons would not be stored at one place and very few people know about their exact locations. One can count these people on fingers who exactly know about the

location of nuclear arsenals. The SPD introduced a very rigorous vetting process for the nuclear establishment, i.e. personal reliability programme for military personals and human reliability programme for the civilians as well as scientists to prevent insiders' link with the terrorist groups. The officers, who are trusted with the weapons' location information, ought to be under continuous surveillance by the intelligence agency, which is directly reporting to the high-ups of the secretariat. This methodology, certainly, conceals the locations of the nuclear arsenals and also ensures the integrity of the employs.

Fourth, the critics of Pakistan's nuclear arsenals safety apparatus have failed to comprehend that the country's nukes are not maintained on a hair-trigger alert. Thereby, in times of peace its nuclear warheads are maintained separately from their non-nuclear assemblies. This approach prevents accidental or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons. In addition, the SPD has developed a fool proof security system such as Permissive Action Link System that is modeled on one used by the United States nuclear establishment. The Permissive Action Link electronically locks nuclear weapons. The SPD also relies on a range of other measures including dual-key system. To prevent any possibility of inadvertent or unauthorized use of nuclear weapons, physical safety mechanisms and firewalls have been developed in the weapon systems themselves and in the chain of command. No single individual can operate a weapon system, nor can one individual issue the command for nuclear weapons use. The evolution of the NCA ensures that no unauthorized use of nuclear weapons could ever take place, yet the weapon can be operationally ready on short notice.

Fifth, Pakistan's Parliament Legislated an Act in September 2004 – the Export Control on Goods, Technologies, Material and Equipment related to Nuclear and Biological Weapons and their Delivery Systems Act. It was a practical attempt by the government of Pakistan to fulfil international obligations envisaged

by the UNSC Resolution 1540 in April 2004. The purpose of the Export Control Act was to further strengthen controls on the export of sensitive technologies, particularly related to nuclear and biological weapons and their means of delivery. Pakistan also established a Strategic Export Control Division (SECDIV) in the Ministry of Foreign Affairs in April 2007. The purpose of the SECDIV is to further tighten controls over exports, by monitoring and implementing the Export Control Act of 2004.

Sixth, to prevent the possibility of theft and sabotage during the transportation of sensitive nuclear materials, effective measures have been instituted to fulfil international obligations under the UNSC Resolution 1540. Along with other measures taken in this regard, it has been ensured that specialist vehicles and tamper proof containers are provided for transit of nuclear materials, and escorted by military personnel. It was reported that as part of its international obligations, Pakistan has submitted four reports pursuant to UNSC Resolution 1540, providing details of its national legislative measures to prevent non-state actors from acquiring nuclear weapons or related material, till the writing of these lines.

Seventh, Islamabad is very attentive and actively participating in the international arrangements to prevent nuclear/radiological terrorism. For instance, Pakistan was amongst the very first countries that submitted a report to the United Nations to fulfil its obligations under UNSC Resolution 1540. It joined US sponsored Container Security Initiative (CSI) in March 2006 and the Global Initiative to Combat Nuclear Terrorism (GICNT) in 2007. In addition, Pakistan is also part of the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) process – an initiative by President Obama that had led to three successful Nuclear Security Summits in 2010, 2012, and 2014 held at Washington D.C, Seoul, and The Hague, respectively. Pakistan participated in these three Summits at the Prime Minister level and made significant contributions in support of the global efforts towards nuclear

safety and security.

Eighth, Islamabad has established a state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence that provides specialized courses in nuclear security, physical protection, material control and accounting, transport security and personnel reliability. The Center of Excellence acts as a regional and international hub to train the people. Pakistan also deployed Special Nuclear Material Portals on key exit and entry points to counter the illicit trafficking of nuclear and radioactive materials. During the Nuclear Security Summits, Pakistan also called attention to its endeavours to cooperate with other states to improve their nuclear safety and security system.

Ninth, since 2001, Pakistan Nuclear Regulatory Authority (PNRA) has been guarantying physical protection of nuclear materials and facilities, nuclear material control and accounting, transport security, border controls, the prevention of illicit trafficking and radiological emergencies.

Tenth, the Nuclear Emergency Management System (NEMS) has been established by the government to deal with all nuclear and radiological emergencies. For instance, “dedicated Quick Reaction Forces (QRF) and Special Response Forces (SRF) equipped with the latest equipment and technology, including airborne assets, to handle various nuclear safety and security contingencies.”

The national consensus on Pakistan's nuclear programme and the institutionalized structure of the NCA and its secretariat constituted vigilant custodians of the country's nuclear programme. The physical-protection apparatus and custodial safeguards' arrangements make Pakistani nuclear assets both civilian and military inaccessible to the unauthorized outsiders. Consequently, there has been no recorded incident of the sabotage or theft of the Pakistani nuclear material to-date. On March 23, 2015, Lt. General (retired) Khalid Kidwai, the former Director General of SPD stated categorically at the Carnegie International Nuclear Policy Conference 2015 (CINPC 2015) held

at Washington D.C United States that: “I would like to conclude by holding out an assurance to this audience on something I know worries the international community all the time: the safety and security of Pakistani nuclear weapons in the disturbed security environment of our region. For the last 15 years Pakistan has taken its nuclear security obligations seriously. We understand the consequences of complacency, there is no complacency. We have invested heavily in terms of money, manpower, equipment, weapons, training, preparedness and smart site security solutions.” He added, “I say with full responsibility that nuclear security in Pakistan is a non-issue. You have all your national tactical means to verify, but you might also take my solemn words for it. Our nuclear weapons are safe, secure and under complete institutional and professional control.” Notably, during the question and answer session not even a single participant in CINPC 2015 conference asked a question to General Kidwai related to Pakistan's nuclear security. This verifies that informed international community has confidence in Pakistan's nuclear security apparatus.

To conclude, Islamabad's transparent policy about its NCA, SPD, PNRA, NEMS and SECDIV; its practical initiatives to carryout international obligations under the UNSC Resolution 1540, CSI and GICNT; its relative openness in explaining its command and control structures that goes beyond the practice adopted by other nuclear capable states; its commendable Export Control Act 2004; its constructive participation in the three Nuclear Security Summits; and establishment a state-of-the-art Centre of Excellence vindicate that Pakistan's Nuclear Security is unquestionable.



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BALUCHISTAN

2015



# Sustainable Development Goals



The SDGs draw attention to myriad issues, in which our country is already mired. Pakistan should accord attention to the SDGs for reasons beyond its responsibility as a member of the comity of nations given that the aspirations centred on building peaceful, just and inclusive societies, human rights and environmental protection, women's empowerment, and universal access to education, health and social protection are deeply in the country's own interest.



**Dr. Sania Nishtar**

**O**

n August 2, 2015, the UN Inter-Governmental negotiations on the post-2015 development agenda and the Sustainable Development Goals' (SDGs) process came to fruition with consensus on the outcome document, titled 'Transforming our World: The 2030 Agenda for Global Action'. As a follow-up to the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs), which will come to term in September 2015, the SDGs are the world's

next big promise. Framed as 17 goals with 169 outcome-based targets, the framework is meant to be embraced by governments later this year at the UN General Assembly and Pakistan will be amongst the 190+ countries, expected to adopt it officially.

Year 2015 is a watershed moment for 'development' for several reasons. In particular, owing to three major international development convenings, each of which is pointing towards a development paradigm, which is quite distinct from what the world has known since the MDGs were adopted in 2000. In July, the third international Conference on Financing for Development (FFD) framed a new lens on development financing. The UN meeting to adopt the SDGs that is scheduled for September and December brings hopes for a legally binding treaty on climate change.

The emerging new development narrative brings in its wake four salient changes compared to what was the convention in the era of the MDGs. First, a shift in responsibility from 'donors' to 'countries'. The post-Cold War optimism and G8 fiscal space, a milieu in which the MDGs were born is a stark contrast to the austerity, which marks the world today. Therefore, whereas the MDGs were developed for the aid system, the onus of responsibility for implementing the SDGs is squarely on governments. In its 'Means of Implementation' section, the outcome document clearly outlines that "each country has the primary responsibility for its own economic and social development....", as it should.

Secondly, development thinking has become more system-focused, which is evidenced in the emphasis on "institutions and infrastructure" in the new development narrative — and just as well since systems plagued by show-stopping constraints cannot deliver on desired goals.

Thirdly, there is a clear shift from the 'future of people' to the 'future of planet', as is evidenced by the five 'Ps' of the 2030 universal

agenda for sustainable development — People, Planet, Prosperity, Peace and Partnerships. Sustainability is the organizing principle of the new development paradigm with the goals' text, referring to it more than 10 times in terms of sustainable economic growth, sustainable consumption and production, sustainable agriculture, sustainable management of water and sanitation, sustainable energy, sustainable industrialization, sustainable cities, sustainable oceans and sustainable terrestrial ecosystems. It has been reiterated all along that the process of achieving economic and human development goals must respect the earth's natural systems, which provide natural resources and ecosystem services for the economy and the society.

In the fourth place, the new framework underscores the importance of inter-connectedness of risks and the sectoral inter-dependencies involved in public policy solutions, therefore, making a case for whole of government and whole of society approaches and partnerships, an area where public institutions are particularly weak.

Through 17 goals, the SDGs also implicitly call for systemic governance reform, which is the first step to delivering on its wide-ranging agenda at the country level. This in its own right underscores the need for a major international development effort.

There is a fair share of systems-level reorganization that is needed domestically in Pakistan to deliver on this agenda over time. This notwithstanding, what should Pakistan do in the short term, in the run up to September, prior to officially adopting the framework in the next few weeks?

Several steps should be considered by the government, beginning with assigning focal institutional responsibility in the country. Getting clarity on where the country stands with respect to policy positions in relation to the 17 goals should also be a logical first step. Many elements of the new agenda are part of existing

policy norms in Pakistan and a review is needed, so that Pakistan pitches a clear position at the UN Summit. The UN process to develop indicators will soon follow, which warrants assigning responsibility as well. Clarity on the federal government's reporting mechanisms is another imperative.

Also, we must view this in the context of the post 18<sup>th</sup> Amendment lens, where a complex dynamic is at play. The federal government has responsibility for ensuring compliance with international agreements, as mandated by the Constitution's Entry 32 of the Federal Legislative List Part I. Provincial governments exercise control over several mandates but sustainability is a shared national agenda — not federal, not provincial, but a subject of the federation. It would make sense to convene stakeholders in a timely manner for a discourse on roles in that regard.

The SDGs draw attention to myriad issues, in which our country is already mired. Pakistan should accord attention to the SDGs for reasons beyond its responsibility as a member of the comity of nations given that the aspirations centred on building peaceful, just and inclusive societies, human rights and environmental protection, women's empowerment, and universal access to education, health and social protection are deeply in the country's own interest.



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## ANOTHER INDIAN PROPAGANDA GIMMICK:

# THE LURKING GHOST OF INDIAN POWs



**Brig (Retd)  
Mehboob Qadir**

Moved by this startling disclosure, I started off in earnest but regrettably that Indian officer turned out to be more an insensitive self-seeker rather than one genuinely concerned. It was so distressing to see men playing with tender human sentiments in this blatant manner.

**A**lastair Sloan likes to be known as an investigative journalist whose forte is turning out to be selective advocacy rather than a wholesome pursuit of truth. His professed passion, one believes, is 'human rights' a going commodity that is commercially saleable these days, but more often an ill-defined preoccupation based on imbibed prejudices. He wrote an article on the subject in the Newsweek's July 24, 2015 issue.<sup>1</sup> In the article, Alastair Sloan falsely asserted that 54 Indian PoWs are still held by Pakistan and languishing at same hidden place. He is now scheduled to visit New Delhi next month, quite expectedly, to dig deeper for his write-up for perhaps another magazine this time. A respected colleague from US sent me the following questions whose answers were being sought by Mr. Sloan:-

- 1 If India released 90,000 Pakistani prisoners at the end of the conflict, why were 54 prisoners overlooked going the other way, as it was especially given Pakistan was hardly in a strong negotiating position at that time?
- 2 How could a release now affect relations?

Real catch is built into the second question which is loaded with the suggestive presumption that those

unfortunate souls were, allegedly, still held by Pakistan. There could be nothing more preposterous. This approach is illegitimate by conception and therefore unexceptionable. We will come to this a little later.

This matter was also broached with me by a retired Indian Army officer more than a year ago. He seemed to be a campaigner for these mysterious Indian men, claimed to be held by Pakistan variously by the Indian and other foreign media, certain affected families and quite a few others who have a stake in it one way or the other. Moved by this startling disclosure, I started off in earnest but regrettably that Indian officer turned out to be more an insensitive self-seeker rather than one genuinely concerned. It was so distressing to see men playing with tender human sentiments in this blatant manner.

For the families of these men it is a real agonizing situation. I know how unbearably painful it can get. I had been a prisoner in Indian camps

after the same war. However, the matter has been scandalized, made a slander tool and pasted on every wall in town, obscuring the real issue. The issue was humanitarian and needed to be discussed objectively for the sake of their families and not for point scoring. It is hideousness at its worst.

I have been on quite a few important positions of considerable access to information in GHQ, field formations and elsewhere after 1980 and have never heard or seen anything about these allegedly held 54 Indian PoWs of 1971 war. Such a thing can never be kept under wraps that too for 44 years. A whole lot of officials of all descriptions have replaced many more ever since but not a single word about that? Amazing! Pakistan is not a Gulag or Andaman exile. We do not run Gauntanamos or Pul-e-Charkhi either.

In my assessment the trouble with this whole issue is that there are underlying presuppositions by their interlocutors and the likes of Alastair

<sup>1</sup><http://europe.newsweek.com/after-45-years-pakistan-indias-missing-54-pows-could-be-coming-home-330724/>.

Sloan which defeat fruitful interaction ob initio. It is like hanging the wretch from his trial later:-

1. The notion presumes that Pakistan has retained the alleged PoWs with an ulterior motive. None has defined what could that be and how would it be served?
2. Sadism of the idea is so irresistibly appealing to the ravenous media and professional spin masters that they are not prepared to grant any decency and compassion to Pakistan. This pre-cooked thick stew about our perceived conduct is lapped up readily as it sells easily. Media is voracious and the story tends to feed just the juice that it yearns for. Even a modicum of civility allowed to Pakistan would unspin the whole evil weave which could end the success run of quite a few news howlers.
3. Acts of grace, humanitarian consideration and responsible conduct by us are either conveniently ignored or trashed as freaks. Rescue of Indian citizens from the teeth of Yemeni battle zone early this year, sustained efforts for months by

Pakistan is a victim of manufactured perceptions, a massive failure of its successive leaderships to rise to the occasion, their feet of clay when faced with challenging situations and immense disjointedness in our ability to present the country's case effectively. Pakistan is not going to be everybody's punching bag hung in the public park for long. We will regain our dignity and will regard those well who understood our difficulties and stood by us.

Ansar Burney Trust Pakistan to free Indian Commercial Navy

men along with ours from Somali pirates last year and unscathed return of Indian Army helicopter which strayed into sensitive Siachen Sector, alongwith its crew the same day, are not ordinary acts. They need outstanding character and not hollow humility or empty talk. But we are not given to thumping our chest for what we do to help fellow men in distress. We are generous and not petty, unlike what Mr. Sloan and his sort would prefer us to be painted. That is why such commendable acts of compassion by Pakistan do not make news.

4. Very frequently Pakistan releases Indian fishermen in their hundreds who were found fishing in disputed waters in Rann of Kutch bay. One has to see expressions on their faces for being well treated in detention as Pakistan understands they were victims of India's proverbially obstinate deep state which is repeatedly refusing to settle the long standing issue of demarcation of sea boundary. We have never killed an Indian held in our custody, but invariably receive tortured dead bodies of ours from India. Imagine India holding back a few years old child from his Pakistani parents on utterly frivolous officiousness.
5. India seems to have been washed in Ganges waters and clean as a snow flake forever from any act of atrocity, impropriety or breach. Pakistan too is not Rwanda nor a Roman Colosseum where ferocious men must kill, maim and destroy. Their inclination seems to be to judge the whole of us by the beastly few who were imposed upon us from abroad, are their proxies and bequeathed as the humanity's garbage.
6. It is well known but still begs repetition that by now notorious and again scandalized Bombay terror attack was tried by the Indian courts. After six years of

gruelling trial and thousands of pages of high legal hairsplitting along with concerted efforts by their otherwise efficient and nearly prescient intelligence and investigating agencies, the court found it hard to link the tragic incident with Pakistan. However, what was thrown up before and continues to bounce in the media around the world was conjecture and favourite sensation despite the tragic and needless loss of lives. India has still to produce tenable evidence in our trial court to enable us to convict Lakhvi. It is quite apparent that Indian establishment prefers political mileage over the blood and sufferings of her citizens; their grief, tragedy and searing pain, notwithstanding.

Pakistan is a victim of manufactured perceptions, a massive failure of its successive leaderships to rise to the occasion, their feet of clay when faced with challenging situations and immense disjointedness in our ability to present the country's case effectively. Pakistan is not going to be everybody's punching bag hung in the public park for long. We will regain our dignity and will regard those well who understood our difficulties and stood by us.

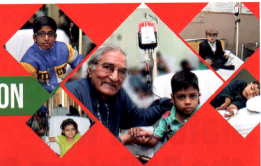
Journalistic theatrics of Alastair Sloan's article are understandable. How else would the Newsweek lift his write up? Whereas this case needs genuine concern and a very thoughtful application. An obsession for ratings and lust to whip Pakistan anyway is futile. We can be angry but not callous.

✖✖

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# SUNDAS FOUNDATION



سندس فاؤنڈیشن 1998 سے پاکستان کے آٹھ شہروں میں بلا معاوضہ مستحق تھیلیسیڈیا، ہیپو فیلیا اور بلڈ کنسر جیسے مہلک موذی امراض میں جتنا 5,000 سے زائد معصوم مریض بچوں کو مفت علاج و معالجہ فراہم کر رہا ہے، جبکہ تمام ہپتائوں میں زیر علاج نادار اور مستحق مریضوں کو بوقت ضرورت صحت مند خون اور اجڑے خون مفت فراہم کر رہا ہے۔ سندس فاؤنڈیشن کا شمار ایسے اداروں میں ہوتا ہے جن پر فخر حضرات انکمیس بند کر کے امتداد دیتے ہیں اور اپنے بچے کو نہیں بلکہ معصوم بچائی جانوں کو بڑبڑا رکھتے ہوئے سندس فاؤنڈیشن کا ساتھ دیتے ہیں، اس لئے ہماری بھی بھرپور کوشش ہوتی ہے کہ ڈاکو و عطیات کا مکمل اور شفاف ریکارڈ رکھا جائے تاکہ بوقت ضرورت مفید حضرات کو دکھایا جاسکے کہ انکا ایک ایک پیسہ کہاں خرچ ہوا۔ آپ کے اس تعاون کی سندس فاؤنڈیشن کو ایک مرتبہ پھر ضرورت ہے اس لئے برائے کرم اپنی اور اپنے خاندان کی ڈاکو و عطیات سندس فاؤنڈیشن کو بھیجیں تاکہ نہ صرف مریض بچوں کے مفت علاج و معالجہ کا تسلسل برقرار رہے بلکہ نئی نئی عمارت کی تعمیر بھی ممکن ہو سکے۔

آپ کے خلوص اور تعاون کے لئے میں جتنی شکر یا دعا کرتا ہوں اور بشمول ہزاروں مریضوں کے میں آپ کے لئے دعا گو ہوں کہ خدا آپ پر ہمیشہ مہربان اور آپ کا حامی و ناصر رہے۔ آمین!

طالب تعاون

منوہاجی منسوبٹر  
چیمبرمین بورڈ آف مینجمنٹ

نوٹ: تمام عطیات انکم ٹیکس آرڈیننس 2001، سیکشن 2(36) کے تحت ٹیکس سے مستثنیٰ ہیں۔ کیس / چیک / ڈرافٹ بنام سندس فاؤنڈیشن کے پتہ پر یا آن لائن اکاؤنٹ نمبر 04650051801110055، فیصل بک، ملائہ اقبال ٹاؤن پرائیج، لاہور میں جمع کروائیں۔

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# Thou Shall Not Hate Nor Kill the Religious Other !



Dr. Amineh Hoti

## WHO ARE THE ROHINGYA?

The Rohingya — described by the international media and human rights organizations as one of the most persecuted minorities in the world — have been denied citizenship and expelled from the country they live in i.e. Burma or Myanmar (neighbouring Bangladesh). Technically, this region is not too far from Pakistan and the treatment meted out to these people reflects a larger issue of how neighbours have been treated in the region. Escaping persecution and extreme violence in widespread, systematic attacks led by Buddhists (Rakhine); hundreds have been arrested on false charges and over 140,000 Rohingya have been displaced in inhumane internment camps, with thousands having fled the country simply to survive. As scholars of dialogue have argued, "Though the Rohingya may be small in number at less than two million, the real lesson of the Arab Spring is that no notion of democracy can succeed without the inclusion of all people within a country's borders. Every member of society, regardless of race and religion, must be given their due rights as citizens."

The Rohingya have fled to

neighbouring Bangladesh, Thailand, Indonesia and Malaysia and hundreds have died on the way to and in these countries. Some of these countries have taken in a small amount of refugees, yet have shut their iron doors to larger numbers. This means that the Rohingya have no citizenship and literally nowhere to go, and many have been stranded at sea and are thus given the name of 'boat people' (according to the UNHCR more than 25,000 people have been stranded on boats from January 2015). Those fortunate to arrive in a country are labelled 'illegal citizens', meaning they cannot work to feed their starving children. If found begging, they are caught, imprisoned, beaten, and sent back despite the very real fear of being killed in Burma.

There are about 1.33 million Rohingya out of 3.5 million citizens in Burma, but the country's 1982 Citizenship Law denied them legal status as citizens in spite of the fact that the Rohingya have lived in Burma for generations. The one million Rohingyas who have been forced out with nowhere to go are sadly, "the world's least wanted" community: most of whom escaped violent religious persecution and are

left in starvation.

In the spirit of *Rehma* (kindness and mercy to the needy), let us reflect on the situation of millions of people world-wide who have left their destroyed homes behind to seek refuge elsewhere, often in lands with unwelcoming laws (Africans, Syrians, Iraqis and others). Let us especially try to empathize with the Rohingya, and with the Afghan refugees who live in Pakistan amongst us, and let us ask ourselves how can we help?

## Background

The agony of forced exile, is reflected in another Muslim's story in Burma: Bahadur Shah Zafar — the last Mughal emperor — exiled by British colonialists to Rangoon. His extreme longing for his own homeland is captured by these famous lines,

*Kitna hai bad naseeb Zafar, dafan ke liya*

*Do gaz zameen bhee na meele koo-e-yaar mein!*

Evidence points to Muslims ruling Arakan, Burma, in 1430 — their gold coins had Persian on one side with Allah's and the Prophet's names. In the 16<sup>th</sup> Century, other Muslims who migrated to Burma settled in the Arakan or Rakhine State. Rohingya means 'inhabitant of Rohang' —

an early Muslim name for the Arakan State in Burma. They are an Indo-Aryan people living in Burma for as many years as Pakistanis have lived in Pakistan, yet the local population of Buddhists who have ruled since the 17<sup>th</sup> century, despite adopting Mughal ways and employing Muslims in their kingdoms, have recently accused the Rohingya of being 'outsiders'.

As there was no boundary between Bengal and Arakan and no restrictions on migration, thousands of people settled in Arakan seeking a livelihood in the paddy fields of Burma. In the 19<sup>th</sup> Century, as per British policy – the East India Company which had extended the Bengal Presidency to Arakan – encouraged the Rohingya to migrate from Bengal to the lightly populated and fertile valleys of Arakan as farm labourers in Burma (1826-1948). The increase in Muslim population is reflected in the British census of 1871 which reported 58,255 Muslims in Akyab District and by 1911 this population had increased to 178,647. By the 20<sup>th</sup> Century, Rangoon was the greatest immigration port for Indians in the world. A British 1939 report fore-warned of "seeds of communal troubles", it pointed out that the immigrants were hard working and had lower demands, which meant that the local population began to resent the waves of immigrants and reacted, according to one historian, with a "racism that combined feelings of superiority and fear". Later, the British would continue to trust and even arm the Rohingya to protect this part of the border of British India from the Japanese (unfortunately the arming of one of the two conflict groups, turned into communal violence – the Rohingya and the Buddhists turned to conflict within).

Reports show that the recent Burmese governments in favour of the Buddhists have encouraged racial and

religious hatred to simmer – leading to further persecution of the Rohingya. The Rohingya lost much of their arable lands to confiscation by the military who gave them to Buddhist settlers from elsewhere in Burma.

During the past 50 years rule, ethnic and religious minorities in Burma have suffered from systematic and widespread human rights violations including summary executions, torture, state sanctioned rape, and forced labour. Furthermore,

One may ask, how can one human being do this to another? At what point do people begin to stop seeing the other as human and start demonizing them? Thinking that they are 'different', they are not 'us', they are 'the other', they are not 'human' and, therefore, it is ok to kill – not just kill, but kill with maximum damage and cruelty. This is against the nature of every religion and of human rights.

law and policy makers refuse to hold perpetrators to account or provide legal redress to displaced, imprisoned, raped, and murdered Muslims who have become victims of an avoidable, manmade humanitarian crisis. The Burmese government unwittingly has restricted education for the Rohingya, so that many pursue Islamic studies in stringent mosques as their only educational option breeding generations of Rohingya who remain oppressed and marginalized from mainstream community. This spells disaster for the communities in the coming years where there is little room for bridge building education. These acts of persecution by the ruling regime have resulted in up to two million fleeing Burma.

#### Denied Citizenship Everywhere

At the time of the Pakistan Movement in the 1940s, Rohingya Muslims in western Burma as a result of suffering extreme persecution, organized a separatist movement with the intention of merging Muslim-dominated regions into East Pakistan. In January 1948, before the independence of Burma, Muslim leaders from Arakan addressed the Quaid-i-Azam, Muhammad Ali Jinnah, and asked to incorporate the Mayu

region with Pakistan considering their religious affinity and geographical proximity with (the then) East Pakistan. Two months later, the north Arakan Muslim League was founded in Akyab (modern Sittwe) which desired annexation with Pakistan. However, with Pakistan's own overwhelming challenges and refugees in the period of 1947-48 this was not a feasible request to accept at the time. Migration to Burma continued in the chaos of the 1971 war.

Denied Pakistani citizenship, the dejected Rohingya Muslim elders founded the Mujahid party as a freedom movement in northern Arakan. The aim of the party was to create an autonomous

Muslim state in Arakan where the Rohingya could live in peace and dignity with freedom to practice their religion and to be accepted for who they are. This dream of acceptance was not to be realized, as after the 1962 coup d'état by General Ne Win oppressive military operations against the Rohingya were carried out for two decades. The army, which ruled for half a century, heavily favoured and invested their trust in the Buddhists – encouraging Burmese nationalism. From 1971 to 1978, Rakhine monks and Buddhists staged hunger protests in Sittwe against immigrants of other faiths. They particularly saw the Rohingyas as "the vanguard of an unstoppable wave of people that will inevitably engulf Rakhine" and forced the government to tackle immigration. The divide between the communities grew wider, uglier and deeper: this hatred of the other led to terrible communal violence, discrimination, and slavery against all minorities including the Chinese and the Rohingya. 'The King Dragon Operation' or Naga Min Sitsin Yae, was a large scale military operation in Arakan aimed to root out Mujahid 'rebels' who desired independence. Many have argued that this was a

front to round up Rohingya people.

Beginning on 6<sup>th</sup> February, 1978 in the village of Sakkipara in Sittwe district mass arrests and tortures began. Anyone who sympathized with the Muslim rebels was dealt with severely: over a period of three months, approximately 200,000 to 250,000 Rohingya Muslims escaped, a few managed to migrate to Karachi and others to nearby Bangladesh to seek refuge. Here the Bangladesh government allowed them to settle in makeshift camps as refugees. In 1978, the Bangladesh government protested against the Burmese government's expulsion of thousands of Burmese Muslim citizens to Bangladesh. The Burmese government responded by saying that they were Bangladeshi citizens who had resided illegally in Burma. In July 1978, after intensive negotiations mediated by the United Nations, Ne Win agreed to take back 200,000 refugees who then settled in Arakan.

At the heavy hand of the discriminatory military might, extreme hatred for the religious other increased leading to dehumanization of helpless minorities. In 1982, the new Burmese National Law denied their own citizens, the Rohingya, citizenship. The Burmese President, Thein Sein, denied outrightly the existence of the Rohingya as an ethnic group of Burma, labelled them "Bengali", and expelled them as "foreigners". In the 2014 Burma Census, they have been classified as "stateless Bengali Muslims" from Bangladesh since 1982. From the perspective of the Rohingya, who only know their identity as Burmese, this labelling is a discriminatory way of implying that they are non-Burmese – a rejected community and illegal immigrants. At the same time, in 1982, the Bangladeshi government amended their citizenship law and declared all "Rohingyas" "non-nationals". Overnight both countries denied the Rohingya people the dignity of recognition as citizens. Without citizenship, they were left without rights, protection, and worst of all, an identity.

## Constructing and Deconstructing Identity

Rohingya argue that they have been living in Myanmar along with other communities for centuries, and it is in recent years that they are being treated as outsiders or aliens. Despite world attention on the terrible misnomer of the growing threat of 'Islamist militants' many Muslims around the world have experienced exile, persecution and even genocide – the image drawn is of them being the perpetrators when in reality the majority of Muslims are the victims of violent extremism (e.g. in Bosnia, Middle East, Afghanistan, Pakistan, Burma, etc).

Since the 1990s, a new 'Rohingya Movement' which is distinct from the 1950s armed rebellion emerged. Rohingya scholars have claimed that Rakhine was previously a Muslim state for a millennium, or that Muslims were king-makers of Rakhine kings for 350 years. They often traced the origin of Rohingyas to Arab seafarers. On the other side, these claims have been rejected as 'newly invented myths' in academic circles. Some Rohingya politicians have labelled Burmese and international historians as "Rakhine sympathizers" for rejecting these purported historical origins. Comparatively, during a research trip to Andalusian Spain, some scholars argued that Spain under Muslim rule allowed for a culture of co-existence amongst its Jewish, Christian and Muslim communities leading to a 'Golden Age' of high civilization, while others, supporting anti-immigration policies and more hostile attitudes towards Moroccan immigrants argue that this is merely a fanciful 'construction' and 'a myth'.

Rohingya politicians and scholars maintain that if citizenship is provided it must allow for an alternative identity that is neither "Bengali" nor has the connotations that the term "Rohingya" now has, but something like, "Rakhine Muslims", "Myanmar Muslims" or simply "Myanmar".

### Nowhere to Go!

According to Physicians for Human Rights (PHR; receivers of a Nobel

Peace Prize in 2007), the Burmese refugee population in Bangladesh is estimated at 200,000 to 400,000. The Government of Bangladesh with the UN refugee agency (UNHCR) jointly administer two "official" camps with a combined population of just 28,000 registered refugees. The remaining "unregistered" refugees who arrived after 1993, when genocide began, are currently not protected by UNHCR – after this year, the Bangladeshi government had ceased to confer refugee status to any Rohingya escaping Burma. According to the reports of PHR, recently Bangladeshi authorities have waged "an unprecedented campaign of arbitrary arrest, illegal expulsion, and forced internment against Burmese refugees" – this has led to restriction of all movement outside the unofficial camp. As a result, thousands of refugees are trapped in what PHR in their report calls, "an open-air prison". Despite fears of leaving the camp, some refugees venture out to beg for money to buy food. What is worrying to read in the report is that local Bangladeshi media put out anti-Rohingya hate messages leading some Bangladeshis to form "resistance committees" that demand the expulsion of the Rohingyas from Bangladesh. Furthermore, the government refuses to allow aid-workers to reach the refugees to gain access to food aid. This means the traumatized impoverished jobless refugees are left to die from starvation. "The Rohingyas have a well-founded fear of persecution if forcibly returned to Burma" the report says.

PHR suggests ways to resolve the crises by appealing to the Burmese government to condemn and prevent ethnic hatred and human rights' violations against Rohingyas and to the Bangladeshi government to desist arbitrary arrests and forcible expulsions who have well-founded fears of persecution; to help and allow aid organizations to reach the refugees; to the UN, to launch a coordinated appeal to regional and other donor

nations for humanitarian relief and protection to this unrecognized and unassisted population in Bangladesh and elsewhere.

### **Fear of the Other Leads to Brutal Violence and Genocide**

The 2012 Rakhine State riots were a series of conflicts between Rohingya Muslims who are a majority in the northern Rakhine; and ethnic Rakhines who are a majority in the south. Before the riots, there were widespread and strongly held fears circulating among Buddhist Rakhines that they would soon become a minority in their ancestral state. According to the Burmese authorities, the violence between ethnic Rakhine Buddhists and Rohingya Muslims left 78 people dead, 87 injured, and up to 140,000 people displaced. The government responded by imposing curfews and by deploying troops in the region. On 10 June 2012, a state of emergency was declared in Rakhine, allowing the military to participate in the administration of the region. Rohingya NGOs overseas accused the Burmese army and police of targeting Rohingya Muslims through arrests and violence.

In July 2012, the Burmese Government did not include the Rohingya minority group in the census — classified as stateless Bengali Muslims. About 140,000 Rohingyas in Burma remain confined in IDP camps. On January 13, 2014, Rakhine mobs and security forces entered Du Chee Yar Tan, Maungdaw Township, and slaughtered over 40 Rohingyas. The UN confirms the gruesome killings— severed heads of at least 10 Rohingyas, some of them children, were found bobbing in a water tank. Brutal and savage ways of hating and killing Rohingyas men, women and children are shown on the internet. You only have to google “Rohingya images” and scroll down to be horrified: children as small as two years have their intestines spilling out and Muslim men with beards have their heads cut off in extreme acts of brutality! One may ask, how can one human being do this to another? At what point do people begin to stop seeing the other as human and start demonizing them? Thinking that they

are ‘different’, they are not ‘us’, they are ‘the other’, they are not ‘human’ and, therefore, it is ok to kill — not just kill, but kill with maximum damage and cruelty. This is against the nature of every religion and of human rights.

Rakhine Buddhist communities formulated vigilante mobs, surrounding homes and razing them to flames. Escaping the terror, many Rohingyas have fled to refugee camps and even ghettos in neighbouring Bangladesh and along the border with Thailand. A 100,000 plus Rohingyas in Burma continue to live in camps as internationally displaced people; they are not allowed by the authorities to leave. After the 2012 Rakhine State riots, Rohingyas received international attention due to their attempted bid for life — they tried to reach any country in South East Asia to live a life in dignity. Malaysia and Indonesia said that they would only allow 7000 Rohingyas to come to their shores temporarily. Both countries set up temporary shelters to house the migrants, but Thailand, the traditional transit point for those trying to reach

**Extreme marginalization and violence with no educational opportunities for the Rohingyas or recognition as citizens and the Buddhist fear of being overtaken by a Muslim majority will drive these communities to further violence. The answer is in acceptance of the ‘Other’ first as human beings — restoring human dignity to the Rohingyas; and second as neighbours — mutual respect and understanding is key, and finally seeing strength, not weakness, in diversity is important.**

Malaysia for work, said it would not follow suit. Hundreds of people died on the way and others have been stranded at sea without food and water. The crisis has been made worse by smugglers.

### **To the Rescue?**

As in Bosnia, the concentration camps in Germany and elsewhere, the ‘good cops’ in America may just come to the rescue. The House of Representatives passed a Resolution (no. 418) on 7<sup>th</sup> May 2014 urging the Burmese government to end the persecution of ethnic minority — Rohingyas Muslims. Additionally, the international community has called on the Burmese government to commission an independent investigation that the Burmese President challenged, calling them ‘accusations’. The government also vehemently refused the US’ request to allow international officials to sit on an investigation into the incidents at Du Chee Yar Tan village where many Rohingyas were savagely killed. The government as a result agreed to commission two internal investigations, which were severely biased and concluded that no massacre had taken place whatsoever. The government’s insistence that there were no Rohingyas deaths in Du Chee Yar Tan in January 2014 is just one recent example of the government’s complicity in religious violence. Publicly rejecting the US and UN’s calls for justice, the government refused to hold perpetrators to account or provide legal redress to the displaced, imprisoned, and murdered Muslims.

### **Where is ‘the Ummah’?**

I wondered how aware my own Muslim friends and acquaintances were — a substantial network of people — I whatsapped them saying, ‘do you know what’s happening to the Rohingyas?’ A few were aware of the situation and said they were following news carefully, another caring friend, Fatima Azzam, leading the Islamic Text Society in Cambridge said her family and friends were donating their zakat to charities helping the Rohingyas, like Muslim Aid.

Others to my surprise and horror, revealed complete complacent

ignorance. Not even knowing the word 'Rohingya'. One smartly dressed middle aged married woman with a series of Louis Vuitton bags who had studied in an English-medium school till just before O Levels and was from an elite family replied, "Didn't understand, sorry". Another Pakistani Islamabad-based woman – a relatively young woman fully clad in a black *niqab* and *abaya* – a medical doctor and training to become an *alima* (a scholar of Islam) sent back a text saying, "wrong window". Like the previous woman, she had not even understood the word 'Rohingya', or what it meant. I explained the genocide briefly. To this the future *alima* replied, "Ok. *JazakAllah* for informing...its Allah *Subhanahu wa Tala's* dastoor: He doesn't change people's conditions until they change themselves for His *Raza*." This statement coupled with her lack of awareness showed both ignorance and arrogance of the situation, and more so from a lady training to become a 'religious scholar' to lead many other young Muslims. This was worrying. A third young girl – a primary school teacher in a private elite school in Islamabad – who had just returned from America spending thousands of US dollars on buying designer bags and shoes blatantly said, "I don't care!" I was horrified at her level of understanding and her lack of feelings for her own community and repeated, thinking I may have misunderstood her, "What/who don't you care about! The Rohingya?", "Yes" she replied with ignorant confident defiance.

Without compassion and empathy (the core principle of all world religions), the world is a jungle with beasts preying upon beasts. Moreover, the worst of beast, perhaps, are those who are ignorant, and then display thoughtless arrogance about their ignorance.

#### Conclusion

Extreme marginalization and



violence with no educational opportunities for the Rohingyas or recognition as citizens and the Buddhist fear of being overtaken by a Muslim majority will drive these communities to further violence. The answer is in acceptance of the 'Other' first as human beings – restoring human dignity to the Rohingyas; and second as neighbours – mutual respect and understanding is key, and finally seeing strength, not weakness, in diversity is important.

Both Islam and Buddhism preach tolerance in their ideal forms, it is the extreme political situation that pushes human beings to act like animals towards each other – hating and killing one another. When persecuted children, women and men seek refuge and not one country is open to welcome them – one asks where is our common humanity? Where is empathy? What if this happened to us – roaming the seas and land simply to survive and not a single place wanting or welcoming you. Human beings as vicegerents of God are meant to reflect and embody ideas of acceptance, tolerance, kindness and allow for peaceful harmonious living. Both Buddhism and Islam are rooted in the region of Pakistan. Notions of mercy, kindness and justice are strong

in Islam. In Buddhism, the concept of 'Ahiṃsa' is non-violence: Buddha said, "Hatred will not cease by hatred, but by love alone." And "All fear violence, all are afraid of death. Seeing the similarity to oneself, one should not use violence or have it used."

I want to emphasize that ideas of empathy and acceptance must play a much bigger part in global politics and policymaking. I pray that this happens worldwide, and especially in Burma and elsewhere. The on-going heart-breaking case of the Rohingya reflects badly on humanity's collective conscience and must give us all food for thought: How do we treat our fellow-neighbours? How do we treat humanity? At a national level? At an individual level? How do we treat our young people, especially our teachers, to care about and feel for the 'Other'? Finally, how do we treat minority communities amongst us? Mustn't we use the desirable tools of empathy and understanding when we deal with the religious, ethnic and gendered 'Other'?



The author is a PhD in Social Anthropology, University of Cambridge. Presently she is Director at Centre for Dialogue and Action, FCCU, Lahore.

<sup>1</sup><http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/opinion/2012/01/201212710543198527.html>

<sup>2</sup><http://www.unhcr.org/4a375c426>, Afghanistan is the leading country of origin of refugees with 2.8 million; Iraqis are the second largest group with 1.9 million refugees. UNHCR, 2008 Global Trends: Refugees, Asylum-seekers, Returnees, Internally Displaced and Stateless Persons, June 16, 2009

<sup>3</sup>[https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR\\_Reports/stateless-and-starving.pdf](https://s3.amazonaws.com/PHR_Reports/stateless-and-starving.pdf)

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6th September 1965

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our resolve, our vision and  
our dreams



# My Identity, My Pakistan

**Captain  
Hercharn Singh Arora**

For me, Pakistan Army is a proud motherly institution that has never discriminated anyone on basis of religion, caste or creed. The only factor that prevails in Pakistan Army is 'Love for Pakistan'.

**"A** A Sikh in Pakistan Army," I don't know how it sounds to people when they see a guy with a turban wearing a Baloch regiment badge, but is definitely a source of immense pleasure and of extreme pride to carry Pakistani flag on my uniform while wearing my religion on my sleeves.

My romance with Pakistan Army began while staying in Lahore during college days. It did not happen out of the blue rather it was patriotism and nationalism inherited from my father who used to raise national flag at our house in Nankana Sahib (located about 80 km southwest of Lahore and about 75 km east of Faisalabad) during the complete month of August every year. We follow this tradition since Pakistan's inception and it will continue till the world remains. I am talking of nearly ten years ago when I and my friends of Forman Christian College (FCC) decided to apply for the prestigious National College of Arts (NCA) in Lahore. On the way, we passed through an army recruitment office. Something attracted me about it but no one had any idea of a Sikh being allowed into Pakistan's military and affiliated institutions, I recalled. I got admission at the NCA but later on decided to visit the Army recruitment office individually to make inquiries. When I was told the rules didn't inhibit Sikhs from joining the army, I immediately asked about the prerequisites,

apparently arousing curiosity at the office about the "Sikh who wanted to join Pakistan Army". Like other patriotic stories, it pulled an irrepressible tug at the heartstrings.

Now my intent to join the ranks of Pakistan Army was pellucid but I kept this unusual decision buried in my heart and did not consult anyone. When people finally got to know, many of them tried to deter me from pursuing my ambitions and affections for the motherland. But how could they? They only thought of the highly misjudged extremist outlook of the country presuming that the army would never truly consider me as a part of it because of my religious beliefs. The biggest surprise, however, came from my mother who I initially thought would oppose my decision but turned out to be the only source of motivation at that time. She gave her consent and allowed me to go ahead in pursuit of my dreams. Being an elder son, she was initially worried about me joining the army but turned this weakness into strength, when she gave me a curt reply to my joke about continuing my degree instead of being in army after termination of first term at Pakistan Military Academy (PMA) Kakul that I would find doors closed upon returning home.

As I write, the memories of occasions that occurred during my tenure at different stations of posting, especially the experiences of my

deployment in the South Waziristan Agency (SWA) are flashing through my mind. For nearly three years from now, I landed myself in Spinikai Raghza (SKR), nearly 10 km from Jandola Fort at SWA along with my unit. I had a daunting task of inspiring and leading the soldiers. I tried to follow in the footsteps of inspirational Islamic leaders, who lead by personal example. The reaction of locals on seeing an officer of Pakistan Army wearing a turban was befittingly responded to. My actions reflecting my love for Pakistan was the key and the only reason that I survived in battle-hardened mountains of SWA.

Indeed, life in Pakistan Army has been challenging and specifically formidable for me owing to a distinct headress but not undoable. As I owe nationalism and patriotism the way my ancestors did at the time of partition, who preferred to stay put while showing high valued commitment to the land, I just followed. For me, Pakistan Army is a proud motherly institution that has never discriminated anyone on basis of religion, caste or creed. The only factor that prevails in Pakistan Army is 'love for Pakistan'. When I hear "Pakistan Zindabad", blood starts pumping in my veins as it does in any other Muslim Pakistani. The green and white shining on my uniform is the significant reason for me to live with pride and by far it is the only reason. ☒ ☒



# My Identity, My Pakistan

# My Identity, My Pakistan

**Commander Kamran  
Christy Munir**

**S**omewhere in the middle of last year while browsing through my facebook page something grabbed my attention. The picture and caption was tempting enough for a click and I read through the article. The caption read, "Pakistan One of the Most Dangerous Countries for Minorities". Belonging to a religious minority community, I felt compelling urge to read the article regardless of the contents therein, my experience in Pakistan and as Pakistan Navy (PN) Officer remain in sharp contrast. I deem myself to be an equal son of the soil, perhaps more, since I am a Naval Officer and have pledged to lay my life for the defence of my country. I feel like Lt/Nk Lalik Jan, Major Shabbir Sharif, Major Aziz Bhatti, Lieutenant Yasir Abbas of PN and all scores of other valiant sons of the nation whose ultimate sacrifice brought dignity and honour to the country. I, in one way find myself associated to them. In normal circumstances my reaction would have been to click the 'close' button, yet I chose to continue reading. In the end my opinion regarding my country and the Navy remained unchanged.

I come from a Christian family of Islamabad, as my father, a Ph.D in Chemistry, taught at the Quaid-i-Azam University. During my early education I always had inspiration to pursue the finest education and join an institution as prestigious as the one my father worked in. Much to the angst of my father, I announced to be interested in joining the PN at a tender age of 15. He never wanted his son to join the defence services. "It is not for us, son". 25 years later, his words still echo in my ears.

But despite my father's reservations, I joined PN on 8 August 1992. My apprehension of unequal treatment during the selection process proved wrong, and my father's too, as he proudly accompanied me to Karachi where I joined Navy's training unit PNS RAHNUMA. It has been 23 years since. Fears of persecution, unequal treatment, bias, harassment and maltreatment have all buried under the blanket of protection and non-partisan treatment of seniors, colleagues and subordinates with whom I serve and continue to serve in PN. PN not only fulfilled my dream of higher education but also filled me with pride of being a chosen one as I was selected for many appointments and duties which steadfastly proclaim a system based on merit only. During my career, I also got the honour to serve onboard PN frontline Destroyers. It is

indeed worth mentioning that I was nominated to undergo M.S based on my performance. I was selected and sent on secondment to a friendly Muslim state, Sultanate of Oman. I consider much honoured to have the privilege of being a national flag bearer in a foreign country for three years.

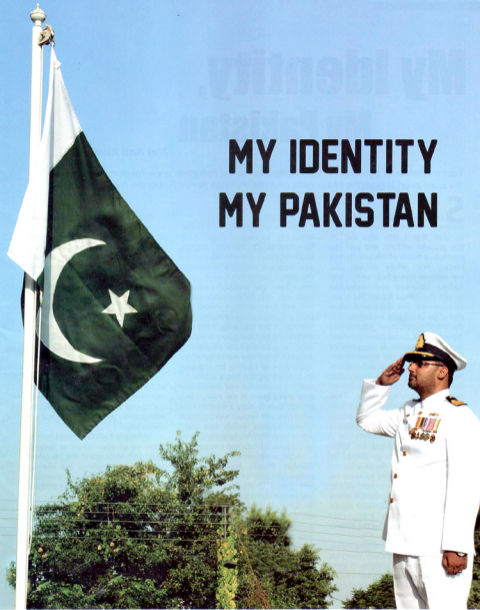
Today, I feel proud to serve in PN which has emerged as a key member of regional and global maritime coalitions through its professionalism and commitment.

The image of my country may be tarnished abroad because of some incidents, but these are exceptions only. I stand today as a symbol of equality of minorities in this country. I never felt any discrimination in the ranks and files and reaped rich rewards purely on performance and merit. At this critical juncture, when the Armed Forces are engaged in combating terrorism across Pakistan, I am reminded of the message of our founding father; hope, courage and confidence.

The honour of serving my motherland in white, the same colour which stands prominent in our flag, gives me the confidence of dwelling and prospering in my Pakistan and my Navy.

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# MY IDENTITY MY PAKISTAN



# My Identity, My Pakistan

**Maj Anil Kummar**

*I am a Hindu but I am Pakistani first; as my other fellow Pakistanis are – Pakistan binds us all in the same pearl irrespective of our caste or creed. Pakistan Armed Forces are my second identity.*

**S**ince childhood I was attracted towards military uniform. I used to wish that I may also put on this graceful uniform and join the prestigious family of Pakistan Armed Forces. With every passing day, my passion intensified, and I was further attracted and motivated to join the armed forces. But I was disappointed and depressed when one of my colleagues misled me that the minorities could not join Pakistan Armed Forces. Consequently, I chose to become a doctor as suggested by my parents. But my desire to join forces was never quenched. And one day, I got this pleasant information that there was no religious bar on minorities in joining Pakistan Army. I immediately applied for the post of GDMO (General Duty Medical Officer) despite the resistance from my parents/relatives as I had already completed my MBBS and was planning to go abroad for further studies. But my love for my motherland and desire to serve my people motivated me to join Pakistan Army as its the best institution where one can fulfill his passion with dignity and pride. Ultimately! I succeeded and my dream of wearing the elegant khaki came true.

Today, I feel distinguished, honoured and confident everyday when I put on the uniform. It gives me immense pleasure when I found my parents feel proud of me and the relatives who also wish to join the

Armed Forces.

When I got selected for Pakistan Army and received the call letter for training at Pakistan Military Academy Kakul, besides happiness I was extremely tensed with multiple thoughts in mind that how I would adjust there, how people there would treat me, etc. Finally, with strong will and motivation, I joined the PMA and successfully completed the training. In the beginning, I felt that the training was being very tiring and hard, but gradually I started enjoying it especially with the realization of the importance of training for changing an ordinary person into a soldier. It was the wonderful and memorable time that I spent at the PMA. I also proudly want to make a mention here – full care and respect was accorded to my religious beliefs and given ample opportunities to carry out my religious obligations and practices.


After completion of training at Pakistan Military Academy I was posted to CMH Malir. Thereafter, I was posted to Frontier Corps KPK, United Nations Peace Keeping Mission in Dafur (Sudan), and currently I am serving in Pakistan Air Force on secondment. I now have experience with the peoples of three different institutions i.e., Pakistan Army, Pakistan Air Force, and Frontier Corps KPK. I always found out that except for a small number of people, all others are welcoming, accommodative and respect other religions.

The unforgettable and worthwhile experience I ever had was my posting to FC KPK and then deployment with unit at Mirali, North Waziristan Agency for almost three and half years. Initially when this posting was announced, my colleagues at CMH Malir got little worried considering the active involvement of FC KPK in the operation against militants. They suggested me to initiate an application for change of posting or at least request to FC's authorities to place me at FC Headquarter, Peshawar. But I decided to move as per the orders. I had taken the oath to serve the motherland wherever and whenever told! I found FC troops extremely disciplined, cooperative, caring and mature. They were always willing to lay their life for me, and on my orders.

Serving in Pakistan Armed Forces provides an opportunity to defend and serve motherland like no other can do. Be it fighting the enemy, helping people in natural calamities all over the world or handling difficult law and order situations.

Pakistan Army is not just a profession; it is the way of life. It deeply inculcates the ethos of loyalty, discipline, selflessness, integrity and personal courage. Pakistan Army is the perfect specimen of Quaid's motto "Unity, Faith and Discipline".





# MY IDENTITY MY PAKISTAN



# Solutions in Innovations



Ali Moeen Nawazish

Be it internationally or locally, we need to make sure that we turn our own people into our future leaders and that we make sure we help them along the way, through research grants, programmes focusing on abilities of an entrepreneur, as well as allowing them a platform where they can compete with each other to showcase their ideas and help this nation innovate further where it can grow and become a superpower, altogether.

'Facebook turned me down. It was a great opportunity to connect with some fantastic people. Looking forward to life's next adventure.'

That tweet was made almost 6 years ago, in 2009, by Brian Acton. Today, he sits in his lavish house with himself being worth over \$20 billion. How did he manage to make that much money in a period of just six years? If we do the mathematics,

he approximately made \$3.3 billion every year since 2009. Now, let's find out as to how he did that.

Being rejected from the only opportunity that he felt had meant to be a part of didn't turn out exactly as he had hoped it would. Instead, he chose to do something on his own, with his own two hands and instead of working under someone else, taking orders and making money for

another firm, he chose to use this neglect and make something out of that. He became an entrepreneur of something which we all have lately grown to use and love the mobile application called WhatsApp. Just last year Brian Acton managed to sell WhatsApp to Facebook for over \$20 billion. Had Facebook hired him, would he have ever managed to be worth so much and/or get a

chance at redemption that he got when they turned him down? Would he have ever used the intellectual independence he was granted to make something from nothing and to make something of his own self? So if he can do something like that, one of our own, a Pakistani can do the same as well!

We owe a lot of inventions around us to creativity. We are blessed with a mind that enables us to ideally imagine a place where a specific need for ourselves is being fulfilled with relative ease and that allows us to also imagine and make a place where we can create something which does exactly the same thing. In the current climate of huge corporations, corporate raiders and conglomerates, it is very hard for someone to innovate and even harder to make sure that their innovation does not stray the course and remains as theirs. Therefore, in a country like ours, we need to make sure that steps are taken to protect our next breed of leaders who are going to make sure that they create, engineer, innovate and most importantly deliver in the face of adversity that we all have become accustomed to. It is absolutely imperative that we must promote the idea and the perception that we are the same, if not better, as others when it comes to imagination and mental strength. These steps range from entrepreneurial courses that we can offer to our next generation which helps them build their perception to the cause and polish and find their abilities which will help do something different and new. Apart from education, we must offer vocational training in the concept of entrepreneurs where we can make sure they are working under the supervision of visionaries which help them exploit their strengths and realize the potential to the fullest. Why are these foundations important?

According to Edward Lazear, an economist at Stanford University, found in a study in 2005, that a variety in education as well as work experience was one of the most important characteristic that distinguished entrepreneurs from

non-entrepreneurs.

It is painful to see that the IT sector in our country is blowing up. There is so much potential in this field as it links to many other disciplines such as defence, healthcare as well as communications. We need young people starting technical steps so that we can help our country take the leap from within and make sure these companies are part of a rising trend that our nation so valiantly desires.

The struggle that our country faces daily, as it screams silently in the darkness that surrounds them when the clock strikes the time and the light abandons us. The crumbling energy sector of our country is something that we all feel completely desolate about. Why don't we as individuals

The good thing about an idea is that an invention may become obsolete over a period of time, however, a good idea lives forever in the hearts and the minds of the people.

come up with ideas and solutions, be it hydro-power, solar power, wind energy, amongst others, why can we not come up with home-based cost effective power solutions and if not these, then perhaps we can surely come up with a way to halt and stop the wicked energy our country has been eroded with since the inception of time, it feels like.

Imagine the wonderful possibilities these new leaders can bring to the sector of healthcare. With advancements in the IT sector and the energy sector, why we cannot make sure that everyone has access to medical assistance wherever they may be, whether it is a mobile phone app, or an emergency suicide hotline for troubled teens, anything innovative will only help a country where life is not always guaranteed to have an easy path to freedom and/or creative

expression. Therefore, the possibilities are endless when it comes to what good innovation can bring to all these stated sectors of our nation.

Now all we must do is stand with our own people and make sure they get the resources and the promotion that they deserve. Be it internationally or locally, we need to make sure that we turn our own people into our future leaders and that we make sure we help them along the way, through research grants, programmes focusing on abilities of an entrepreneur, as well as allowing them a platform where they can compete with each other to showcase their ideas and help this nation innovate further where it can grow and become a superpower, altogether.

It always means so much more when you create something, whether it be an app or whether it be a new design for your phone cover, it doesn't matter because you are the engineer and you engineer it in a way that no one in this entire world would have or could have done. Innovation has never been faster than it is today, and probably will never reach a point again where every single day there are new inventions and new ideas. The good thing about an idea is that an invention may become obsolete over a period of time, however, a good idea lives forever in the hearts and the minds of the people. An entrepreneur is quite commonly seen an innovator, and a person who drives a sense of direction and maturity for a business over a period of time and during that time adapt to the strengths and weaknesses of that business. This requires a strong mind with ethical values and leadership qualities, but these are not characteristics that are absolutely essential and/or key to survive, but the will to determine and execute what your idea is and the risks that you are willing to take for your business in which you have poured your heart and soul is what it really comes down to in the end.



The writer is a columnist, educationist and entrepreneur. He also works on youth issues in Pakistan.



# 5 Years Since the Swat Deluge



Zubair Torwali

Had the Pakistan Army not been present in Swat then we would still have been walking miles to fetch some food. In the aftermath of the floods a man of Utror had to walk 70 kilometers to fetch the food for his family. In a period of four months the army in Swat was able to make a jeep track from Fatepur to Kalam in addition to the transport of food with the help of choppers.

The influx of a larger number of tourists and their vehicles this year to upper Swat; and consequently the misery and infliction of the tourists and the locals due to

rubble they call road took me five years back when Swat was worst hit by the floods in the last week of July 2010, the worst of its kind after the one happened in the First Century AD. The forest experts say where there grows deodar (Cedrus deodara) the monsoon doesn't happen there but when it gets there it brings nothing but devastation.

The Swat Valley has three natural landscapes namely the lower Swat, the upper Swat and the Swat-Kohistan. The local experts of weathers and seasons say monsoon doesn't occur in the lower Swat and Swat-Kohistan. The Lower Swat is the part from Landakey, where the district boundary meets with the Malakand Agency, to Charbagh including the Mingora City and the district headquarters, Saidu Sharif. The Upper Swat is beyond Chrabagh up to the town of Fatepur whereas the Swat-Kohistan is the narrow valley beyond Fatepur and includes the valleys of the tourist destinations, Madyan, Miandam, Bahrain and Kalam.

The local wisdom also guides us regarding floods and says when in Swat the summer rain falls on pockets there will be no imminent floods except a few cases of flash floods in the gorges which gets the more deluge. They are true as we often see the rainfall in Swat Valley usually in pockets — in some places there is intense rain whereas in other areas it remains dry. This is quite common in summer here in Swat.

But exactly five years back — on July 27, 28 and 29 in the year of 2010 — this was not the case. Then the entire Valley experienced a deluge of almost same intensity from Landakey to the hills of Kalam and Utror.

It was a very wet evening of July 27, 2010. I was at the home of one of my close friends in Bahrain. Cellular phones were still intact, and the electricity was also available because of the grid station near Madyan. By that evening the continuous rainfall had completed 15 hours and the tributaries of the Swat River had already gushed. The bridges over these streams were still standing but the powerful outflow beneath them had started dismantling them.

It was late in the evening when I got excessive calls from Kalam yelling, "Kalam was drowned". It was an obvious signal that the Swat-River beyond Kalam had flooded and the torrent would soon engulf each and everything downstream whether these were villages, bridges, roads, land or bazaars.

There was no forewarning of the floods in Swat as then the disaster management mechanism was virtually defunct. It was so after the 'rehabilitation' of damage done by the October Pakistan-India Earthquake in 2005 which had ravaged AJK, Islamabad and larger areas of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

Desperately I tried to send text and call friends in Islamabad and other cities. By then the electric infrastructure in the floods-hit areas was no longer functional. My good friends in Islamabad connected me to the US based Urdu radio which was perhaps the greatest source of both information and entertainment during the 'entertainment starved' years prior to the floods, during the high days of the Taliban in Swat.

My live conversation on the radio helped many locals in Swat-Kohistan know the havoc the floods were playing with us all.

The torrent grown more ferocious by the gushing tributaries of Mankiyal, Kamal, Gurnaal, Daral and Ulaal, came after devastating Kalam drowning everything on its way. It washed away the villages of Mankiyal, Kedam, Bahrain, Madyan, Damana, Qandeel and Piya in Swat Kohistan; along with damaging the road from Fatepur

to Utror—a road of 70 kilometers. Over hundreds suspension and other bridges were completely destroyed. Only a single bridge near the Ayeen village miraculously survived the floods. This was the main means of crossing the Swat River in the entire area. I was stranded at the friend's house for more than two months because my house is on the other side of the river.

These were the most torturing days for majority of the people of Swat. This and similar torrents in the Panjkora River, Chitral River, Kandhiya River et al went downstream disrupting the plains of Charsada, Nowshera and down to Punjab and Sindh. This year a similar torrent is being witnessed in the Chitral River but one hopes the other rivers, say tributaries of Kabul and Indus River, may not follow the course.

To hear the 'dagger floods' — floods in hilly areas come like a dagger cutting lands, hills and whatever comes in its way — is one thing but to actually experience is something more dreadful and reminds the poetic lines 'nature with bloody frets'.

I saw how multistory structures

Usually, Bahrain-Kalam road is repaired with mud prior to the high days of tourism in the area in summer but after that the locals are left in the lurch for the harsh and long winters. Thanks to Pakistan Army that it doesn't allow the road to be blocked by avalanches in winter otherwise it used to be blocked for months before. None but the Army also does the repairing work on the road in summer.

collapse. I witnessed how the beautiful mosque in Bahrain usually known as Rock Mosque collapse. I saw how gushing rivers wrestled at confluences.

It is now exactly five years since the severe deluge in Swat.

Whether Swat especially its beautiful part Swat-Kohistan has been fully restored is a question which still haunts us.

Had the Pakistan Army not been present in Swat then we would still have been walking miles to fetch some food. In the aftermath of the floods a man of Utror had to walk 70 kilometers to fetch the food for his family. In a period of four months the army in Swat was able to make a jeep track from Fatepur to Kalam in addition to the transport of food with the help of choppers.

A 24 kilometers portion of this road could only be reconstructed

last year with the assistance of the Asian Development Bank whereas the larger portion — from Bahrain to Kalam — is still in rubble. A total of 13 damaged schools were rebuilt just this year with the support of the Swiss Development Cooperation. Similarly a number of bridges were erected with the support of the UK department of international development (DFID). The latter has reportedly cut short its further assistance because of the 'too politicized dimension' of the bridgework. It is said the DFID did so because the political leaders want to leverage political mileage from the aid.

Usually, Bahrain-Kalam road is repaired with mud prior to the high days of tourism in the area in summer but after that the locals are left in the lurch for the harsh and long winters. Thanks to Pakistan Army that it doesn't allow the road to be blocked

by avalanches in winter otherwise it used to be blocked for months before. None but the Army also does the repairing work on the road in summer.

Given the tremendous tourism potential of the valleys of Kalam and Bahrain, there should have been two roads to the area on both sides of the Swat River beyond the town of Madyan. But given the cruel urban centered 'development' and the myriad callousness of the public offices the prospects of such a project is bleak; and to demand that is living in a fool's paradise even though Swat is a real 'paradise' to many like me.

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# Revival of Pakistani Cinema

Walking into the cinema theatre to watch a Pakistani film has become a significant choice considering the loopholes of Pakistani entertainment perceptions. The wow factor coming to light is the increase in the cinema going culture, which has shed light upon some of the brightest functions of the Pakistani film industry. Despite the fact that a large number of multiplexes had opened up only to show houses full of Indian films, it is now visible that Pakistani films tend to cover up daily schedules, which also remain house full even weeks after their release. Is this because of a trend or is this the revival of Pakistani cinema? The truth is that the hunger of Pakistanis for entertainment has never died, and wherever there is opportunity for satisfying this hunger, there is an abundance of appreciation by all and sundry. Thus, the 'merry-go-round' of the Pakistani film industry has once again spun in full speed, drilling into the cracks of dryness that had torn apart the interest of masses in local productions.

The way the cinema used to be a mere boondoggle for both the producers and the audience has changed like a butterfly coming out of a cocoon, after years of growth and development. As much as the Pakistani television drama industry has remained successful, the film industry is also glittering: being appreciated by the audiences, though both industries are growing due to completely different reasons. This acclamation is not simply meant for their mere presence, but both the genres are being appreciated for trying to serve an audience, which is not easily fooled.

However, the revival of the Pakistani cinema is a byproduct of a long run dry port of lacking creativity, though the new films being released seem to be taking a new turn.

However, similar to the randomness of the Pakistani fashion industry is the arbitrary development of the Pakistani film industry in terms of their themes and codes, which are working regardless of their strength and hold. Considering the newly released films, the content/story on display seem to have lost a grip on vitality, demand, structure, and ideology. Filmmakers have started making films for the heck of it, and as much as it sounds astonishing, this trend seems to be working well for the Pakistani cinema. Not all Pakistani films are as trashy as some may seem to be, but the truth is acceptance leads to formation. The day films like *Khuda Kay Liye* and *Bol* by Shoaib Mansoor and *Waar* by Bilal Lashari were released, the Pakistani cinema and the audience seemed to have been taken up by a fire and a want for innovation. One after another films started coming out, but as soon as

the Pakistani industry realized they had a chance to fool the audience for a mere monetary gain, films with item songs and the absurdity came up front. The silence broke when movies like *Na Maloom Afraad*, *Jalaibee*, and the very recent *Karachi say Lahore* included provocative dance numbers, more commonly referred to as 'item songs', and a specific rather large segment of the audiences flocked towards the cinemas to watch these performances. The filmmakers, when questioned on this need to copy Indian cinema in this regard, come to their defence stating that they prefer giving the mass audience what they anticipate and would like to see on the big screen. Whether or not this justification makes sense, but fact remains that this has done good to the overall Pakistani cinema and industry. More and more people have started heading towards cinemas to watch films with glamorous displays.

Having to believe that films made in Pakistan would have the same sound effects, the same video clarity, the same action, the same glamour and the same level of acting,



**Madeeha Raza**

which the Indian movies have had, is interesting. What is interesting is the manner in which Pakistani actors use Indian themes and codes to entertain the Pakistani audience, and what is intriguing is the longing, which the Pakistani audience feels for such shows. Calling the current state of the Pakistani cinema as a 'revival' seems

the execution is even worse in terms of production. The focus has been put on unnecessary elements, and not so much on the characterization or the performances per se, both of which lack depth, are very superficial, and fail to make an impression on the audience, except for one of the supporting cast who is the only star

all across Pakistan.

Even with all this 'revival of the Pakistani cinema' becoming talk of the town, I say that until every car has Pakistani film songs playing, instead of Indian, and we have produced a thousand actors like Shaan, our cinema has a long way to go keeping in mind the dullness it has remained



to be clouded for an industry that remained close to dead for a very long period of time, because the role of people like Waheed Murad, Nadeem, Shabnum, Rani, and Shamim Ara in their own way has kept the industry alive for decades. However, the turns, which this industry took in terms of storyline/plot, presentation, and distribution is what seems to be revived. But wherever there is smoke, there is a fire, and years after *Arman*, *Ayna*, *Chakori*, and *Bandish* went behind the curtains of memory, the fire of genuine entertainment dimmed and the smoke of mere performance began to hum. It seemed that hopes of seeing a sustainable and functioning Pakistani cinema had been blown away, but what is intriguing now is the new trend, which is driving it towards incorporating themes and codes, which are more bizarre and less genuine. This trend seems to be working well for the Pakistani cinema and the industry is booming with positive responses from people.

In terms of storyline, the film *Karachi say Lahore*, for instance, follows a very ordinary and predictable plot;

of the show with his one-liners and dialogue delivery. Where films like *Karachi say Lahore* and another recently released *Wrong No.* seem absurd, movies like *Shah* and *Moor* have won the hearts of many. In the recently released film *Shah*, the manner in which a real life story has been translated into a film with good characterization and commendable acting seems to be quite prominent. Though for many, the film does a terrible job in terms of its production, with many flaws in cinematography and sound, but the story stays with the audience as they exit the cinema house, and the message is not only meant for gaining attention but has an ideological function. *Moor* on the other hand gives the audience a great cinematic experience, with remarkable production and post, brilliant background score and songs, and an excellent storyline; however, where it lacks is in the characterization of characters, with some underlying loopholes in the plot. Nonetheless, all of these films have attracted audiences to the cinemas and have kept running full house for several weeks

in for decades. The producers and other stakeholders seem to be using this medium for paradigm shift, patriotism, and even propaganda, besides basic entertainment by focusing on the significant dimensions of plot, dialogue, and action in different ways, some of which could be improved. If the current stance of the Pakistani film industry has stirred an overwhelming response, what is essential is the dive into the future. Even though there may not be a complete shift from Indian cinema, but people can be lured into the true essence of Pakistani talent by incorporating genuine ideas and themes for display.



The writer is a professional documentary filmmaker.  
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nation that is the Pakistan Army. We the citizens of Pakistan owe  
our lives and safety each day with every sunrise and the promise  
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# HILAL

THE PAKISTAN ARMED FORCES' MAGAZINE

1965-2015 GOLDEN JUBILEE A TRIBUTE TO THE MARTYRS OF PAKISTAN 1965-2015 GOLDEN JUBILEE A TRIBUTE TO THE MARTYRS OF PAKISTAN 1965-2015 GOLDEN JUBILEE



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THE MARTYRS  
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