

## **Pakistan's strategic interaction with peripheral states: the regional power fulcrum during 1958-1971**

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Pakistan joined Western defence pacts in 1954-55. It adhered to these pacts rather firmly till 1956, when the Suez Canal crisis posed it a serious challenge as to whether to take side with the Arab world or the Western allies. Nevertheless, the Suez Crisis did open up for Pakistan new avenues to drift away from the West and initiate a revised concentration on its own peripheral States. If the Suez Crisis was one of the factors for this shift, the fear of Communism had also started receding, mainly because of the ideological refocusing by the Soviet leadership after Marshal Stalin. Pakistan was, therefore, ready by 1958 to readjust its primary policy focus on the principle of giving top priority to Pakistan's vital self-interests.

It is worth stressing that the policy of alliance with the West, and particularly with the United States, had brought some benefits for Pakistan. The U.S. financial assistance in different fields, from 1947 to 1965, was up to the tune of \$ 3 billion. The military aid acquired by Pakistan from the same source till the U-2 incident in May 1960 amounted approximately to \$ 1.5 billion. Before the American aid, which started pouring in after 1954, Pakistan's defence was virtually in the hands of India. But, in early 1957, Pakistan's Commander-in-Chief General Ayub Khan could declare confidently: "We are no more short of men and material ... If we are to hit a target today, it will not be the same tomorrow." Later, in 1958, he announced that Pakistan's army was now the "sharpest instrument of peace or war and the greatest deterrent against aggression."

In spite of all such substantial advantages, however, the policy of alliance never bestowed real benefits upon Pakistan. In the first instance and as a consequence of the Suez Crisis, the whole Arab world, particularly Egypt and Saudi Arabia, criticized Pakistan's alliance and did not appreciate Muslim Pakistan's playing with the Western imperialist powers.

As regards Pakistan's own vital interests, the first Pakistani complaint against alignment was that military stability, though assured considerably by the U.S. aid, could not ensure the country's equilibrium with India. Defence expenditures were still as strenuous on the economy as ever before and remained appallingly high, touching 86 per cent of the national exchequer even during the period of alignment.

In contrast, India, the rival of Pakistan, still had a clear edge in this regard. Foreign aid to India, though mostly economic, could not be hampered. It rather increased since Pakistan's alliance in 1954. The financial aid received by India from Pakistan's ally, the United States, showed a sudden spur from \$ 92.8 million in 1956 to \$ 364 million in 1957. On the other hand, the assistance received by Pakistan from the same source, and in the same period, nominally increased from \$ 162.5 million to \$ 170.7 million. The help from the Soviet bloc to India after 1954 was relatively more. During 1955-58, it was \$ 219 million; while Pakistan refrained from accepting aid from that quarter especially in this period. According to another assessment, between July 1, 1954 and June 30, 1964, it was over \$ 1.011 billion to India, showing a tremendous difference with the \$ 10 million Soviet assistance accepted by Pakistan up till 1964. When the aid grants of the two super powers combined, India's purchasing capability shot up; and, thus, the economic and military balance in the subcontinent was by all means tilted to Pakistan's disadvantage.

Nor was the same friendship of Pakistan with the United States appreciated by many Pakistanis at the grass-root level. It was felt that the U.S. aid policy served India's interests alone, and represented the general pro-India stance of the Pentagon. This outlook about the United States was retained even in the later period of President John Kennedy. In India, on the contrary, an alarm was sounded over the growing Pak-U.S. understanding. Prime Minister Nehru accused Pakistan of bringing the Cold War to the subcontinent.

Consequently, towards the end of the 1950s, Pakistan appeared to be disenchanted with the United States of America. In 1958, there was a strong demand in the National Assembly of Pakistan that the foreign policy of the country should be given a revised thought to streamline it in conformity with its vital self-interests by gradually acquiring neutrality in bipolar politics.

About the Communist bloc, towards 1957-58, the Soviets seemed to be making tremendous strides, sufficient to attract a developing State like Pakistan. They had been

successful in launching their Sputnik-I in October 1957; and also demonstrated their capability to make an equally impressive economic and technological breakthrough. These achievements were supplemented by the 'balance of terror' attained by the Soviets vis-à-vis their American rivals. Hence, on account of the Soviet advancements, the United States was no more the chief aid-giving super power to depend on.

If since 1954 the United States could be acknowledged as a 'balancer' for Pakistan against India, the Soviet Union had emerged as a 'counter-balancer' in the world scenario in competition with the U.S.A. Likewise, prior to Pakistan's joining the Baghdad Pact in 1955, the Soviet policy on Kashmir had been one of neutrality, and was retained despite Liaquat's visit to the U.S.A. in 1950. But, after that, Soviet officials started criticizing Pakistan's policy of alliance and extended their support to India on Kashmir and to Afghanistan on 'Pakhtunistan'. The Soviet indignation was evidenced when, for example, they vetoed almost every Security Council resolution, especially the one in 1957, which supported Pakistan's viewpoint of holding a plebiscite in Kashmir. The Kashmir issue was, thus, put in jeopardy mainly because of the Soviet vetoes during 1955-57.

#### Policy maximization

As such, the year 1958 set in a new crucial phase of policy-fixation in Pakistan's foreign affairs. To quote Arif Hussain, in 1956, Foreign Minister Feroz Khan Noon presented a novel perception of fixing priorities in this regard. He conceptualized foreign policy foci by distinguishing between the ideological and strategic interests of Pakistan. His unique proposal contained three conceptual parameters - Pak-Islamism, Two-Nation Theory, and Pan-Islamism - identified respectively on priority bases as explained below:

Priority: I      Pak-Islamism: more strategic than ideological, as it portrayed Pakistan's Islamic self-image and laid a special emphasis on achieving its vital strategic interests by relying upon any potential power abroad (not necessarily the Western powers); a concept of making Pakistan a model progressive Islamic State, pursuing an independent foreign policy befitting its prestige and potential.

Priority: II Two-Nation Theory: both ideological and strategic, as it pertained to counter adequately hegemonic and aggressive designs of India against the vital national interests of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan.

Priority: III Pan-Islamism: primarily ideological, as it was meant for nurturing Muslim brotherhood and cooperation in the world of Islam.

To illustrate these three fundamentals, we should recall that Martial Law was imposed in Pakistan in October 1958. General Ayub Khan initially held office as the Chief Martial Law Administrator, and then was installed as the President of Pakistan till 1969. A brief profile of President Ayub is in place here to identify him as an outstanding strategist possessing leadership qualities and administrative skills needed to introduce rationality in Pakistan's domestic and foreign policies.

First and foremost, Ayub Khan was a Sandhurst-trained soldier of pro-Western traits, who conveniently shared the Westernized outlook of many intellectuals of Pakistan. Secondly, he held the post of Commander-in-Chief for seven long years (1951-58). In this capacity, he worked in close liaison with the prime ministers of the past and also held the defence portfolio. Thirdly, his being in command of the armed forces, as well as a close associate of the civil and military bureaucracies, enabled him to assert his personal viewpoint in policy-making more effectively than anyone else in Pakistan. Fourthly, he was the chief architect of Pakistan's policy of alliance with the West, and had the authority to approve enormous military expenditures borne by Pakistan in the wake of foreign threat.

Apart from that, Ayub Khan enjoyed a privileged position in Pakistan's politics. For instance, when the (British-oriented) bureaucratic government of Malik Ghulam Mohammad dismissed the First Constituent Assembly in 1954, it was mostly done under his influence. Then, he was fortunate enough to be the Commander-in-Chief during 1951-58, as against the seven prime ministers changed in the same seven years. Similarly, in spite of the fact that his tenure of office was due to expire in 1959, the bureaucratic President Major-General Sikandar Mirza had extended it even before the imposition of martial law in October 1958. As such, Ayub Khan was the most outstanding C-in-C during 1951-58, and then the sole dominant leader of Pakistan in the ensuing period of 1958-69.

In the sphere of politics, a military ruler of Ayub Khan's stature was also an admirer of Pakistan's Islamic ideology, indeed not in a conservative fashion. Being a liberal Muslim leader, he had a strong conviction in the strategic importance of Islamic ideology as a source of national integration in a bifurcated Pakistan, physically split apart by over 1,000 miles of hostile enemy State (India). Accusing the feudalistic cliques supporting corrupt politicians and their political parties, Ayub blamed all of them for the degeneration in Pakistan's national fibre. In his contention, people of Pakistan did not possess a well groomed political culture, fit for Westernized democracy. Rather, they needed 'instructed' democratic activities under the authoritative control of the policy-makers at the Centre. From this standard of 'democratic-centralism', he uprooted the traditional parliamentary structures of British-orientations, and replaced them with a novel presidential system mostly devoid of checks-and-balances. The policy-making of Ayub's period was, therefore, not essentially democratized. It was in the main personalized, authoritative and a one-man show; reducing the National Assembly to the status of a mere rubber-stamp for formal approvals.

However, in the sphere of foreign relations, President Ayub Khan did adopt policy -maximization by fixing Pakistan's priorities in view of his past observations, and probably in conformity with what the former foreign minister, Malik Feroz Khan Noon, had suggested in 1956 after the Suez Crisis. This approach of Ayub Khan, in the first place, facilitated the replacement of sentimentalism in Pakistan's politics with rationalism; and then, it allowed him fixing of foreign policy dimensions more in Pakistan's own periphery.

## China

Soon after Ayub Khan's political ascendancy in 1958, some specific developments had been taking shape during 1959-62. For instance, Communist China had demonstrated rapid advancement in the decade of 1950s, which enabled that emerging Communist giant to challenge India in a border conflict over Tibet in 1959. Interestingly, the fear of Communism in Pakistan, which had subsided after the death of Marshal Stalin of USSR, was revived. China now appeared to be a potential Communist giant making headway with relatively three times more power than India. Although Pakistan was not the direct target, it got the hint and wanted to take necessary precautions, tactfully and carefully, to evade the revised charge of allowing Cold War in the region.

Therefore, the choice for it at that time was to prevent the Communist onslaught of any denomination in the subcontinent. Feeling the commonality of threat, Pakistan wanted help from neighbouring India, the immediate target of China. President Ayub Khan offered a joint Indo-Pakistan defence pact to Prime Minister Nehru to contain the 'danger from the North'. But the latter preferred to turn it down on the plea that, as long as Pakistan was allied to the West, joint defence virtually meant India's adherence to the Western-sponsored CENTO and SEATO. The Chinese government, on its part, astonishingly inquired from Pakistan about the purpose of its making such a proposal against friendly China, and the Chinese press castigated Pakistan's foreign policy. Hence, a rebuff from both India and China placed President Ayub in a dilemma: 'joint Indo-Pakistan defence against whom'?

Nevertheless, in late 1960, a new proposition also came under consideration in Pakistan's official circles. That was to do with the possibilities of an Islamic State's relations with the Communist world. By 1958, the Soviet Union had emerged as a super power having the capability to compete with the U.S.A. in a global environment. Pakistan's continuous unfriendliness to the U.S.S.R. could have minimized the chances of aid and assistance from that quarter. On the other hand, China was currently entangled in a border conflict with India. The Western powers, in spite of their commitments to assist Pakistan against a Communist threat, would have found themselves in danger of entanglement; and, thus, the crisis on the subcontinent could escalate into a larger war beyond Pakistan's control.

It was, therefore, earnestly felt by the Pakistani decision-makers of the time, particularly foreign minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, that antagonism with the Communist powers was of no use. In their normal practice, "States deal with States and not with their ideologies or social systems." Consequently, the most discernible course for Pakistan was to do business with the Soviet Union and China.

President Ayub Khan did adopt this pragmatic approach in the 1960s, when his government initiated bilateralism in Pakistan's foreign policy despite persistent multilateralism because of Cold War in the world. He tried to combine 'relative commitments' to the West with better relations with the East. For example, bonds of fraternity between Pakistan and the U.S.A. had already been strengthened when a Pak-US (Bilateral) Security Agreement was signed in 1959. This treaty reassured the U.S. commitment for Pakistan's defence, though with a revised emphasis on foreign threat and not specifically on the communist threat. Later, in 1961, foreign minister Manzoor Qadir expressed his satisfaction over the progress made in the talks to demarcate the Sino-Pak border and said that Pakistan had 'very cordial relations' with China. The

Sino-Pak Border Agreement was finally concluded in October 1962, and was signed between the two countries on March 2, 1963.

Besides readjustments of territories, the most striking feature of the border agreement was that China not only reaffirmed Pakistan's ideological claim on Kashmir, but also helped revitalize this country's strategic defence requirements. In addition to that, the strategic Karakoram Highway, the construction of which was initiated in 1959, was co-sponsored by the two countries and finalized in the early 1970s, followed by many more high-value projects of mutual assistance and cooperation, specifically in the fields of defence and resource management.

U.S.S.R.

In the official calculations of the Soviet Union, these Pakistani gestures towards China were an important development. Pakistan of the past (1950s) used to be a conservative Islamic State that projected its fears about Communism. But, Pakistan of the 1960's, on the contrary, had demonstrated a breakthrough by throwing away the fear of Communism in the case of China. Therefore, the Soviets in their calculated move were themselves ready to do business with Pakistan. It was a sign of such moderation in the divergent outlooks of Pakistan and the Soviet Union that Pakistan's Foreign Minister was able to break the news in January 1961 that his government had no objection in permitting the Soviet Union to replace the Western companies exploring oil in the country. Dawn newspaper commented:

"... We are happy to find that the wind of change has begun to blow, though even so gently, in the wake of the signs of disenchantment." Then in March the same year, Pakistan signed a \$ 30 million loan agreement with the Soviet Union, which was not merely the first formal commitment with the U.S.S.R. but also the first concrete evidence of Pakistan's taking steps in the direction of improved relations with that Communist super power. That was followed by many trade pacts with several other States as well in the Communist world. Similarly, President Ayub visited America during the Sino-Pak friendship period; but he signed the Indo-Pak Tashkent Declaration of January 1966 in the Soviet Union.

India

Many Pakistanis look on India as a hostile State. They have the fear that the Indian hegemonic designs since 1947 are mostly based on Nehru's self-styled doctrine of "India is a paramount State," and that, with the British withdrawal, the Indian government had inherited all powers. Therefore, all decisions about South Asia should be taken in New Delhi. Consequently, the Pakistanis believe that the Indian decision-makers are rigidly adamant and hostile vis-à-vis Pakistan and the Kashmir issue. However, in the period after 1958, certain developments affected India's regional status and enabled Pakistan to revise its stand towards that enemy neighbour. Previously, during the 1950s, Prime Minister Nehru of India did foresee the rise of China and believed that it could be detrimental to his own country's national interests. On that account, he tactfully attempted cordiality with that emerging Communist neighbour by raising the slogan of: "Hindi-Chinese Bhai Bhai". The inherent motive of Nehru in this approach was perhaps to bind China in the bonds of friendship, lest it might dare to pose a threat to India.

But, hard luck for Nehru, China did pose a threat to India on Tibet in 1959, which culminated in an all-out Sino-Indian war in 1962. That resulted in India's humiliating defeat at the hands of China. The dream of India to dominate in South Asia was frustrated, and to its utter disappointment; China was now a rising power having counter-balancing potentials. By virtue of that, China in the decade of 1960s could be acknowledged as an 'extra-area actor'.

Taking note of this development, President Ayub streamlined his foreign policy. To recall, it was in the same period that Pakistan leaned towards China, though after strengthening its bilateral ties with America. Evidently, therefore, his policies could have the support of U.S.A. as well, especially when the choice for Pakistan was either to support India when it stood humiliated, or to lean towards China. Obviously, a strategist of Ayub's calibre decided to do business when he acquired a calculated policy of treating the strategic self-interests with India separately from the ideological. The strategic issues could be resolved by mutual understanding or by third-party mediation. The ideological issues, on the other hand, were intricate and unresolved for India's intransigence. They required a broader compromise between the two divergent outlooks of Pakistan and India. By distinguishing between the strategic and ideological issues, as we shall see, Ayub Khan gave secondary importance to Kashmir, assuming it as an intricate issue to be resolved at some later convenient stage.

The most outstanding issue of strategic importance between the two countries was the Indus water dispute. That related to sharing the Indus irrigational water system, the best



natural network in the world, totalling a flow of water twice that of Nile. The system comprised the River Indus itself plus various tributaries, namely: the Jhelum, the Chenab, the Ravi, the Setluj, and the Bias. The partition of 1947 cut across the whole system. Consequently, the last tributaries now flowed into Pakistan through India, making Pakistan not only the lower riparian State but dependent on India for its agriculture. Pakistan felt the hardship when India stopped the supply of water from the same tributaries for the first time on April 1, 1948.

Shutting down of water, though temporarily, was alarming for Pakistan's very survival and indicated an inevitable threat to its vast agricultural lands. Thus, Indus waters were strategic for Pakistan, maintaining the life-line of its agriculture. But since the rivers mostly flowed from the disputed area of Kashmir under Indian occupation, the matter remained pending as a part of the perceivable package for Kashmir settlement agreed upon by the two countries. In other words, in Pakistan's national perception, the Indus waters dispute was a part of the Kashmir dispute. Once the Kashmir dispute was settled in Pakistan's favour, the waters would flow into Pakistan uninterrupted. However, that was a dream of many Pakistanis which had yet to come true when the new environment started taking shape after 1958.

Luckily, in 1960, through the auspices of both the World Bank and the United States, President Ayub Khan's government successfully manoeuvred a settlement with India over the strategic issue of river waters' distribution. According to the settlement, known as the Indus Basin Treaty, Pakistan accepted India's right over the waters of three of the tributaries crossing the Indo-Pakistan border. To evade the threat of devastation to its fertile lands, Pakistan also took the responsibility of constructing several dams and link canals in its territory, so that the surplus water flowing into the sea could be stored and utilized. The total expenditures incurred in the entire project were one billion dollars, out of which Pakistan and India financed a part while the remaining about 70 per cent was contributed by many Western countries, especially the United States.

However, apart from the strategic Indus waters issue which was of great significance, many other issues can be cited as areas where India and Pakistan cooperated despite Pakistan's ideological identity, e.g.: Liaquat-Nehru Pact of 1950, and border disputes including Runn of Kutch (1965-66), as well as the Tashkent Declaration of 1966 and Simla Agreement of 1972.

Coming to Kashmir, India made this ideological issue a prestige matter, a symbol of its so-called 'secular' self-identity, on which no concessions were to be given to the Islamic State of Pakistan. For that, Kashmir, a Muslim-majority area, always remained a bone of contention between the two States and was on the top of the list of their unresolved issues. Despite the commitments of both Prime Minister Nehru and Lord Mountbatten that Maharaja's so-called accession to India was temporary and a final settlement would be made as per the wishes of Kashmiris, New Delhi, mostly in collusion with the British government of Lord Attlee, made Kashmir a most tricky case, right from the beginning. For example, even from the time of Nehru, the Indian government persistently tried to convince the Indian communal hardliners (the Hindu fanatics and their parties) that India took Kashmir as a 'miniature Pakistan', a political and military stronghold which denied Pakistan's Islamic ideology and vindicated India's 'secularism'.

For many Pakistanis, however, Kashmir was very near and dear to this Islamic State; near in geographical contiguity and dear in cultural affinity, according to Allama Iqbal's vision. Therefore, by all considerations, both historical and geographical, Kashmir belonged to Pakistan. It was even a part of the Pakistan movement, and so should have been incorporated in Pakistan on the communal principle of partition. Hence, Kashmir was an 'unfinished agenda' of 1947. In response to this national aspiration, the official stand in Pakistan since 1947 had been that a workable solution of the Kashmir problem was not in any legal accession as the one sought by India, but in granting the Kashmiris their birth right to self-determination, through a free and fair plebiscite held under U.N. Security Council resolutions.

Although the official approach in favour of plebiscite did persist in almost all the decades, some deviations were also visible in the same. For instance, mostly because of the India's strong hold on occupied Kashmir, the Pakistani officials appeared to have acquired a pragmatic approach in their Kashmir policy. Besides a demand for plebiscite (Muslim Kashmir for Muslim Pakistan), they added to their claim that Kashmir was not just an ideological issue, rather it also had some strategic importance for Pakistan. This strategic importance included geographical, military and economic elements (Kashmir as 'Shahrug') . Upon which, the foreign press (e.g.: The Times) reported that Pakistan might accept partition of Kashmir by reverting from its demand for a plebiscite.

Mostly in view of these trends of the past, soon after his coming to power in 1958, President Ayub neither insisted much on the ideological significance of Kashmir nor on holding a plebiscite there. Specifically in 1962, he endorsed the views of the foreign press when he said that a settlement of Kashmir was vital for Pakistan in two respects. First, most of the rivers in Pakistan, strategically indispensable for its economic survival, originated from Kashmir; and second, once the dispute was settled, the military strains on Pakistan placed by the presence of the Indian army in Kashmir, could be released.

However, in spite of that apparent shift in Pakistan's original support for a plebiscite, the sentiment of Kashmir's being a part of Pakistan never receded in Pakistan's national thinking. Even in response to the aforesaid foreign press news, the national press criticized Pakistan government vehemently, and accused it of bargaining with India. In three of its successive editorials, Dawn, for instance, pleaded that a plebiscite in Kashmir was honourable, rightful and non-negotiable. A former prime minister, Mohammad Ali Bogra, did contradict such news items, and reiterated that government of Pakistan was committed to the end, to the Kashmiri right to self-determination.

As for the conservative reactionaries in Pakistan, they endorsed the stand taken by the civilian prime minister of the past. When martial law was lifted in 1962, they expressed their indignation by accusing President General Ayub Khan of bargaining on Pakistan's ideology to Communist China and enemy India. That was evidenced when forty-four leading conservative leaders protested on Ayub's 'un-Islamic' and 'anti-Pakistan' policies. They were arrested in January 1963. Interestingly, the public in general supported the conservative elites insofar as India was concerned; but, at the same time, they approved Ayub's China policy despite its apparently being in conflict with the common man's anti-Communist sentiments.

About the world-wide pan-Islamism, which we listed as the third priority in Ayub Khan's policy-formulation, this sentiment was exceptionally high in Pakistani thinking, especially during 1949-57. However, Ayub Khan gave a new impetus to it. He believed that the Muslim nations, particularly the Arabs in the Middle East, were kept involved in their problems with the colonial powers; whereas Pakistan had its own confrontation with India. Evidently, Islamic nationalism, according to Ayub, was no longer the motivating force for unity in the Muslim world. It had been replaced with Arab or territorial nationalism. In order to defeat the alien conspiracies and to weld the Muslim nation's together, economic unity (if not political unity) should be aimed at. This view of Ayub Khan had mainly developed in response to the Suez Crisis of 1956, when he was the C-in-C of Pakistan, as well as in response to at least one of the suggestions of media in the same period that the people of Pakistan should recognize the fact that "for the present, they were the lone torch bearers of the Islamic ideals."

Fortunately, a strategist of Ayub's stature was successful in 1964 in evolving an economic formula for Muslim unity - the Regional Cooperation for Development (the RCD: a 'miniature' regional pan-Islamic unit). Not surprisingly, the two Muslim partners of Pakistan in the U.S.-sponsored CENTO, Iran and Turkey, joined hands with Ayub in this non-political and non-military project of economic significance. The doors for other Muslim nations were kept open to join in.

However, as mentioned earlier, the preceding decade of the 1950s was one of mounting Indian threat to Pakistan's security for which it joined the Western military pacts. This policy of alliance pursued by Pakistan had not only earned it the blame of allowing Cold War in South Asia, but also had antagonized India, the Soviet Union, and even the culturally akin Middle East. But, luckily, the decade of 1960s witnessed the prospects of a decrease in the same threat environment for Pakistan; specifically when this Islamic State could do business with the Communist giants and the Soviet Union in particular appeared to be responding favourably.

More noteworthy was India's declining status in this period. As a consequence of the Sino-Indian war of 1962, mentioned earlier, Pakistan did gain diplomatic leverage when China emerged as an 'extra-area actor'. But, the military balance was disturbed in South Asia to Pakistan's disadvantage when the Western great powers and the Soviet Union extended enormous aid to India to counter China. It was estimated that during the 1950s, the U.S.A. had been playing the role of a 'balancer' for Pakistan by giving arsenals in the ratio of 1:3 to Pakistan and India, respectively. But, in the wake of Sino-Indian war, this ratio was dangerously tilted to 1:5 against Pakistan. Pakistan did lodge a strong protest against this military imbalance, on the plea that the weapons provided to India would be used against its security.

The Indo-Pakistan war of September 1965 provided such evidence, when all the great powers and the super powers, having their traditional bias in favour of India, appeared to be apprehensive about the rise of China and its leaning towards Pakistan. Mostly, to keep Pakistan away from China, they were either friendly or at least neutral to Pakistan's advantage. Nevertheless, India's main objective in the war of 1965 appeared to be restoring its prestige and dominant status lost in the Sino-Indian war of 1962. On that account, India started contemplating to wage a war with weaker Pakistan soon after 1962.

Such adventurism, if materialized, could have manifold advantages for the policy-makers in New Delhi. Initially, by solving the 'Pakistan problem', they could solve the Kashmir problem once and for all, and attain their cherished goal of India's preponderance. Then, the ruling Congress party, otherwise frustrated from defeat by China, could hopefully win the forthcoming general elections scheduled for 1967.

President General Ayub Khan's military strategy suggested, in the first place, that Pakistan should resist Indian aggression in self-defence, despite the latter's military superiority. Then, there should be a localized war in Kashmir, not an all-out war, to keep India engaged in that mountain region alone. Moreover, Pakistan should avail this opportunity to get the Kashmir dispute settled with India on the principle of 'Now or Never'. Once India regained its power after humiliation from China or attained nuclear capability as foreseen, Kashmir would never be settled. Viewed from this standpoint, the Runn of Kutch was a testing ground prior to the September war, where military confrontation between the two contestants had demonstrated Pakistan's improved defence potentials, despite India's much enhanced offensive capabilities. The other plus points, relevant to Pakistan's regional power status before the war in 1965, included: China's being on its side; and, the great powers including the Soviet Union having no more direct involvement.

But, the course of events relevant to the war of 1965 had many positive and negative repercussions for both Pakistan and India. For instance, President Ayub's military strategy of keeping it a 'Kashmir war' did not work. As declared by Prime Minister Shastri, it was an all-out war with India having the option to open up fronts of its own choice. Likewise, from the defence point of view, it proved to be an ill-planned war for Pakistan. Only West Pakistan was well-fortified, leaving East Pakistan defenceless. Therefore, being frustrated on the Western front, India indicated its intention to open new fronts in East Pakistan for an overall encirclement and total defeat of Pakistan. Mostly in response to this kind of situation, China intervened by giving an ultimatum to India in the midst of the War.

Hence, General Ayub Khan's statement that the defence of East Pakistan lay in West Pakistan proved out to be futile and deceptive. Consequently, India was deterred from escalating aggression; East Pakistan in particular was saved because of China's involvement; and Pakistan could not be defeated despite India's penetration across the international borders. The calculations of the Western powers and the Soviet Union were that China was now in a position to intervene in the South Asian affairs from Pakistan's side. Had China not given an ultimatum to India, Pakistan would not have been capable of resisting India's all-out attack on both the fronts, East and West Pakistan.

This posture of the super powers, obviously detrimental to Pakistan's vital self-interests, was perceivable, especially so long as they had adopted detente in the wake of Cuban Crisis and now took China as an emerging common enemy in the East and in the vicinity of U.S.S.R. and South Asia. Obviously, therefore, both the super powers were now directly involved in South Asia and adopted a unified approach that China must be checked. Mostly on that account, the Security Council debates were restricted to the restoration of peace and initiation of talks between Pakistan and India, though without any clear emphasis on Kashmir settlement which was otherwise a cherished goal in President Ayub's policy framework. As far as the Security Council was concerned, peace was restored on September 23 through a cease-fire.

But, for the talks, the only option was third-party negotiations either through the United States or the Soviet Union. The option of the U.S.A. could not be acceptable to India for its opposition to the same super power in the Cold War politics. The second option of the Soviet Union's mediation was therefore more acceptable, especially for the following reasons: that the Communist power had traditional friendship with India; it had acquired neutrality in the War of 1965 to Pakistan's advantage, Pakistan should avail of this opportunity by depending on it, and India was willing to adhere to third-party mediation, especially so long as the ideological issue of Kashmir was left out and only the restoration of peace was to be negotiated. One should recall that India had already accepted third-party mediation on Indus waters (non-ideological) dispute in 1960.

The Tashkent Declaration of January 1966 was, thus, a planned tactic of the two super powers for specific advantages of their own. Even more specific it was for the Soviet Union, as it was signed on the Soviet soil. In the first place, it could relegate China into the background. Secondly, it could force Pakistan to seek regional solutions for its regional problems. It could also be tantamount to relegating the United Nations to a secondary position as a forum for resolving Indo-Pakistan conflicts. And, thirdly, it could ensure peace with Pakistan while at the same time enhancing the focus on India and the Soviet Union. Consequently, by the middle of the 1960s, the Soviets were now the 'custodians of peace' in the region, though by alienating China and driving the burning issue of Kashmir into the 'cold-storage' of the United Nations. Mostly on that account, many Chinese called the Tashkent summit as the 'notorious' conference engineered by the enemies of China to make a 'joint defence against China'. The official protest of Beijing condemned it as 'conspiracy of the super powers against China.'

Nevertheless, this aspect of the Indo-Soviet upper hand in South Asian affairs was indeed detrimental to Pakistan's vital strategic interests. The war of 1965 was a

remarkably unified 'crusade' of the Pakistani government, army and the people, as a result of which almost 5,000 square miles of Indian territory were under Pakistan's control. President Ayub's image in Pakistan of a strong hero was much played up the government agencies as well as the national media, drawing wide-spread public support. But after the Tashkent Declaration, the same image of a national hero was distorted when riots broke out all over the country and Ayub was blamed by the masses for losing the war diplomatically which had been otherwise won by the army in the battlefield. The high tempo of 'crusade' in Pakistan was hence frustrated. Especially for many Pakistanis, including the conservative hardliners, it was a Kashmir war and India was not forced to vacate the disputed territory in spite of Pakistan's having better scores in terms of game of war. From the Indian standpoint, Kashmir was secured from Pakistan, and thus in its overall perspective the war was a victory for India.

The decline of General Ayub Khan's regime was, therefore, inevitable in the ensuing years. That took its course when, immediately after the war and Tashkent Declaration, Sheikh Mujibur Rehman of Awami League in East Pakistan formally tabled his party's controversial Six-Point Formula before the Government in Islamabad for East Pakistan's unlimited autonomy. Apart from the ingredients of the Formula, one of the accusations of Sheikh Mujibur Rehman was that the Central Government had failed to defend East Pakistan. Instead, it was China, an external power, which had saved the Bengalis through its ultimatum to New Delhi. The Central Government in Islamabad, Mujib further blamed, earned national revenue and had been boastfully claiming that East Pakistan's prosperity was linked with West Pakistan. Even military fortification of West Pakistan could be a bulwark for East Pakistan against the enemy.

However, what can be inferred from this is that the war of 1965 was a disastrous event in Pakistan's history. It was an ill-planned war; Kashmir could not be liberated from the Indian occupation which was strategically the most vital target of Pakistan. As a consequence, Pakistan moved rapidly towards its national disintegration in the form of political chaos culminating in the rise of Mujibur Rehman in East Pakistan, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto in West Pakistan and the fall of President Ayub Khan's regime in 1969.

The lesson of the war of 1965 received by the Indian strategists was that, despite India's military might, Pakistan could not be inflicted a total defeat mainly because of the external support to it from China. This multiplied Sino-Pakistan threat, in their contention, was unprecedented in the past decades and was utterly alarming for India's security. The fear of Sino-Pakistan collaboration haunted many Indians since the Sino-Indian War of 1962. Pakistan was already allied to the West. The military experts in India, therefore, took the mid-1960s scenario in South Asia as the growth of a 'U.S.-China Axis'. They were inevitably led to contemplate any future military onslaught

against Pakistan with firm assistance from abroad. In other words, the Indian experts were convinced to believe in the post-1965 period that a war could not be fought and won decisively either by India or Pakistan on its own, unless foreign involvement was permitted. Likewise, if at all India wished to defeat Pakistan, the latter's defence potential had to be weakened and the fighting tempo inherent in its army and the people be frustrated to India's advantage.

The perceivable foreign power for India to rely on for this two-way onslaught against Pakistan in future was surely the Soviet Union. It was already a proven supporter of India in the Cold War politics; and had also manoeuvred India out of the aftermath of September war against Pakistan. It had tactfully relegated not only China but also the U.S.A. and the United Nations by acquiring the status of 'peacemaker' between Pakistan and India after the Tashkent Declaration. Hence, if Pakistan's military option in 1965 had suggested priority to reliance on Communist China for self-defence, India opted for total collaboration with the Soviet Union for an aggression to dismember Pakistan in future. Such collaboration could deter China and relegate both America and the United Nations to less important roles.

Perhaps in response to such developments taking shape between India and the Soviet Union, America initiated a tactical move, when Henry Kissinger made a surprise visit to Beijing via Islamabad in July 1971. That was indeed an astonishing breakthrough in the strained Sino-U.S. relations. And, when Pakistan appeared to be a partner in this deal, the world took it as the materialization of the same 'U.S.-China-Pakistan' entente. That was responded to quickly, when India and the U.S.S.R. entered into the so-called Treaty of Friendship and Cooperation, and Pakistan was dismembered on December 16, 1971.

However, another version which is equally worth noticing is that the presence of the U.S. 7th Fleet in the Bay of Bengal in the wake of the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971 was at least in Pakistani perception just an eye wash. As per several neutral observers, that had been deployed not necessarily to protect Pakistan, as many Pakistanis wishfully perceived, but to facilitate the Indo-Soviet joint venture under the so-called Treaty of Friendship. The only visible aspect in Pakistan's favour was that the Fleet was also deployed by America in the Bay to pressurize the then Indian Prime Minister Indira Gandhi to refrain from giving total defeat to Pakistan by invading West Pakistan as well.



To conclude, as one can see, even in the early period, Pakistan's most vital strategic interests have been related to its survival, namely: military security and economic stability. At least in the period under study, 1958-71, these interests of Pakistan were persistently put at stake by India. Consequently, and also because of meagre resources at home, Pakistan had to depend on outside support. It maximized its foreign policy when it joined the Western pacts in 1954-55. But soon Pakistan's alignment was put at test, when the aid from U.S.A. fell short of national expectations despite America's being a balancer for this country against India, and the Soviet Union took the side of that hostile State (India) to counter the United States. Hence, the impact of Cold War did reach South Asia inevitably. The Soviet Union had risen in competition with the U.S.A. by the early 1960s in global power-politics. Pakistan's antagonism to the Communist giant was logically untenable. Hence, the period of 1960s turned out to be a phase of rationality in Pakistan's policy deliberations. In a process of priority fixation, therefore, a strategist of Ayub Khan's stature initially strengthened Pakistan's bonds bilaterally with the U.S.A. in 1959; and then moved 'cautiously' towards Communist China as well. This aspect of China's being an 'extra-area actor' in Pakistan's interest did apparently look to be a deviation from the traditional ideological stand. But the opportunity for such a shift in policy was provided to the Pakistani policy-makers by the Sino-Indian war of 1962, in which India's prestige and status in the region was much reduced.

When the power fulcrum in South Asia is viewed from this angle, Pakistan's dismemberment was in the mutual U.S.-Soviet interest to weaken this Islamic State and make it subservient to India's hegemony in the region - a dream which had been frustrated by China in the Sino-Indian war of 1962. However, in the Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, the Soviet involvement from India's side and China's from Pakistan's side both were neutralized when the U.S. 7th Fleet moved in to counter both the Communist powers. The result was that China could not extend any material help to this friendly neighbour. The United States on its part had put a military embargo, though on both Pakistan and India, since 1965. It was never lifted even until 1971, despite Pakistan's alignment. Consequently, Pakistan had a limited military potential to confront a joint Indo-Soviet aggression in 1971. In the ensuing period, therefore, Pakistan had no choice but to maximize its foreign policy afresh in the light of the given regional developments

## **Notes & References**

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[1] K.B. Sayeed, *The Political System of Pakistan*, (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1967), p. 270.

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[3] Dawn, January 31, 1957 and September 19, 1958. See also, Aslam Siddiqi, *Pakistan Seeks Security*, (Karachi: Longman Green, 1960), p. 118.

[4] For Suez Canal Crisis, see, S.M. Burke, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), pp. 182-85.

[5] Quantum of the U.S. aid received by Pakistan and India during 1953-62, in, *ibid.*, p. 264.

[6] Increase in Pakistan's defence budget from Rs. 6,532 lacs on the eve of alliance (1952-53) to Rs. 10,435 lacs in 1959-60, *ibid.*, p. 258.

[7] *Ibid.*, pp. 255 and 257. For the figures up till 1963, see also, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, *The Myth of Independence*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), pp. 48-49.

[8] Milton Covner, "Soviet Aid Strategy in Developing Countries", *Orbis*, viii, (Fall, 1964), pp. 624--40. See also, Stephen P. Gilbert, "Soviet-American Military Aid Competition in the Third World", *Orbis*, xiii, (Winter, 1970), pp. 1117-37.

[9] See, Sarwar Hussain, "The Background of American Aid to Pakistan", *Pakistan Horizon*, (2nd Quarterly, 1967), p. 121.

[10] S.M. Burke, *op. cit.*, pp. 245-46.

[11] K. B. Sayeed, 1967, op. cit., p. 272.

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[13] S.M. Burke, op. cit., p. 258.

[14] Ibid. See also, T.P. Thornton, op. cit., p. 374; W. Johustone, "Strategic Frontiers of India and Pakistan", *Foreign Policy Bulletin*, ( January 1, 1965), p. 63; D.M. Solansky, "Moscow and the Persian Gulf: An Analysis of Soviet Ambitions and Potentials", *Orbis*, 14, (September 1970), p. 92; and, J.A. Naik, *Soviet Policy Towards India: From Stalin to Brezhnev* (New Delhi: Vikas Publications, 1970), pp. 68-69.

[15] S.M. Burke, op. cit., p. 210.

[16] Aslam Siddiqi, op. cit., p. 37.

[17] Ibid., p. 38. See also, M. Ayub Khan, n. d., op. cit., pp. 20-21.

[18] Arif Hussain, *Pakistan's Ideology and Foreign Policy* (London: Frank Cass, 1966), pp. xviii and 50.

[19] Ibid., pp. 103-04. In addition, K. B. Sayeed, 1967, op. cit., pp. 92 and 269.

[20] Ibid., pp. 101-04. Also see here Ayub's assertion that his 'centralized' presidential system was more akin to 'Khilafat' in Islam.

[21] Ibid. See in addition, the text, *Government of Pakistan, The Constitution of the Republic of Pakistan*, 1962.

[22] Ibid.

[23] S.M. Burke, *op. cit.*, p. 232.

[24] In the 1950s, China's gross national output was three times that of India; and in 1958, in particular, its economic advancement was more than three times as fast as that of India, John F. Kennedy, cited in, *ibid.*, pp. 253-54.

[25] Nehru, quoted in, *ibid.*, p. 233. Also, Ayub's speech for joint defence, *Dawn*, January 19, 1960.

[26] See, the Chinese government's inquiry, *New York Times*, October 13, 1959; and the Chinese press criticism of Pakistan's foreign policy, *Peking Review*, July 28, 1959.

[27] Norman D. Palmer, 1966, *op. cit.*, p. 279.

[28] See, for instance, T.P. Thornton, *op. cit.*, p. 351.

[29] S.M. Burke, "Sino-Pakistan Relations", *Orbis*, 8 (Summer 1964), p. 397.

[30] Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto, 1969, *op. cit.*, p. 132.

[31] S.M. Burke, 1973, *op. cit.*, p. 267. For Cabinet Meeting, *Dawn*, November 18, 1960.

[32] Warner Levi, "Pakistan, the Soviet Union and China", *Pacific Affairs*, 1962, p. 211.

[33] See, for example, Javeed Sheikh, "Pak-U.S. Relations", in, Javeed Ahmad (ed.), *Pakistan's Political, Economic and Diplomatic Dynamics* (Lahore: Studio 4, 1988) p. 141.

[34] Quoted in, Dawn, January 16, 1961. See the four-fold increase in Sino-Pak trade after 1960, Dawn, March 25 and May 12, 1970.

[35] Text of the Agreement, K. Arif, China- Pak Relations, (Lahore: Vanguard, 1984), pp. 33-37.

[36] It is about a 500-mile-long all-weather highway engineered jointly by Pakistan and China, with elevation varying from 2,000 to 15,000 feet above the sea level, *ibid.*, pp. 285-87.

[37] Dawn, January 16, 1961.

[38] Dawn, January 19, 1961.

[39] N.D. Palmer, 1966, *op. cit.*, p. 278. Also see, N.D. Palmer, "New Directions for Pakistan", *Current History*, 46 (February 1964), p. 75.

[40] Khurshid Haider, "The Recent Trends in the Foreign Policy of Pakistan", *The World Today*, no. 22 (November 1966), p. 486.

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[45] Ibid. Also see, K.K.P, "The Problems of the Indus and Its Tributaries: An Alternative View", in, *The World Today*, 14 (June 1958), pp. 226-76.

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[47] Being disappointed, Pakistan sent its army into Kashmir after India's occupation, G.W. Chaudhry, *ibid.*, p. 112.

[48] Details in, *ibid.*, pp. 90-140.

[49] Joseph Korbel, *Danger in Kashmir* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1966), p. 42. For further study: G.W. Chaudhry, *ibid.*; *Dawn*, November 11, 1953; Zulfiqar AU Bhutto, 1969, op. cit., p. 180; Michael Brecher, *Nehru: A Political Biography*, abridged edition (London: Oxford University Press, 1961), pp. 221-22.

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[73] *Ibid.*, p. 406.