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Pakistan's Terrorism – A case of Dangerous Psychological Disorder?

Submitted by asiaadmin2 on Sat, 09/17/2016 - 06:30

Paper No. 6169

Dated 17-Sept-2016

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Narendra Modi, a sharp critic of Pakistan when he was in the opposition, completely changed his approach when elected an Indian Prime Minister in 2014.

The BJP won the elections with a huge majority and he could have easily hardened India's Pakistan policy. His party and the right wing Hindutva politicians would have been only too glad to back him to the hilt. Instead, Modi did the opposite, to the surprise of many. He reached out to Pakistan, invited Pak Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif to his inauguration ceremony and continued to pursue this line despite criticism at home. To be fair Sharif also responded.

Not surprisingly, however, history repeated itself in Pakistan. The deep state (the army and the ISI) stepped in with handsome support from the Pakistani foreign ministry. The Jehadi groups, the army's acknowledged foreign policy assets like Jamat-ud-Dawa (JUD) Chief Hafeez Saeed and Jaish-e-Mohammad (JEM) founder Masood Azhar were brought in. Terrorism against India from Pakistan continued to increase. Modi remained undeterred. His visit to Islamabad on December 25, 2015 to wish Nawaz Sharif on his birthday was reciprocated by a JEM attack on India's air force base in Pathankot. Modi still stood his ground, allowing an investigation team from Pakistan which included an ISI Officer, to visit the airbase to collect evidence. The team came, saw and investigated, but did not allow an Indian team's reciprocal visit to Pakistan. Indian officials decided to view the Pakistani visit as a positive move that would result in a joint counter-terrorism effort. Nothing of the sort happened.

The international community witnessed the Indian government's restraint against grave provocations. But things had to give at some point. The unprecedented violent protests that followed the (July 8) killing of Hizbul Mujahidin (HM) terrorist Burhan Wani by Indian Security Forces

in Kashmir was found to be fuelled from Pakistan, and their friends in the Kashmir valley like the Hurriyat Conference and woman separatist leader Ayesha Andrabi. The HM is based in Pakistan occupied Kashmir (POK), and its leader Sayed Salahuddin roams freely in Islamabad and Lahore, giving speeches and planning terror attacks with elements like Hafeez Saeed. Salahuddin also heads the United Jihad Council (UJC), based in Pakistan.

Indian politicians in Kashmir played questionable roles. Jammu and Kashmir (J & K) Chief Minister Ms Mehbooba Mufti, whose PDP runs a coalition government with the BJP in J & K first kept silent and then gave confusing and contradicting statements on Burhan Wani's death. She has a track record of, "running with the hare and hunting with the hounds". When in power she is with the central government, and when out of power colludes with the separatists.

J & K politics is an internal matter of India. Pakistan's interference in J & K through Fidayeens (terrorists willing to give up their lives) is something different. **It is asymmetric warfare.**

Pakistan exposed itself to the world when it allowed Sayed Salahuddin to take out an anti-India march when Indian Home Minister Rajnath Singh was in Islamabad for the SAARC Home Minister's meeting (August 3-4). Both Salahuddin and his outfit HM are designated terrorists. It should be a matter of concern for Pakistan that at least three SAARC countries, namely Bangladesh, Nepal and Sri Lanka did not send their home ministers for the Islamabad meet. All three countries have had their share to Pakistani terrorism agenda on their soil.

The Pakistani establishment shut all doors of bilateral; dialogue with India, declined to act on the Ufa agreement between the two countries to discuss terrorism harping only on Kashmir. Pakistan's actions on and in Kashmir forced Mr. Modi to take a new aggressive position on Pakistan's sponsorship of terrorism. At the recently concluded G-20 meeting in Hangzhou, China, and immediately after the ASEAN summit in Vientiane, Laos, Modi pulled no punches. These were stunning charges with no one coming to Pakistan's aid. Not even its "all weather friend", China.

For a glimpse of Pakistani establishment's psychological-ideological fixation with terrorism to forward its foreign policy agenda, consider the following:

- Declassified US Defence Intelligence Agency (DIA) cables of January and February 2010 showed that ISI provided the Haqqani Network (HQN) \$200,000 to attack the CIA facility at Camp Chapman (the camp located in the Pak-Afghan border was wiped out and all occupants killed). The US has been providing Pakistan billions of dollars since September 2001 to counter terrorism.
- In July 2016, former chief of Afghan intelligence agency (NDS) Rahmatullah Nabil, released documents about Pakistan's GHQ and ISI operations paying the HQN to attack the Kabul airport during President Hamid Karzai's rule, and other targets including Shias. Nabil resigned when Karzai's successor President Abdul Ghani tried to be friend Pakistan against his advice. Ghani later changed track after he realized that the Pakistanis were actually sabotaging his peace efforts with the Afghan Taliban. The documents give details

(including copies of ISI/GHQ documents) of Pakistan's covert warfare against Afghanistan, using US taxpayers' money.

- JUD leader Hafuz Saeed, who also controls the terrorist organizations Lashkar-e-Toiba (LET), is a designated international terrorist. The US had put a ten million dollar bounty on his head. Yet, he roams about freely in Pakistan, holding public meetings and spewing venom against India. Former Pak President Gen. Pervez Musharraf had told Pakistani law-maker that LET was a reserve force (against India). This organization was responsible for the "26/11" Mumbai attack in which 156 people were killed including six American citizens.
- The US declared LET a terrorist organization. In July, a US congressional panel launched a fierce attack on Pakistan's duplicity over terrorism, and manipulating the US. **Congressman Matt Salmon suggested several steps including economic sanctions and declaring Pakistan a state sponsor of terrorism.** Congressman Dana Rhorabacher called Pakistan a **vicious terror-supporting country and assured the people of Balochistan of US support for their independence and self-determination.**
- In a senate hearing (September 9) between law makers and experts Pakistan was roundly castigated and threatened with cutting off of aid.

The above are only representative samples.

President Barack Obama, Secretary of State John Kerry and State Department Spokespersons have issued strongly worded warnings to Pakistan. But nothing seems to have affected the military brass in Rawalpindi.

In a manner, these Pakistani gentlemen are no fools. They have learnt that when the pressure becomes intense the Americans will make some moves and statements like "Pakistan is moving in the right direction", will start coming from the State Department and the White House. And aid will be restored. Everything will be back to square one.

The Pakistanis are aware that the Americans need Pakistan for their Afghan policy. Equally important the Americans are not going to vacate Pakistan for the Chinese to have a free run. The importance of geopolitics comes in here.

China, of course, is sitting pretty. Politically and strategically, China will continue to support and empower Pakistan. Tactically it will continue to support Pakistan's official jihadi core because in this bargain these jihadis will not give sanctuary to China's Uighur separatist Muslims of Xinjiang. And China has been successful. As a bonus the Pak establishment and their jihadi auxiliary forces continue to try and debilitate India. As the Chinese say, it is a "win-win" situation for China.

Informed and discerning people in Pakistan are increasingly articulating the futility of their establishment's blind and vitriolic India policy which is actually hurting Pakistan. This view is reflected in several of Pakistan's respected newspapers. Former Pakistani ambassador to China, India and the US, Ashraf Jehangir seemed distressed with Pakistan's India policy. In a recent article "The Dawn" (13th Sept) he wrote "**Pakistan's reliance on jihadi 'assets' has resulted in a comprehensive jihadi 'blowback'. Its foreign policy is determined by unelected and incompetent decision-makers who largely operate from behind security screens.**"

This, he said has “significantly disabled Pakistan’s diplomacy”.

Jehangir Kazi should know, having forwarded Pakistan’s Kashmir policy for years. He also recalled former Chinese President Jiang Zemin’s advice that “Kashmir was an issue left over from history and its solution should be sought in that context”. The “incompetent” decision makers in Rawalpindi must realise that the Chinese will not wage a war against India on Kashmir. Without saying in so many words, Kazi said that Pakistan was dangerously close to being isolated.

Pakistan’s establishment still remains caught in the ideological-political time warp of the “two nation theory”. That theory died in 1971 when East Pakistan broke away and was reborn as “Bangladesh”. Now Balochistan is fighting for independence from Pakistan and the voice of the people of Balochistan is gaining traction in the international community. US congressman Dana Rhorabacher has already voiced his support.

Pakistan’s interference in Bangladesh, both in support to terrorists with money and shedding tears for those war criminals who supported the Pakistani army in 1971, reiterates the fact that the policy makers in Pakistan are in a psychological bind and self delusion, lying to themselves.

Pakistan has hardly any friends left in the neighbourhood. Relations with Afghanistan are in a sharp decline. They betrayed President Ashraf Ghani. No Afghan fully trusts Pakistan’s establishment including the Taliban who reject the Durand Line as the Pak-Afghan border. Relations with Iran are no longer warm, to say the least. Even the Saudis are annoyed when they discovered that footprints of terrorist involved in bombing in Saudi Arabia led to Pakistan.

The Pakistani army appears to be again presiding not only on further dismemberment of Pakistan, but making Pakistan a poster-boy of a nation supporting terrorism. They are taking the country to international ignominy.

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