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Noticeable since last year is the emergence of a new Islamic bloc of Pakistan-Turkey-Malaysia which ostensibly asserts to bring about a renaissance in the Islamic World but essentially comprises three Non-Arab Sunni Muslim nations attempting to challenge the Arab domination of the Islamic World led by Saudi Arabia as the 'Custodian of the Holy Places of Islam'.

Public assertions that this new Islamic Bloc would attempt to bring about an Islamic Renaissance and break the Islamo-phobia that grips the world leads one to the assumption that Pakistan-Turkey-Malaysia Bloc feels that the Arab-dominated Islamic World has failed to do so and that therefore a newer effort is required. No reactions currently are available from the Arab World led by Saudi Arabia on this development except that Saudi displeasure prompted Pakistan PM Imran Khan's absence from the First Summit held recently in Malaysia.

Geopolitical, domestic political turbulent dynamics and economic factors portend in 2020 that this emerging Islamic Bloc to challenge Arab domination of Islamic World in terms of gaining substantive cohesiveness and longevity may at best emerge as a 'Ginger Group' in the Islamic World but does not have the potential to assume leadership of the Islamic World.

Deserving initial recording is the reality that despite the myth of Islamic unity under the over-arching umbrella of Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) the Islamic World stands divided by the Sunni-Shia sectarian divide and the resultant power struggle led by Saudi Arabia and Iran respectively.

The emergence of Pakistan-Turkey-Malaysia (PTM) Sunni Islamic Bloc as a superimposition over the Sunni domination of the Islamic World can only be analysed and read as an attempt to challenge the Arab domination which factor emerged consequent to the global oil prices rise in early 1970s.

Till the early 1970s, Pakistan, Turkey and Malaysia were deemed as more progressive Western-oriented and West-linked Islamic nations as compared to the oil-rich Arab monarchies.

Pakistan was the favoured protégé of the United States and Western countries as it readily rented itself out to US-led military pacts like MEDO, CENTO and SEATO ---all formed ostensibly to stem Former Soviet Union advances. Pakistan even allowed its territory to be used for U-2 surveillance flights into the Soviet Union. Pakistan was the favoured nation of the United States in South Asia at the expense of India as the predominant Power in the Indian Subcontinent.

Pakistan's downslide into the Mecca of Global Terrorism as manifested by 9/1 shifted United States perceptions of Pakistan while still temporising with it because of Afghanistan. What has followed is recent history well publicised in public domain.

Turkey was and is still a full-fledged member of the Atlantic Alliance military bloc –NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organisation Organisation) and guarded the Eastern Flank of NATO Area with the largest military contingent of Turkish Troops within NATO countries.

Malaysia was till recent years were closely linked with Britain as an erstwhile British Colony with a marked British-oriented culture. Under its earlier Prime Minister like Tunku Abdul Rahman an active member of the Non-Aligned World.

Contextually, in 2020, the picture obtaining of these three Sunni Muslim erstwhile Western-oriented countries presents a totally different complexion in terms of their political policy formulations both in terms of policy attitudes towards the United States and the Western countries as well as towards the Islamic World. This needs a brief amplification to fathom the underlying impulses that pushed Pakistan, Turkey and Malaysia to seek themselves out to form a new Islamic bloc within the Islamic World.

In 2020, Pakistan has decidedly moved out of the American orbit and has emerged as the 'Frontline States of China' in comprehensive terms. Its transactional relationship with the United States in the 1980s and 1990s was in tandem with its promiscuous strategic proximity to China. In the last three decades Pakistan moved from a Western-oriented progressive Muslim nation to an Islamic Fundamentalist State dominated by an unholy nexus of Pakistan Army-Islamic Jihadi Terrorist outfits. Pakistan adopted State-sponsored terrorism as an instrument of State-Policy by Pakistan Army affiliated Islamic Jihadi terrorist groups.

In 2020, Turkey presents the picture of a secularist, progressive and moderate Islamic nation regressing into the mould of intolerant Islamic nations relying more on Islamic externals. Turkey like Pakistan has seemingly moved away from the United States fold while still clinging to NATO membership. Turkey wishes to strive for leadership of the Islamic World so far being led by Saudi Arabia. Turkey's dalliance with Russia and China has not paid any dividends even if it was only a signalling venture against the United States.

Malaysia in 2020 also presents a confused picture of a modern progressive Islamic nation having regressed like Turkey into maybe not a fundamentalist Islamic State but with a lot of Islamic externals suggesting so. In a multi-racial State with sizeable population segments of Chinese and Indian descent people there are signs of Islamic intolerance.

Moving on to the state of relationships of the Pakistan-Turkey-Malaysia Bloc with Arab nations and particularly with Saudi Arabia, here again the picture obtaining in 2020 has altered considerably, despite rhetoric to the contrary.

Pakistan despite having reduced itself to a concubinage relationship with China which has virtually colonised it in recent years still clings gingerly to Saudi Arabia's purse-strings. But one can safely assert that the tenor of Saudi-Pakistan proximate relations stands changed. Pakistan while having proceeded to forging the PTM Bloc however succumbed to Saudi pressures not to attend the First Summit of this Bloc in Malaysia recently. It is only recently that Pakistan PM Imran Khan paid a visit to Kuala Lumpur as recompense for missing the Summit.

Weighing heavily on Pakistan is also the fact that India under PM Modi has been able to establish substantive relations with Pakistan's major Arab oil-rich monarchies like Saudi Arabia and UAE. Both these Arab major Nations have bestowed their highest civilian awards on Indian PM Modi which has upset Pakistan.

Turkey cannot be said to have had excellent relations with Arab oil-rich monarchies. Turkish relations with Arab monarchies can be said to have been transactional and not strategic. Turkey has oscillated between somewhat proximity to Saudi Arabia and Shia Iran. Presently, Turkey has good relations in Arab world only with Qatar.

Malaysia in 2020 also does not present any picture of markedly close strategic partnerships in the Arab world. However, Arab Islamic influences have replaced the earlier moderate Islamic culture of Malaysia.

With the above contextual background having been sketched out the logical question that arises is as to what factors impelled or prompts Pakistan-Turkey-Malaysia Bloc to forge a significantly standing out Sunni Muslim Bloc in an already predominant Saudi Arabia-led Sunni Bloc in the Islamic World which also claims leadership of the entire Islamic Ummah?

Two major factors that emerge on analysis in this direction hinge on the United States and China as the major determinants of this change. The Arab oil-rich monarchies depended heavily for their security and stability on their strategic partnerships with the United States for many decades. While Saudi Arabia may have made some openings towards Russia and China as political signalling to United States there is a TINA Factor in play here. For Arab oil-rich-monarchies predominantly in The Gulf dominated by Iran 'There Is No Alternative' but to remain close to the United States.

The above reality is not palatable to Pakistan-Turkey-Malaysia Bloc in which all these three Islamic countries are markedly in testy and bordering on adversarial relationships with United States. No indicators are available to suggest that PTM Bloc relations with United States will revert back to the earlier close relationships due to changed geopolitical factors in play.

The China Factor is the major factor in play here in that all the three PTM Bloc countries in 2020 can be said to have better relations with China than the United States. China while deftly playing its cards in the Islamic World to give a semblance of balanced relations cannot but be thrilled that with or without its backing a new Sunni Islamic Bloc is emerging to challenge Arab domination of the Islamic World, which realistically perform stands tied strongly to the United States. Some could suggest that the PTM Bloc tilt towards China is a validation of Huntington's theory of Sinitic-Islamic World unity.

Geostrategic locations of Pakistan, Turkey and Malaysia with their closer links to China as opposed to United States contributes to further China's comprehensive national security interests in the Eastern Mediterranean, South Asia and South East Asia.

Above all, one can also assert that there could be a sense of arrogance in the PTM Bloc emerging that Pakistan, Turkey and Malaysia perceiving themselves as more advanced Islamic Nations pre-dating the shooting into geopolitical significance after 1973 of oil-rich Arab Monarchies, stand better positioned to lead the Islamic World in the 21st Century.

Concluding, what can be surmised in terms of the substantiveness and longevity of the Pakistan-Turkey-Malaysia Bloc is that China cannot alone geopolitically or financially subsidise the longevity of this Bloc wherein in all these three countries runs the thread of domestic political turbulence waiting to implode. Till that decisive moment the world can expect that the Pakistan-Turkey-Malaysia Bloc will continue not in the leadership role of the Islamic World but merely as a 'Ginger Group'.

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