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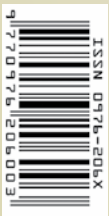
DEFENCE BUDGET 2018-19

TOO LITTLE FOR

MODERNISATION

- ▶ ARMS CONTROL CHALLENGES
- ▶ FROM DETERRENCE TO WINNABILITY
- ▶ FOR FUTURE-READY CITIZENS

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DEFENCE BUDGET 2018-19



An ISO 9001:2015 Certified Magazine



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FOR LIES AND DECEIT

The logic for the continuing US' support for the Pakistan Army is fundamentally flawed. It emboldens the army to interfere in decision-making well outside its domain, undermines civilian control over the military and, consequently, weakens Pakistan's fledgling democracy.



**BRIG GURMEET KANWAL
(RETD)**

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In his first tweet on New Year's Day 2018, US President Donald Trump lashed out at Pakistan. Showing his annoyance and his frustration, he wrote: "The

United States has foolishly given Pakistan more than 33 billion dollars in aid over the last 15 years, and they have given us nothing but lies and deceit, thinking of our leaders as fools.

President Donald Trump delivering his inaugural address.

**US-PAKISTAN
RELATIONS CAN
NO LONGER
WITHSTAND
ISLAMABAD'S
SELECTIVE
CRACKDOWN ON
SOME TERRORIST
GROUPS WHILE
EXTENDING
SUPPORT AND
SAFE HAVEN TO
OTHERS**

They give safe haven to the terrorists we hunt in Afghanistan, with little help. No more!”

The tweet was widely welcomed in the US, India and Afghanistan. However, in Pakistan, the government was deeply upset and hundreds of people demonstrated on the streets. The general refrain in Pakistan was that Pakistan's sacrifices in the war against terror were not being given due recognition.

On January 4, the US government suspended security assistance to Pakistan for failing to take 'decisive action' against Taliban groups operating against US and Afghan army personnel from safe havens in Pakistan. The State Department announced that the total assistance being withheld is over US\$1 billion, including Foreign Military Financing (FMF), that had been sanctioned in previous years, but had not

been disbursed because the Pakistan Army had failed to act against the Taliban, particularly the Haqqani network, which the US accuses of conducting operations against its forces in Afghanistan.

The Background

According to the Congressional Research Service of the US Congress, since 2002, the US

has provided security assistance worth over US\$33 billion to Pakistan (See Table opposite). The assistance falls into three broad categories: security-related funding, including FMF; funds for economic support; and Coalition Support Funds (CSF) to reimburse costs incurred by Pakistan for providing logistics support and security to ISAF convoys using the two ground





American soldiers patrolling a village in Afghanistan.

routes to Afghanistan through Peshawar and Quetta.

The Armed Services Committee of the United States Senate had recommended the allotment of US\$800 million to Pakistan by way of Coalition Support Funds for 2016-17, but made a portion of the military aid – US\$300 million – contingent upon Pakistan demonstrating that it has taken

action against the Haqqani network.

According to a statement released by the Armed Services Committee, the US-Pakistan relationship is ‘critically’ important and there is need for ‘enhanced security and stability’ in Pakistan’s northwest region and along the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. Though Pakistan is a major, non-NATO ally (MNA) of the US,

frustration at Pakistan Army’s reluctance to operate against the Haqqanis had been mounting for several years.

Pakistan’s Double Cross

The Obama Administration did not wish to precipitate a showdown and kept warning the Pakistanis, but also kept giving them more and more time to act decisively. President Trump had put Pakistan on notice in his Afghan policy speech in August 2017 to change its approach and, since Pakistan’s ‘deep State’ (army and the ISI) probably thought it would be business as usual, he has acted on the security assistance front.

Pakistan continues to harbour terrorist leaders like the Haqqanis. The Pakistani ‘deep State’s’ efforts to destabilise Afghanistan with a view to establishing a pliant regime are still continuing. For several years, the army and the ISI harboured Osama bin Laden and Mullah Omar – both fugitives from justice. Mullah Mansour, the Taliban chief, was killed in a drone strike deep inside Balochistan in May 2016.

Gen Sher Mohammad Karimi, Chief of Staff of the Afghan Army said during an interview with the BBC on July 3, 2013, that the war with the Taliban would be over in weeks if Pakistan wished so. Even as it projects itself as a facilitator for reconciliation talks with the Taliban, Pakistan has been instrumental in wrecking the talks.

H.R. McMaster, US National

Security Adviser, warned Pakistan that US-Pakistan relations can no longer withstand Islamabad's selective crackdown on some terrorist groups while extending support and safe haven to others. Limited military action by the US across the *Durand Line* may be expected to follow unless the ISI stops employing 'strategic assets' like the Haqqani network to fight not only the Afghan National Security Forces (ANSF), but also to kill American soldiers, advisors and contractors.

Nuclear Worries

Pakistan's support for the war against the Taliban and getting it to participate with earnestness in the reconciliation talks are not

Afghan army personnel during a military operation.



ALSO, LIKE NORTH KOREA, PAKISTAN IS A DE FACTO 'TERRORIST STATE' AND HENCE, AN INTERNATIONAL PARIAH

the only reasons for continuing US' support for the Pakistan Army despite its double crossing ways. There is a broad consensus in Washington, D.C., that cuts across the policy community, think-tanks and academia, that it is necessary to continue to support and strengthen the Pakistan Army. The ostensible logic for this policy option is summarised below:

"Pakistan is going down the tube for reasons that are well known. If it implodes, nuclear weapons will fall into *jihadi hands*. Such an outcome is absolutely unacceptable to the United States. Hence, in order to ensure that nuclear warheads do not come into the possession of radical extremist elements, it is necessary to support and strengthen the Pakistan Army as it is the only force for stability."

In keeping with this consensus, US' support for the 'deep State' has been

consistent. As brought out above, Pakistan has received over US\$33 billion by way of security assistance since the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the consequent NATO-ISAF operations in Afghanistan. The US Congress approved the sale of weapons' platforms like F-16 fighter aircraft, though on part-payment basis and not as a free gift to fight terrorism. On completion of the draw-down, many items of surplus military equipment were handed over to the Pakistan Army.

Despite Pakistan's double crossing behaviour, the Generals have been welcomed in the US. Gen Raheel Sharif, the previous Army Chief, was wined and dined while on a private visit to Washington. He was received by the then Secretary of State, John Kerry and the then Secretary of Defence, Ashton Carter.

As for the safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear warheads, these are well guarded by the Pakistan Army. The real threat is that of the theft of radioactive material from nuclear facilities to assemble dirty bombs or RDDs (Radiological Dispersal Devices) – unless there is a *jihadi*-led coup from within the army.

Pakistan Army's Domination

Pakistan's internal turbulence is certainly a cause for concern. Pakistan Army's prolonged operations against home-grown Taliban like the TTP and the TNSM; fissiparous tendencies in Balochistan; continuing



F-16 Fighter Aircraft

radical extremism and creeping Talibanisation that has reached the Punjabi heartland; ethnic tensions, including protracted violence against the Shias and the Ahmadiyyas; and, the floundering economy; together signal the nation's gradual slide towards becoming a 'failed State'.

The Pakistan Army plays a disproportionately large role in the nation's polity. The army determines Pakistan's national security threats and challenges and decides how to deal with them. Pakistan's policy on Afghanistan and Jammu and Kashmir is guided by the army and the rapprochement process with India cannot proceed without its concurrence. The army directs and controls Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme. The civilian government has no role to play in deciding the doctrine, force structures, targeting policies and command and control. The army decides the annual defence expenditure and senior armed forces appointments – the civilian government of the day merely rubber stamps these decisions.

US-Pampered Military

Under these circumstances, the logic for the continuing US' support for the Pakistan Army is fundamentally flawed.

It emboldens the army to interfere in decision-making well outside its domain, undermines civilian control over the military and, consequently, weakens Pakistan's fledgling democracy.

THE US' SUPPORT FOR THE PAKISTAN ARMY APPEARS ILLOGICAL AND FINDS NO RESONANCE IN NEW DELHI

The US' support for the Pakistan Army appears illogical and finds no resonance in New Delhi. It is also a stumbling block for the further consolidation of the India-US strategic partnership.

India's Options

Despite facing seemingly insurmountable internal security challenges, the Pakistan Army and the ISI continue to sponsor terrorist attacks in India through extremist organisations like the LeT and the JeM. Their war against India, through

asymmetric means, is now in its third decade. Though, it is being prosecuted at low ebb due to the need to concentrate efforts to fight the demons within Pakistan, the machinery is being kept well-oiled so that levels of violence can be ratcheted up whenever necessary.

Incidents like the terrorist strike at the Pathankot air base in January 2016, and at a military camp in Uri in September 2016, and Pakistan's proclivity to remain in denial even though hard evidence of the involvement of organs of the State is given to it, are exhausting Indian patience. A single miscalculation could lead to conflict between the two nuclear-armed neighbours.

It should be a national security and foreign policy objective for India to work towards reducing the salience of the Pakistan Army and the ISI in the country's polity. A carefully calibrated long-term strategy should be evolved to realise this objective. Also, like North Korea, Pakistan is a de facto 'terrorist State' and hence, an international pariah. India should work with its strategic partners to get the United Nations Security Council to place an embargo on the sale of military equipment to the Pakistan armed forces. **DSA**