

# CENTRE FOR JOINT WARFARE STUDIES



## CENJOWS

### **A TALE OF PAKISTAN'S SUCCESSES AND FAILURES**



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Remember, there was no country named Pakistan prior to 1947! It was born and nurtured by its creators and subsequent rulers with the wisdom at their disposal, efficacy of which could be questioned. It passed through many ups and downs during its nearly 73 year's long journey and continues to exist as a nation state. Pakistan is 34<sup>th</sup> largest country geographically<sup>1</sup> despite its dismembering and creation of Bangladesh in 1971. It is fifth most populated country next only to China, India, USA and Indonesia<sup>2</sup>. It ranks 15<sup>th</sup> in the Military Strength of Nations, 2020 List<sup>3</sup>. In addition to UN agencies, it is member of many influential organisations like OIS and wields considerable influence in West Asia and Afghanistan. It enjoyed considerable privileges by virtue of its closeness to the Western military dispositions and continues

<sup>1</sup> Worldometer, "Countries in the world by population (2021)". <https://www.worldometers.info/world-population/population-by-country/>. 20 January 2021.

<sup>2</sup> Worldometer, "Largest Countries in the World (by area)". <https://www.worldometers.info/geography/largest-countries-in-the-world/>. 20 January 2021.

<sup>3</sup> Maria Gourtsilidou, Ranked. "Military Strength of Nations, 2020 (Comparing Global Armed Forces)", *CEOWORLD magazine*. <https://ceoworld.biz/2020/03/03/ranked-military-strength-of-nations-2020-comparing-global-armed-forces/>. 22 January 2021.

to be a non NATO ally of sorts despite sourness on certain issues. It is playing a major part in the return of Taliban Mk II.

Its close relations with China have brought many advantages to it of course with associated cost. China has invested large sum of money in CPEC and Pakistan's power sector as Pakistan has been reeling under intense power shortages resulting in a massive power blackout in Lahore, Karachi, Islamabad, Multan, Kasur, and other cities<sup>4</sup>. On 22 Jan 2021, ANI reported that China's illegal 'profiteering' in power sector is leading to massive blackouts in Pakistan<sup>5</sup>.

Its close relations with China and Turkey have enabled it to pursue its policy of bleeding India through thousand cuts with some success. Pakistan's closeness to China has benefited it technologically, militarily and even financially. It continues to lean on China's shoulders despite visible signs and danger of compromising its autonomy and emerging as a vassal state of China.

Pakistan is the only nuclear weapons state in the Islamic world with 160 warheads in its inventory<sup>6</sup> and possesses a sizeable missile arsenal to impress upon its friends and adversaries alike. These and many other laurels make many Pakistanis citizens proud and give them a false sense of success through the display of these achievements even though its well wishers continue to suggest a course correction in its approach to spread of terrorism and extremism. Way back in 2002, Pervez Hoodbhoy and Zia Mian, observed that in Pakistan, school children have been taught that Kashmir was the "jugular vein" of Pakistan, the unfinished business of Partition without which the country will remain incomplete. They advised that this national obsession must be dropped, pointing out that it has resulted in three wars and is an invitation to unending conflict and ultimate disaster. They also recommended that as a first step, Pakistan must visibly

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<sup>4</sup>Yahoo News, "Maryam Nawaz slams Imran Khan govt over electricity price hike". 22 January 2021. <https://in.yahoo.com/news/maryam-nawaz-slams-imran-khan-085656404.html>, 23 January 2021.

<sup>5</sup>Yahoo News, "China's illegal 'profiteering' in power sector leads to massive blackouts in Pakistan" 22 January 2021. <https://in.yahoo.com/news/chinas-illegal-profiteering-power-sector-102858267.html>, 23 January 2021.

<sup>6</sup> WORLD NUCLEAR FORCES , *SIPRI Yearbook 2020, P-15*, [https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/yb20\\_summary\\_en\\_v2.pdf](https://www.sipri.org/sites/default/files/2020-06/yb20_summary_en_v2.pdf), 20 January 2021.

demonstrate that it has severed all links with the militant groups it formerly supported and shut down all the militant camps it set up for them<sup>7</sup>.

Many reports emerged on the 70<sup>th</sup> Independence anniversary of Pakistan in 2017 by its own citizens and others, listing successes and failures of Pakistan till then; and the list of its failures has only grown thereafter.

A well orchestrated propaganda has enabled many of its new generation citizens to forget the pangs of its repeated defeats in its wars with India. Its citizens are even beginning to forget that Bangladesh was perhaps their integral part – The East Pakistan until December 1971 and was lost due to disastrous effect of military intervention in politics<sup>8</sup>. What is even more surprising is that Pakistan's rulers especially its Military is beginning to forget the lessons learned during the Bangladesh liberation war and is repeating the mistakes with added finesse in many of its present parts especially, Baluchistan! Regional identities and the tension between Punjab-dominated central Government and the restlessness in adjoining provinces have always been a major reason for turmoil in Pakistan. As a result Pashtun, Baloch, Sindhi and other groups have periodically revolted against government, due to lingering sense of alienation<sup>9</sup>.

Arsalan Hussain, while describing Pakistan's achievements and failures, noted that India and even Bangladesh that got independence much after Pakistan did, have left Pakistan far behind in terms of education and research development, explaining that Pakistan has only strengthened its political dynasties and made it dependent on foreign aid: adding that most dramatic effect it has imparted to its society is extremism and terrorism<sup>10</sup>. Its

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<sup>7</sup> Pervez Hoodbhoy and Zia Mian, "The India-Pakistan Conflict – Towards The Failure Of Nuclear Deterrence", *Special Policy Forum 9/11*, 13 November, 2002, <https://nautilus.org/napsnet/special-policy-forum-911/the-india-pakistan-conflict-towards-the-failure-of-nuclear-deterrence/>. 25 January 2021.

<sup>8</sup> Arsalan Hussain, "Pakistan's 70 years of freedom: Achievements & Failures", *The Deep Insight*. <https://medium.com/the-deep-insight/pakistans-70-years-of-freedom-achievements-failures-2b6c7dacbb59>. 24 January 2021.

<sup>9</sup> ZIYA US SALAM, "Declan Walsh: I hesitate to call Pakistan a failed democracy", *Frontline*, 09 October 2020. <https://frontline.thehindu.com/arts-and-culture/i-hesitate-to-call-pakistan-a-failed-democracy/article32613187.ece>. 26 January 2021.

<sup>10</sup> Arsalan Hussain, "Pakistan's 70 years of freedom: Achievements & Failures", <https://medium.com/the-deep-insight/pakistans-70-years-of-freedom-achievements-failures-2b6c7dacbb59>, 25 January 2021.

anti India idiosyncrasies inspired by misplaced ideological inclinations have given it many benefits, shortsighted though; seen as its creation of Taliban and overthrow of mighty Russian from Afghanistan replacing the government with its henchmen. The cost it paid and is perhaps still paying is far in excess of benefits it got. Arsalan Hussain further opined that foreign affairs of Pakistan must be dealt with, in Islamabad where Parliament holds the jurisdiction and not in Rawalpindi (where the General headquarters, GHQ is located) which is alleged of designing foreign policy and advised that Military has to stay away from this unless they are asked to give suggestions to the parliament<sup>11</sup>.

One may wish Pakistan well with all the good intentions; but will Pakistan wish it well with a long term perspective as well. It is true that Pakistan did not have right reasons for its creation. Talmiz Ahmad, a former diplomat believed that by May 1947, the British top leaders had accepted the need for partition hoping that West Pakistan would serve Britain's strategic interests by providing Karachi port, air bases and Muslim manpower when required but insisting that Pakistan should be much weaker than India for ensuring that it would continue to depend on western military, political and economic support to look after itself. Mr. Ahmed explained that Jinnah did not create Pakistan but was created by poisoned chalice imposed on South Asia by British imperialism<sup>12</sup>. Jinnah failed the people of Pakistan both domestically and globally by not instilling into them a sense of national unity and national purpose. He failed to address the issue of whether Pakistan is a Muslim state or a Muslim homeland, opening the gates for the world's worst fanatics to commit heinous crimes in the name of their faith<sup>13</sup>.

After independence, while India shaped a modern democratic and secular nation, despite the trauma of partition, Pakistan chose a different course. Right in the beginning itself, Jinnah appeared bitter, vindictive and paranoid. But having been created and sustained itself on mainly anti India disposition, is it not time to reassess the goals for its prosperity, territorial

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<sup>11</sup> ibid

<sup>12</sup> Talmiz Ahmad, "Muhammad Ali Jinnah Got Full Support for His Pakistan Project from the British", *The Wire*. <https://thewire.in/books/jinnah-pakistan-british-gandhi-book-review-ishtiaq-ahmed>. 24 January 2021.

<sup>13</sup> ibid

integrity and sustainable development without compromising its autonomy. A stable region and a peacefully growing Pakistan could bring financial prosperity and well being to its people and improve their living standards. Are there not enough patriots in Pakistan to free it from the self destructive course it has chosen for itself? Are there not enough leaders, bureaucrats, diplomats and academicians who can assist Pakistan Establishment in liberating itself from its outdated resolves? Should Pakistan continue to tread the journey of bloodshed and inevitable further dismemberment? Should Pakistan keep itself tied down to the anti India zeal or look for a long term leadership role in the emerging world order with or without assistance from India but certainly without enmity towards India? Pakistan Establishment may not want this but many people of Pakistan wish it with all their heart and show it as they did recently after India's win at Gabba cricket test match<sup>14</sup>. Should Pakistan not benefit from India's advancements in COVID-19 vaccines as all other neighbours of India are doing?

The Editorial Board, ANU (Australian National University), in their article in East Asia Forum asked a pertinent question; "Pakistan has a path out of the abyss, but will it take it<sup>15</sup>?" They Board highlighted a commonly held belief in Pakistan that "civilian governments serve at the army's pleasure. Pakistani army journals are full of senior officers lamenting the state of civilian politics and national institutions, undermining their authority and effectiveness." The Board members further stated that, Pakistan's poor economic form continues and the economic and political struggles witnessed in 2019; austerity, inflation, rising public sector debt, and poor economic growth is still persisting but politicians, generals, clerics, separatists, militants and activists of various kind continue pulling the country in different directions. The Editorial Board concluded their article in a sad note asking one more relevant question; 'Will 2021 tell a different story', observing that the country has recently been affected by large protests by the opposition parties which

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<sup>14</sup>Yahoo News, Buzz Staff, "Pakistani Anchor's Praise, Wasim Akram's Message: Love For Team India from Across the Border". 22 January 2021. <https://in.yahoo.com/news/pakistani-anchors-praise-wasim-akrams-065112063.html>. 22 January 2021.

<sup>15</sup> Editorial Board, ANU, "Pakistan has a path out of the abyss, but will it take it", *East Asia Forum*. <https://www.eastasiaforum.org/2020/12/07/pakistan-has-a-path-out-of-the-abyss-but-will-it-take-it/>. 22 January 2021

is normal in Pakistani politics, but what is less normal is the open criticism of the army and its chief in traditionally pro-military Punjab.

Sudheendra Kulkarni writing in the 'Quint' brought out that towards the end of his life, Jinnah was sad at what he had accomplished and according to his doctor, Jinnah, when he was in Quetta, saw Liaquat Ali Khan and told him that Pakistan was the biggest blunder of his life, declaring that: "If now I got an opportunity I will go to Delhi and tell Jawaharlal Nehru to forget about the follies of the past and become friends again<sup>16</sup>." Will Pakistan's leaders not endeavor to fulfill the last desire of their Quaid-e-Azam?

### **CERTIFICATE**

The paper is author's individual scholastic articulation. The author certifies that the article is original in content, unpublished and it has not been submitted for publication / web upload elsewhere and that the facts and figures quoted are duly referenced, as needed and are believed to be correct. The paper does not necessarily represent the views of the CENJOWS.

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<sup>16</sup> Sudheendra Kulkarni, "Jinnah Bashing Back With CAA but What Were His Views on Partition". *The Quint*. 26 December 2019. <https://www.thequint.com/voices/opinion/muhammad-ali-jinnah-votary-of-both-two-nations-theory-and-two-nations-together-theory#read-more>. 26 January 2021