



Bullying Pakistan with sanctions doesn't work

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"Bullying Pakistan with sanctions doesn't work" was written by Lt. Colonel Saleem Akhtar Malik (Retired) He holds an honors degree in War Studies, an MBA and M. Phil in Management Sciences. He is the author of a book on India- Pakistan security paradigm called the 'Borrowed Power'.

ABOUT COMMANDELEVEN

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Founded in 2015, CommandEleven provides situational awareness to facilitate a better understanding of the key dynamics that effect Pakistan from a national security perspective, especially in relation to terrorism, insurgencies and extremism.

CommandEleven seeks to inform and guide public policy and decision makers in government, business and military through a rigorous program of publications, conferences, digital medias, policy briefings and recommendations.

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Financial Action Task Force (FATF) of the G7 countries has threatened Pakistan with sanctions if it “fails to comply with necessary actions against terrorism” (Corr,2017). It has, rather magnanimously, given Pakistan three months’ time to comply or else face the music. One can only say that such orchestrated moves are part of the larger narrative which paints Pakistan in dark colors to please India, a 1.3 billion plus market for G-7 countries. This is not the first instance where G7 countries have shown their bias towards Pakistan. In the past also, their leaders had been insinuating against us in order to grab lucrative contracts from India, especially in the defense sector. To add humor to this news, Afghanistan has also threatened to seek UN sanctions against Pakistan for its hallucinatory support of the Taliban terrorists. Afghanistan’s economy is heavily dependent on its trade with Pakistan, and the land and sea routes through Pakistan for access to the rest of the world.

If Afghanistan joins the G7 led sanctions against Pakistan, with India as the main instigator, it will only be shooting itself in the foot. It should remember what had happened to Nepal when India, in retaliation to a weapons deal between China and Nepal few years ago, had stopped the transit trade with Nepal. As for India, it is dying to gain land access through Pakistan to reach the Central Asian markets. Any coercive move by India, in concert with the G7, will close the window of opportunity for India forever.

Anders Corr’s piece on the purported sanctions is a typical example of West’s perpetual realignment of policies, double dealing, and doublespeak, to justify its shifting interests. US and its allies supported Pakistan during the so-called Afghan Jihad because they, according to Brzezinski (1998), needed this country to “sow shit in the Soviet Union’s backyard”. During the 21st Century, they need India to checkmate China, hence the present hullabaloo against Pakistan.

The Taliban, as the world knows, are the avatar of the Afghan Mujahideen who were bankrolled by the CIA during the Cold War period to fight its war in Afghanistan. One should remember that during the height of the Afghan Jihad, Ronald Reagan had likened the Mujahideen to the founding fathers of the United States. The Taliban appeared on the West's radar in the wake of the civil war, which engulfed Afghanistan after the withdrawal of the Soviet forces from this war-torn country. Central Asia is the home of the world’s second largest oil reserves. So, the Taliban were propped up by the US and its allies to act as the vanguard for protecting the West’s interests, particularly the projected pipelines which were being planned to pump Central Asian oil and gas to the refineries in the US and Western Europe. One of its major investors was the Union Oil Company of California (Unocal), which merged with and became a subsidiary of Chevron in 1995. To achieve its aims, Unocal, even flew a selected cadre of the Taliban to its US headquarters for training in pipeline security (Rozoff,2010). The overall US strategy to grab the Central Asian oil and gas has the following salient features:

- Tap the Caspian oil and gas reserves, while at the same time, deny the same to Russia and China.
- Build pipelines that would skirt Russia on the way to the Black Sea and the Mediterranean.
- Promote Kazakh oil to western markets without Russian interference.

- Promote the Turkmenistan-Afghanistan-Pakistan-India gas pipeline, connecting the gas resources of Central Asia to the surging economies of South Asia. Such a line would deprive Iran of transit fees for Turkmen gas crossing its territory while capturing the South Asian gas market coveted by Iran.

Unocal opened an office in Kandahar, the "spiritual birthplace of the Taliban," in 1996 as the latter were completing their conquest of Afghanistan. In 1997, a senior Taliban delegation arrived in the U.S. to meet with Unocal officials. At the time a Unocal spokesman said "the Taliban were expected to spend several days at the company's headquarters in Sugarland, Texas" and it was confirmed that "Unocal says it has agreements both with Turkmenistan to sell its gas and with Pakistan to buy it." So, whenever it suits the US and its allies, they adopt the Taliban, and then discard them at will.

Pakistan Army and Air Force are fighting the Taliban for almost a decade and have destroyed their sanctuaries in Pakistan's Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA). Maybe, in the past, the army was keeping some factions of the Taliban as assets, even as the US, India, and Afghanistan have their proxies in Pakistan's border regions. But, since the launching of operation Zarb-e-Azb, an across the board action is being taken against all the terrorist groups. It takes two to tango (in this case, it takes three, since Afghanistan's NDS is playing as active a role as India's RAW in destabilizing Pakistan).

Corr, alleges that while terrorist attack fatalities in Pakistan have decreased since 2013, they have increased in Afghanistan over the same period. From this he concludes that Pakistan based terrorists are now redirecting their efforts to Afghanistan. He conveniently forgets that during the same period TTP and its confederates, from their Afghan sanctuaries, have launched numerous attacks in Pakistan, resulting in hundreds of casualties. Mullah Fazal Ullah, the TTP Grandmaster, is hiding in Afghanistan. He, along with the Indian sponsored Balochi separatists, is ensconced in safe houses in various Afghan cities and enjoying full NDS and RAW hospitality.

It makes little sense when India accuses Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism in India. While doing so, the Indian leaders deny the fact that they also have their fingers deep in the terrorist pie. How is this happening? Quoting a former Indian police officer, Rajnath (2004) writes that both India and Pakistan use the underworld to undermine each other even as their armies use smugglers to infiltrate into the other's territory to spy on the movements of the enemy army. Indian proxies operate from bases located in Ganga Nagar, Bhachbhar, Birsilpur and Lunkha in Rajasthan.

In a Press Trust of India report published in Express Tribune (2014), India's interior minister Rajnath Singh blamed that Pakistan was providing shelter to Dawood Ibrahim who was hiding along the Pak-Afghan border. Dawood Ibrahim and Chota Rajan are two Mumbai underworld dons who used to operate together in the notorious Indian organized crime syndicate "D-Company". The Syndicate had been actively involved in money laundering through sponsoring the Bollywood film industry, cricket match fixing (particularly IPL), drug trafficking, extortion, and terrorism in South Asia, including Pakistan. The Syndicate flourished in the narcotics business by spreading its tentacles into the Far East, Middle

East, South East Asia, South Africa, and Australia. It was involved in smuggling of synthetic drugs such as Methaqualone, Acetic Anhydride, Pseudoephedrine, and other chemical ingredients used in production of Mandrax, Ecstasy, and Morphine, etc. The money earned from narcotics was provided to the Indian intelligence agencies for their South Asian and overseas terror financing.

Such organizations work solely for money, have no permanent affiliations/loyalties, and are run by two/three/four... timers. This is what happened to D-Company when Dawood Ibrahim turned on his Indian masters. Reportedly, Dawood Ibrahim and Chota Rajan parted ways after the 1992-93 Mumbai bomb blasts allegedly masterminded by Dawood Ibrahim. According to Rajnath (2004), "When the BJP came into power, a sensitive organization contacted Chota Rajan, and he agreed to work with it. BJP government, especially L.K. Advani, used Chota Rajan to launch operations against Pakistan". Citing examples of how Chota Rajan was used for terrorism in Pakistan, Some Indian officials revealed that the Karachi bomb blast on 11th July, 2003 was the handiwork of the Chota Rajan gang. The headquarters of Chota Rajan gang was located on a cruise ship anchored near the Malaysian coast. He has three passports issued him from Malaysia, Laos, and India.

After the split, Dawood Ibrahim moved to Dubai and set up shop there, famously inviting Bollywood actors to his parties in Dubai and Sharjah. After the Mumbai bombings, he became India's most wanted man. Dawood is currently on the wanted list of Interpol for cheating, criminal conspiracy, and running an organized crime syndicate. India accuses Pakistan of harboring Dawood, Hafiz Saeed, and many others, even as Pakistan accuses India of harboring the terrorists involved in sabotage and killings in Karachi, interior Sindh, Baluchistan, and Pakistan's North West. In 2010, a US Congressional report, prompted by India, claimed that D-Company had a strategic alliance with Pakistan's ISI. They overlooked how D-Company had been providing black money to RAW for terror financing in Pakistan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka, and Nepal. In November 2015, Chota Rajan was apprehended from Bali by the Indonesian police and handed over to the Indian authorities. He has since been brought back to India, ostensibly to face charges of terrorism and money laundering, etc., or is he simply handed back into the custody of his erstwhile protectors?

We now discuss the linkages between the Indian film industry and Mumbai's underworld, and their involvement in terrorist operations in the region. It is an open secret that RAW coordinates the underworld's financing of Bollywood movies and exploits the film industry to launder black money for India's terrorist operations in South Asia. Through various channels, including use of sea launches and human transporters trailing along the desert and mountain routes, this laundered money finds its way to Dubai, Chah Bahar, Zahidan, Qandahar, and many other cities and towns dotting Pakistan- Iran and Pakistan - Afghan border areas. From there the money is issued to various Indian sponsored terrorist outfits which operate in Pakistan and Afghanistan. Indian consulates in Iran and Afghanistan serve as conduits for this terror financing.

To have a glimpse of these linkages, let us see how organizations like the Indian International Film Academy (IIFA) are exploited by India's Ministry of External Affairs and RAW to facilitate and promote Indian covert objectives. We all know how India abetted the Tamil insurgency in Sri Lanka, and the havoc it wreaked on this island nation. After

about three decades of intense fighting, the Indians realized it was a futile war and decided to call it quits.

IIFA's awards presenting ceremony is an extravaganza held every year in different countries around the world. The 11th IIFA Awards ceremony took place on 5th January, 2010 at the Sugathadasa stadium in Colombo. Indian Minister of State for External Affairs was the chief guest. The ceremony was televised in India and internationally. At the ceremony's end, Jacquelin Fernandez, the India based goodwill ambassador of the NGO "Habitat for Humanity" announced that the NGO, in partnership with the Indian superstar Salman Khan, will build 100 homes for the war affected people of Sri Lanka. Quoted in Indian newspaper Deccan Herald, Khan said "Many people lost their lives or have been displaced due to war, and constructing 100 homes is a commendable and good start." (Habitat, 2010). This is how you first destroy a country and then make a mockery of rehabilitating it. This was not all. To complete the double dealing, The South Indian Film Chamber of Commerce, Film Employees Federation of South India, Tamil Nadu Theatre-Owner's Association, and Tamil Nadu Producer's Council were some of the organizations who vehemently opposed holding of IIFA ceremony in Colombo and boycotted it.

Coming back to Corr, he mentions about Pakistan's support of the insurgency in the Indian occupied Kashmir. Going by the amount of innocent blood spilled by the Indian occupation forces, writers like him would have hit the roof had even a fraction of such violence taken place elsewhere. Kashmiris are fighting for their independence, and this differentiates them from terrorists. Has the collective conscience of the so-called civilized societies gone numb and fails to stir even when hundreds of unarmed Kashmiris have been blinded and killed by the Indian pellet guns?

In 2014, the G7 had condemned the Russian Federation's occupation of Crimea, and imposed financial sanctions on it. It can similarly target Pakistan, but it remains to be seen how effective such sanctions will be in the face of opposition from China and Russia. Since the time, Americans packed their bags and left Afghanistan in the wake of the Afghan Jihad, Pakistan has been living under one set of sanctions or another. Though hardships have been faced, this has, however, not translated into diminishing of Pakistan's economic resilience and its capabilities to thwart foreign sponsored aggression. Even while thinking about such arbitrary actions against Pakistan, the international players should be careful not to corner this country. Withdrawal of G7's cooperation with Pakistan will create a vacuum which will inevitably be filled with other powers. As the CPEC unfolds, Pakistan's economic dependence on the West will start decreasing. Located at a strategic vantage point which dominates Asia's land and sea lanes of communication, Pakistan cannot be ignored and isolated. It is, therefore, in the interests of all the global stakeholders, not to subject this region to another round of the Great Game. Regional stability in Eurasia and South Asia can only be achieved when the sensitivities of all the regional players are addressed. The days of *Regional Policemen* are over. This should have become amply clear after the fall of the Shah of Iran. Bad days are there for the G7 and USA if they have become so helpless as to need India to checkmate China.

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