

Fault Lines in Pakistan's Armed Forces: Impact on the Stability of the State

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Since the creation of Pakistan, the state has been bedevilled by one crisis after another. Over the last six decades, Pakistan has remained consistently dependant on its armed forces to create a nation state from an entity divided by ethnic, religious and social fault lines. Today, the fissures which divide the country have deepened and Pakistan now is on the verge of tearing itself apart. While the armed forces stand as a bulwark against emerging centrifugal forces and have the capacity and institutional coherence to restore order and maintain the integrity of the state, fissures within the armed forces do not bode well for the country. This article examines the role of the armed forces in the governance of Pakistan, its counter insurgency campaign in the country's troubled western borders and the impact of radicalisation within the armed forces on the future of the country.

Pakistan's military¹ has always played a larger than life role in the affairs of state. Since independence in August 1947, the three traditional pillars of a state – the legislature, the executive and the judiciary have been consistently overshadowed by Pakistan's military which can well be considered as the fourth pillar.

The communal basis for partition and the resultant riots made religion central to the idea of Pakistan. Getting the new nation on its feet presented major economic and political challenges and the manner in which these were addressed deeply influenced Pakistan's evolution as a nation state. To paper over differences resulting from ethnicity and language, inter-provincial rivalries and divergent political interests of various groups, Pakistani identity was attempted to be forged through religious symbolism and by building and creating an India-Pakistan rivalry and hostility.² The fears of dilution of Muslim identity by a larger aggressive India became central to Pakistan's identity, reinforced over time through the educational system and state propaganda. Pakistani nationalism thus came to be defined in anti India terms. Pakistan 'was' what India 'was not'.³ That India was an existential threat to Pakistan became the leitmotif for many in the Pakistani establishment and formed the basis for justifying the need for a large military to protect the new nation.

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Fault lines in large organisations such as militaries develop over long periods of time. They are a product of policy decisions and a combination of several other factors which impact on the military. This is true for the Pakistan army, which has taken upon itself the mantle of guarding the nation's ideological frontiers over and above its mandated role of guarding Pakistan's geographical boundaries. It exerts significant influence over security and foreign policy issues, especially issues pertaining to India and maintains total control over the country's nuclear programme and nuclear assets. It has repeatedly demonstrated that it can and will influence the nature and direction of political change in Pakistan without necessarily assuming power and remains deeply concerned about protecting its own interests and standing in society. Its belief that it alone can handle national interest and security concerns indicates that Pakistan is likely to remain under the direct or indirect dictates of the army⁴.

This article seeks to examine the causative factors for the growth of fault lines within the Pakistan army and offers an assessment of the impact this will have on the state.

The Rise of Military Influence

When India was partitioned, the British Indian army was divided too, with India getting 260,000 of the 400,000 soldiers and Pakistan the remaining 140,000. Eight regiments of infantry- each having several battalions went to Pakistan along with six armoured units and eight artillery regiments. This comprised over 30 per cent of the combined army.⁵ Pakistan got a 40 per cent share of the navy and that of the Air Force was 20 per cent⁶. Of the undivided India revenues, Pakistan received 17 per cent⁷. In terms of administrative staff, of the 1,400 Indian Civil Service officers, only 80 went to Pakistan i.e. less than 6 per cent⁸. Also, India several tall leaders of the stature of Nehru and Patel. In Pakistan, Jinnah's death soon after independence removed the only leader with charisma from the Pakistani scene. The military thus assumed a position of dominance in the new state. This dominance increased when the governor general of Pakistan, Ghulam Muhammad dissolved the Constituent Assembly in October 1954 and in its place established a 'Cabinet of Talents' which included military and civil officials. General Ayub Khan became the minister of defence while remaining the army chief⁹. The army thus became directly involved in politics. The military and civil bureaucracy came to have a substantive role in governance and maintained its influence over society and the provinces at the expense of the elected representatives¹⁰.

Iskander Mirza took over as governor general from Ghulam Muhammad in August 1955. When the 1956 Constitution was adopted, the title of the head of state was

changed to president with little change in the powers and duties associated with the office. Mirza was unanimously elected as the first president of Pakistan. On October 7, 1958, feeling threatened by the reorganisation of the Muslim League and the alliance of the Awami League with the Punjabi groups, he abrogated the constitution, dissolved the central and provincial assemblies and imposed martial law across the country. While retaining the post of president, he appointed Ayub Khan as the martial law administrator and the supreme commander of the armed forces¹¹. On October 27, 1958, Ayub deposed Mirza and took on himself the mantle of president while retaining martial law. At this time, seeing the rank corruption and disintegration of the political system, the army took upon itself the role of guarding the nation's polity along with its national frontiers. It then set about rebuilding the political system and setting up new economic structures¹². A policy of inducting young officers into the civil services in order to strengthen the military's position in civil society was initiated. Nearly 300 military officers were given key administrative and judicial positions – a move which ensured Ayub's continuity in ruling the country¹³.

Ayub ruled Pakistan under martial law until June 1962 and thereafter as president till March 1969. He inducted some politicians in his cabinet in 1962 and made a Constitution which legitimised his rule after the withdrawal of martial law. The precedent established by him has since been followed by other military rulers.

Role in Foreign Affairs

It was important from the Pakistani viewpoint to woo the West to get economic and military aid to combat India. Ayub, as the commander-in-chief of Pakistan's army, visited the US in September-October 1953, 'of his own volition', ahead of the visit of the country's head of state and foreign minister. As per Shirin Tahir-Kheli, he sought a 'deal whereby Pakistan could - for the right price – serve as the West's eastern anchor in an Asian alliance structure'¹⁴. This suited US interests in the region as it enhanced their capability for containing the Soviet Union. Pakistan joined the SEATO (South East Asia Treaty Organisation) in 1954 and a year later joined the CENTO (Central Treaty Organisation). The alliance further flourished when Ayub became the president in 1958. While Pakistani interests were served in the form of aid for their own projects of national consolidation based on Islam and confrontation with India, Pakistan did not provide military facilities as sought by the US citing domestic compulsions. However, U-2 reconnaissance flights and listening posts aimed at the Soviet Union were permitted. This subsequently became the norm for his successors, where military and economic assistance was sought and taken from the US but only limited support was given in return.

Impact of Religion

Pakistan is an 'ideological state', and its ideology is Islam. Its leadership has consistently played upon religious sentiment as an instrument of strengthening internal politics or relations with Western countries. The attempt has been to 'manage' militant Islamism, and so calibrate it that it serves nation building functions without destabilising internal politics or relations with the West.

During Ayub's tenure, the study of Islam or 'Islamiyat' was introduced as a compulsory part of education at all levels. As taught in schools, the history of Pakistan was no longer a product of a post-colonial constitutional power-sharing struggle or the subcontinent's syncretic and shared Hindu-Muslim heritage, but an almost inexorable culmination of the arrival of Islam on the subcontinent. Notions of an implacable Hindu and Indian hostility were reinforced¹⁵. While Ayub Khan was not imbued with radical ideology, he was neither a secularist nor was he averse to Pakistan having a state ideology. General Zia ul Haq went further down the road in Islamising Pakistan's legal and educational system, but his policy was an extension of a consistent state ideology and not an aberration¹⁶.

The Pakistan army first took recourse to using Islam to reinforce the nation's defence in 1947-48. Jihad was invoked to mobilise tribesmen from the frontier for raiding and seizing Kashmir and religious scholars were asked to issue supportive *fatwas* or religious decrees. The attempt was unsuccessful but tapping jihadi sentiments as part of its war fighting strategy and the use of proxies was to become a part of state policy to asymmetrically secure political and territorial gains vis-à-vis India. A study published by the Bureau of National Reconstruction¹⁷, during Ayub's tenure stressed that Pakistan should turn to its own ideology and inherent strength as a solution for Pakistan's security problems. It proposed 'irregular warfare' based on jihad, as a contingency in case its relationship with the United States weakened. 'Irregular warfare' as proposed by the study was tested by Pakistan in an offensive posture in August 1965 when infiltrators were sent into Kashmir, in the hope of igniting a wider uprising. The support from India's Muslims in Kashmir however was not forthcoming and most of the infiltrators were captured by the local people and handed over to the security forces. India retaliated on September 6 by extending the war all along the international border. The conflict ended in a stalemate, denying Pakistan the military advantage it had hoped to achieve. But in the aftermath of the conflict, the Pakistani military moved closer to an Islamist ideology with religious symbolisms being used to raise the morale of troops. Pakistan's state controlled media generated a frenzy of jihad, extolling the virtues of Pakistan's 'soldiers of Islam'. Many young officers who fought in that conflict described it as a struggle between Islam and un-Islam, a terminology used previously only by religious ideologues such as Jamaat-e-Islami's Maulana Maududi¹⁸.

The 1971 Conflict and Its Aftermath

General Ayub Khan was deposed by his army chief, General Yahya Khan on March 25, 1969. The latter imposed martial law and abrogated the constitution. A week later he took oath as the president of Pakistan while retaining the post of army chief and chief martial law administrator. By now the army too had changed, from being an apolitical force to one that was deeply involved in the running of the country. Over involvement in civilian affairs and martial law duties had made it top-heavy and corrupt and this adversely impacted on its training, thought processes, and actions. At this time, the fault lines had begun to widen between the two wings of Pakistan, with the east wing feeling increasingly aggrieved that West Pakistan was compromising its security interests. Other grievances were of earlier standing and pertained to the issue of language, representation in the assembly and distribution of resources for development. The civil disturbance which ensued led to military action against the Bengalis. The fissures within society were visible in the manner in which the conflict was presented. In East Pakistan it was viewed as a counter insurgency drive; in the western wing it was characterised as a war for Pakistan's Islamic identity and the troops were presented as Mujahideen fighting the enemies of Islam. It hence conformed to the earlier pattern of exploiting Islamic sentiment in conflict. Civil unrest finally led to war with India in which the Pakistani army in East Pakistan was decisively defeated and an independent country, Bangladesh was formed in what had been East Pakistan. This was a most humiliating period for the Pakistan military as despite being involved in governance of the country since 1958, it failed to prevent the break up of the country. The army relinquished power to a civilian government under Zulfikar Ali Bhutto after its humiliating defeat. Thereafter, Pakistan started rebuilding its army.

Pakistan Goes Nuclear

To deal with its perceived insecurity with regard to India, Pakistan's revised strategy encompassed building an arsenal of nuclear weapons. For Bhutto, the bomb was a means to increase Pakistan's international freedom of movement, even though it could invite strong international condemnation, alienating at the same time Pakistan's major ally, the United States. Bhutto perceived the bomb as vital for neutralising India's nuclear programme. He also saw in the bomb a device to erode the army's central military role, believing that it would be under civilian control as the army lacked the technical capability to produce a nuclear weapon. He actively encouraged the nuclear programme, sought and procured assistance from China and Libya, and approved AQ Khan's scheme to steal the plans for an enrichment facility to build a uranium device. Ironically, the nuclear programme designed to undercut the central role of the army, is now under army control.¹⁹

Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan once again put Pakistan at the centre of US strategic interests and led to very close ties between the two countries. General Zia ul Haq who assumed power after removing Bhutto continued covertly with the nuclear programme and at the same time received massive military aid from the US. To the Americans, the Pakistani bomb was of lesser concern than their need for a proxy in the war against the Soviets in Afghanistan. The US provided Pakistan with a vast array of conventional weapons in the belief that conventional strength would make Pakistan feel more secure and obviate their need for going nuclear. This hope was not realised. Pakistan took the conventional weapons but continued with its nuclear programme. In 1998, Pakistan openly tested nuclear weapons after India went public with its own tests.²⁰ Acquisition of nuclear weapons has emboldened Pakistan to continue with the proxy war against India in Kashmir through terrorist groups like the Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JeM) and Harkat-ul-Mujahideen (HuM). The assumption in Pakistani military circles is that fear of a nuclear conflict will prevent a conventional military response from India. Whether Pakistan will resort to the use of nuclear weapons if India responds conventionally to Pakistan inspired terrorist attacks of a serious nature can only be speculated upon. For the moment, Pakistan is using the nuclear card to neutralise India's conventional superiority.

Impact of Zia ul Haq and Soviet Occupation of Afghanistan

The Zia decade (July 1977- August 1988), coincided largely with the decade of Soviet occupation in Afghanistan (December 1979 – May 1988). The anti Soviet jihad which Pakistan supported and propped up with US assistance served the purpose of defeating the Soviets but led to Pakistan becoming a major global centre of radical Islamists ideas and groups. During the war against the Soviet Union, a large number of Afghans took refuge in Pakistan and were housed in camps which later became the base for the recruitment of religious warriors, or mujahideen. Financial and material support for the mujahideen came from the United States and Saudi Arabia using the ISI as the conduit. Over time, religious schools (madrassas) became the breeding ground for these warriors and religious leaders assumed dominance in a society where traditionally they had a subservient role to play and were excluded from participating in tribal councils (called jirgas). By the time the Soviets were defeated and the US had left the region, religion had become a major force in the frontier.

Within the rest of Pakistan too, Zia put the country firmly on the path of Islamisation and jihadi militancy. The strategies that Zia appropriated and propagated were based on narrow, medieval interpretations of Islam, which resulted in gender biased attitudes and policies and militarised exhortations to take up arms for the sake of jihad. The stratification of Pakistan's educational infrastructure also created significant divergences of world views with madrassa students

tending to gravitate more toward jihad. Public school or Urdu-medium students too have imbibed radical ideas but to a lesser extent. Most of the children of the Zia years are young men now and they form a large part of the Pakistan army's rank and file. While the army's senior leadership may be relatively immune to radical thoughts and ideas, the same cannot be said for the rest of the military. The killing of Salman Taseer, governor of Punjab province by his security guard reflects the mindset of those young men and women impacted by Zia's thrust on Islamic ideology. Husain Qadri, the killer was unrepentant. 'I am a slave of the Prophet and the punishment for one who commits blasphemy is death', he told a television crew from Dunya TV that arrived at the scene shortly after the killing²¹. While Qadri was from the police and not from the army, he belonged to the Punjab which is the major recruiting zone for the Pakistani military. The linkages and conclusions cannot be lost on the Pakistan army.

The Post 9/11 Landscape

When the US forces ousted the Afghanistan Taliban regime in October 2011, its leadership relocated to the Western border of Pakistan in the Federally Administered Tribal areas (FATA), Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP) and Balochistan. Afghan tribal leaders who had earlier fought against the Soviets and had tribal links inside Pakistan's borders also returned to those bases for support in their fight against the International Security Assistance Force (ISAF), using their Pakhtun links to garner support from local populations. In an astonishing U turn taken under political and military compulsions, Pakistan, which had close links with the Taliban government in Afghanistan, now switched sides and became an ally of the United States. Musharraf offered logistic support to the US war effort in Afghanistan and promised to move Pakistani troops to help seal the border region for which troops from the Army's XI Corps were moved to FATA. This put him at odds with Al Qaeda and the locally established Islamic groups in FATA and KP and got Pakistan embroiled in a serious home grown insurgency. The army was hugely resented by the tribal militias, many of whom had ties with the Afghans from across the border. They viewed the Pakistan army as an 'alien force', doing the bidding of a foreign power.²² In Balochistan, the locals often said that the Pakistani soldiers were not Muslims since 'they urinated while standing up'²³.

Emergence of Fault Lines – Counter Insurgency Operations

The Pakistan army's experience in counter insurgency (CI) operations has been limited. The employment of the army in CI operations in East Pakistan in 1971 was brutal and led to the eventual break up of the country. Two years later the army was used to quell the insurgency in Balochistan. Here too, the army came in with a heavy hand against Baloch nationalists seeking independence from Pakistani

rule. The movement was quelled but insurgency remains a part of the landscape in Balochistan. Over the past decade, the army has been engaged in CI operations in FATA, KP, and parts of Balochistan. It has achieved limited success at places and little at others. In contrast to Pakistan army's lack of success in dealing with its home grown insurgents, it has been considerably more successful in fomenting insurgency abroad, through its Inter Services Intelligence (ISI) both in Afghanistan and in Kashmir²⁴.

The north west frontier of Pakistan was governed for the most part by its own tribal customs. The concept of 'Pakhtunwali' has been a dominant characteristic of tribal custom which encompasses 'tora' (courage), 'nanawatai' (hospitality) and asylum (melmastia). It also includes 'badal' (revenge), a characteristic exploited by the British and later the Pakistan government.²⁵ South Waziristan, the home of the Mehsud tribe is now the stronghold of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)²⁶ under Mehsud leadership. North Waziristan, the land of the Ahmedzai Wazir and the Daur tribes is also home to the Haqqani group of the Afghan Taliban. Another important grouping is a Wahhabi orthodox group called the Tehreek-e-Nifaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi (the Movement for the Imposition of the Prophet Mohammad's Traditions), known as the TNSM with its base in Malakand.

Between 2001 and 2010, the army operated in FATA and the Malakand division. The troops employed by Pakistan were from the Punjab province. Their inability to converse in the Pashto language made it difficult for them to operate and interact with the local population. Initially, the army was deployed in FATA, but aimed to control the area through domination by physical presence and deals with local leaders rather than any offensive action per se. They however underestimated the ability of the tribal militia, lacked knowledge of the terrain and was worsted in most of the encounters. This had an effect on other militants in the settled areas of KP, one of which was the TNSM, whose operations took on greater momentum after the July 2007 government attack on the Red Mosque in Islamabad. Many of the people killed in the attack came from Swat and were members of the TNSM. Its leader, Fazlullah used the attack as a rallying point to gain support in Malakand Division. He also aligned himself with the TTP, making the tribals a far more potent force and a serious threat to the state of Pakistan.

From 2007 onwards, the military has shown greater intent in combating the militant groups. Five major operations were launched, some of which still continue. Operation 'Sherdil' (Lionheart) was launched in 2007 in Bajaur. Operations 'Zalzala' (earthquake) and 'Rah-e-Nijaat' (the path to salvation) were launched in South Waziristan in 2008 and 2009 respectively and operations 'Rah-e-Haq' (the true path) and 'Rah-e-Rast' (the correct path) were launched in end 2007 and 2009 respectively in the Malakand Division.

In the Malakand Division, 'Rah-e-Haq' was launched to evict the TNSM which had seized control of Swat and other areas. Extensive employment of fighter aircraft and heavy artillery helped the army clear the area by end of 2007. Over the following year, however, the TNSM moved back to its stronghold which led to the launching of 'Rah-e-Rast'. Once again, extensive use was made of aerial and ground bombardment before the forces moved in for operation. A massive exodus of over 4.5 million people took place from districts of Swat, Buner and Dir²⁷. The TNSM (and the TTP which had allied with the TNSM) were dislodged but the leadership of the organisations remained intact and the area continues to be troubled.

Operation 'Sherdil', launched in August 2008 by the Frontier Corps of Pakistan supported by a combat brigade of the army to reclaim all of Bajaur from the Pakistani Taliban was a slow and sluggish affair. It basically cleared the area of the civilian population and then went in with air and artillery assaults to destroy the militants that remained. Large swathes of Bajaur were reduced to rubble in an effort to rout the militants who had dug deep tunnels and bunkers.²⁸ In March 2010, Bajaur was declared cleared of militants but this area remains troubled even now.

Operation 'Zalzalla' was launched in January 2008 in South Waziristan using an infantry division plus a mountain brigade. The aim was to flush out the Taliban militants. In May, the army launched a major attack against a small town called Spinkai. The town was reduced to rubble and 200,000 people fled and were rendered homeless. In mid 2009, the army again moved against the TTP in South Waziristan in operation 'Rah-e-Nijaat'. Over two divisions were employed along with air and heavy artillery. Control over the area was wrested from the TTP but the Pakistani forces failed to capture or kill any of the top Taliban leaders. Here too, the prospects for long term peace remain elusive.

The operations carried out by the Pakistan army over the past decade against insurgent forces have done nothing to raise its credibility. The military's penchant for using excessive force has led to the displacement of millions of people without in any way reducing the level of violence in society. Military actions have alienated large sections of the population and this throws up important questions on the Army's ability to handle insurgency on its western border and its standing in Balochistan, FATA and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. Violence in these areas is unlikely to abate forcing the army to commit large forces to pacification operations for a considerable period of time.

Fault Line - The Idea of Strategic Assets

The Pakistan army views Afghan groups such as the Quetta Shura located in Quetta, Balochistan and the Haqqani network located in North Waziristan as

'strategic assets'. The Afghan Taliban is supported by the ISI to maintain influence over Afghanistan post an American drawdown of forces from the area as many in Pakistan's military establishment continue to think of the Afghanistan landmass as the backyard of Pakistan and an area which will provide them strategic depth in the event of hostilities with India. Pakistan has also encouraged and promoted terrorist organisations such as the LeT, JuM, and HuM which it views as strategic assets to be used against India. These terrorist groups have been waging a proxy war against India over the past two decades in Kashmir at very little cost to Pakistan – a policy of bleeding India with a thousand cuts – but keeping the conflict below perceived Indian threshold levels. While the army is concerned and active in addressing the Pakistan Taliban, it actively aids and abets the Afghan Taliban and the terrorist groups created by it to be used against India. Pakistani duplicity with respect to the Afghan Taliban has led to strained relations with the United States which could impact the US aid being given to the country. This could have serious repercussions for Pakistan whose economy is already under severe strain. The strategic cooperation pact signed between India and Afghanistan on October 4, 2011, which also envisages training of Afghan security forces by India is also being viewed with concern by Pakistan. But to a large extent, this set of events has been brought about by Pakistan support to Afghan Taliban and the suspicion that the ISI was supporting the latter in terror attacks in Afghanistan to include the assassination of Mr Rabbani, who was heading the Afghan High Peace Commission. The flaw in the concept of strategic assets is that terrorist organisations created for a purpose eventually may not conform to what the ISI seeks of them. Merely operating against the Pakistan Taliban or the TNSM cannot eradicate terrorism from Pakistan as there is a link between all these organisations. The Pakistan military's reluctance to abandon this policy has created a situation where the army is likely to be continually engaged in fighting terrorism on its own soil.

Religious Fault Lines

Religious radicalism led to an attempted coup by Major General Zaheerul Islam Abbasi in 1995. Abbasi, who along with 35 other conspirators was arrested on September 26, 1995 failed to kill the Pakistan army's senior leadership when it had assembled for the corps commanders conference chaired by the army chief. The ostensible aim of the coup was to overthrow what Abbasi saw as an un-Islamic regime²⁹. While the army dealt with the dissidents, the incident highlights the spread of radical thought within the rank and file of the army.

Over the last decade, the conflict in Afghanistan and in Pakistan's western border regions has seen a growth of such radicalism. Many officers and men are now questioning the army's involvement in the frontier and US pressure to do more against the insurgents remains a point of concern. Many in the military are not enthused by the in fighting against fellow Muslims. There have been cases reported

in the Pakistani media where army units have avoided conflict due to religious sentiments. Cases have also been reported of individuals refusing to take up arms against fellow Muslims. Such cases are still few but can no longer be discounted. While some may genuinely feel revulsion against fighting fellow Muslims, the argument is not universal. The Pakistan army had no such inhibitions in dealing with their countrymen in East Pakistan nor do they have any inhibitions in dealing with the nationalist Balochis. It is not inconceivable then, that some are citing religious grounds for avoiding conflict, not so much because of the love of Islam but to avoid the strain of conflict in FATA and KP where the tribes have on most occasions got the better of the army.³⁰ Rationalising weakness under the cover of religious sentiment is a handy tool. The Pakistan army takes great pride in its military prowess but that pride is now getting dented in conflicts across the Frontier. This is a fault line which could have serious repercussions on the Pakistan army and its will to fight.

Fault Line – Nexus with Taliban Groups

The process of the radicalisation of the rank and file in the Pakistan military is also impacting on the functioning of the army and can no longer be brushed under the carpet. Pakistan's senior leadership, as of now does, not appear to exhibit signs of radicalisation, but the same cannot be said of the junior and middle level leadership and more so of the rank and file. The impact of the Zia years, which were a continuation of earlier policy albeit in a more demanding way, has affected the army and could lead to activities inimical to the armed forces as seen in the recent attack on the naval base at Mehran which as per the evidence available was made possible only by the support of some naval personnel within the base. More such instances cannot be ruled out. A nexus between Army personnel and militant groups gives rise to a larger fear of the safety of Pakistan's nuclear assets. The possibility of some within the Pakistani military collaborating with the Pakistan Taliban to get control of these assets is no longer inconceivable; the consequences of such an occurrence could be horrendous.

The fact that Osama bin Laden was killed by the US forces in Abbottabad – in the heartland of the Pakistan military - has also thrown up serious concerns. From the military standpoint, the rank and file is none too happy by the way in which the entire issue was handled and the leadership has come under the scanner. This does not bode well for the future.

Prognosis

The military's role in governance is unlikely to be diluted. Its polity hence will continue to suffer from inexperience in governance with all its negative

connotations. While the military does not let the civilians rule, its own rule lacks legitimacy. Failure to handle insurgency will hence have serious consequences on the integrity of the state.

Governance in Pakistan remains highly centralised and unrepresentative. There appears to be a lack of institutional mechanisms for dealing with discontent that has allowed inter-provincial differences to fester without resolution thus creating additional challenges for the state. This is unlikely to change. In the ideological division over the role of Islam in national life, Pakistan's religious parties have now become a well armed and well financed force that wields considerable influence within different branches of government. The symbiotic relationship between these groups and the military has been beneficial to both. However, the Islamist world view propagated by these groups and their violent vigilantism has become a serious threat to Pakistani civil society and has also promoted sectarian terrorism. The failure of the military to control these groups will see an increase in terror activities within the state of Pakistan and resurgence in exporting jihadist ideology for regional influence. India-Pakistan relations are hence likely to be further vitiated despite repeated efforts at talks between the two sides.

Pakistan continues to suffer from an identity crisis. Hostility towards India hence serves as an important element of national identity. This hostility is the very *raison d'être* of the need for a strong military at the expense of other institutions. The Pakistan military will hence be reluctant to effect a change in the status quo. Pakistan's relations with the US have been part of the military's policy tripod that emphasises Islam as a national unifier, rivalry with India as the principal objective of the state's foreign policy, and an alliance with the United States as a means to defray the costs of Pakistan's massive military expenditures. The military has used this ploy successfully in all its dealings with the United States. This equation is now coming increasingly under threat as US lawmakers on Capitol Hill seem progressively more reluctant to continue to provide military hardware to Pakistan without adequate returns on the ground. The flow of US military and economic assistance has led to adventurism on the part of Pakistan's military leadership and has contributed to frayed relationships with India. A decline in military assistance is likely to encourage Pakistan to pursue a friendlier course with India but could also lead to further radicalisation within the country and the military.

The challenge confronting Pakistan is a seeming paradox. A strong military is required to confront the present internal and external challenges which Pakistan faces. But the stronger the military, the greater will be its reluctance to loosen its hold on the levers of power to which it has become accustomed. The dynamic created by an ideology defined by the mosque also has to be addressed. How the Pakistan military reacts to the challenge will define its cohesion in the years to

come. In 1971, societal fault lines led to the breakup of the nation. The possibility of Pakistan's army fracturing on its fault lines as of now is unlikely but that situation may change in the future if causative factors are not addressed. If the military fractures, the state runs the risk of becoming a failed state with nuclear weapons – a process that could well lead to the Balkanisation of Pakistan.



Notes:

- 1 The term 'military' is used for all the branches of Pakistan's Armed Forces. However, it must be understood that it is the Army which is the dominant player in the affairs of Pakistan and not the other two services.
- 2 For a detailed exposition of the views expressed in this paragraph, see Hussain Haqqani, *Dysfunction of an ideological state: Pakistan's Recurrent Crises in Historic Context*; available at www.cepsi.umontreal.ca/uploads/gersi_publications.filename/CIPSS_WorkingPaper_20.pdf
- 3 Ibid.
- 4 Cohen, Stephen P., *The Idea of Pakistan*, Oxford University Press, 2205, pp. 128, 129.
- 5 Cloughley, Brian, *A history of the Pakistan Army Wars and Insurrections*, Lancer Publishers and Distributors, Second Edition, pp. 2-3.
- 6 The strength of the navy and air force was miniscule as compared to the strength of the Army.
- 7 Jalal, Ayesha, *The State of Martial Rule: The Origins of Pakistan's Political Economy of Defence*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 1990, p. 42.
- 8 Cohen, Stephen, Op. Cit., p. 41.
- 9 Syed, M. M., "Pakistan: Struggle for Power 1947-58", *Pakistan Journal of History and Culture*, vol. 15, no. 2, July-December 1994, p. 85.
- 10 Available at Pakistanherald.com/Profile/Malik-Ghulam-Muhammad-1177.
- 11 Available at www.storyofpakistan.com/person.asp?period=P015
- 12 Shaikh, Farzan *Making Sense of Pakistan*, London: Hurst & Company, 2008, p. 13.
- 13 Khan, Fazal Muqem, *Pakistan's Crisis in Leadership*, Karachi: National Book Foundation, 1973, p. 40.
- 14 Tahir-Kheli, Shirin, *The United States and Pakistan – The Evolution of an Influence Relationship*, New York: Praeger, 1982, p. 3.
- 15 Haider, Ziad, "Islam and the Early History of Pakistan", available at <http://www.hoover.org/publications/defining-ideas/article/77366>
- 16 Haqqani, Hussain, *Dysfunction of an ideological state: Pakistan's Recurrent Crises in Historic Context*, p. 15, 16, available at www.cepsi.umontreal.ca/uploads/gersi_publications.filename/CIPSS_WorkingPaper_20.pdf
- 17 The Bureau of National Reconstruction was Ayub Khan's intelligence and research outfit.
- 18 Ziad Haider, Op. Cit.
- 19 Cohen, Stephen, Op Cit., p. 140.
- 20 Hussain Haqqani, Op Cit., p.15, 16.
- 21 Available at www.nytimes.com/2011/01/05/world/asia/05pakistan.html
- 22 Nawas, Shuja, *Learning by Doing: The Pakistan Army's Experience with Counterinsurgency*; Atlantic Council, February 2011.

23 Ibid

24 Ibid

25 Ibid

26 The formation of the TTP by Baitullah Mehsud in Dec 2007 was aimed at bringing all Taliban groups under one command and coordinating their activities in FATA and KP. The TTP is an amalgamation of 40 groups. The aim is to engage the military on many fronts. Also, if the security forces attack one group, the others can open new fronts to relieve pressure on the attacked group.

27 As per Shuja Nawas, 3 million people were displaced of which only 200,000 were kept in official camps. This data is taken from 'The Operation Rah-e-Rast', Editor Dr Noor Ul Haq, available at <http://ipripak.org/factfiles/ff111.pdfhttp>

28 Nawas, Shuja, *Learning by Doing: The Pakistan Army's Experience with Counterinsurgency*, Atlantic Council, February 2011.

29 Cloughley, Brian, Op Cit., pp. 354, 355.

30 As per some reports, nearly 3000 Pakistani soldiers and men have lost their lives in the conflict on its western border. The numbers injured are in excess of 5000.