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Defense policy and the Qur'an

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After the demise of Communism, western powers- hastily and without proper assessment of consequences branded Islamic movements as the new threat. Politicians, military experts and media persons, all busied themselves in a crusade to malign Islam and the global Islamic movements. In the new emerging scenario, the US and the Western powers are working out new alliances with India and Israel countries having aggressive designs against the Arab world, Iran and Pakistan. The creation of Israel was it- self a dagger in the heart of the Muslim World. Both these countries are being armed with most modern equipment and nuclear power to counter Islam.

India, aspiring to become regional super power, is being ex- tended full support by the US, the Western countries and Israel. The American eagerness to grant this status to India can be noted in President Carter's statement who said while addressing Indian Parliament in 1978:

"United States was one of the super powers, and India was the biggest country of the Non-aligned Movement. This makes it essential that both states honor each other's internal role." America's South Asian policy analysis shows that it secured full benefits from its relations with Pakistan but, at the same time, ex- tended generous support to India to assume the role of a regional super power. Worse, Pakistan has been under constant pressure to bow down before the Indian supremacy in the region.

To further mount pressure, Israel had been extending India strategic co-operation for the last 40 years or so. This esprit de corps ranges from sensitive intelligence information to the trade of armaments, joint military exercises and commando operations. This nexus has brought them so close that the Israeli defense minister and other top military brass are now fully active in the formulation of India's regional military plans. They rendered India guidance on how to deal with the freedom movements in Kashmir, Punjab and many other troubled areas. Israel has a significant role in fomenting nasty plans and conspiracies against Pakistan. A detailed information in this regard is given by S. Hersh in his world famous book, The Samson Option, which details the Israeli nuclear preparations. He says that it was on Israel's, policy plans to destroy Pakistan's nuclear installations in Kahuta.

The situation necessitates that Pakistan has not only the defense capability but also deterrence against Indian or Israeli attack. We should also be mindful of the fact that in today's wars, it is not the military muscle or strength in terms of number at the futility of strength, which makes the defense line invincible for any aggressor. The 1991 Gulf War has shared the limitations of the conventional weapons. War analysts believe that besides the conventional weapons, now nuclear deterrence, the mid- range missile technology and efficient air force, alone can ensure security of any country. Such capacity alone can put an effective check on Indian war designs.

Many war commentators have opined this that India would not have dared attack Pakistan had the latter possessed nuclear deterrence in 1971. Former Indian Chief of Army Staff, Gen. Krishna Swami Sundur Ji, while exploring the intricacies of three Pak-India wars maintained that had the two countries been nuclear at the time, "these wars would have not occurred."

In India Today (April 30, 1993), Gen. Sundur Ji claimed: "If India and Pakistan possess nuclear deterrence, I believe, they would be able to slash their respective armies."

Here are some guiding principles and targets for Pakistan's defense policy:

-The foundation-stone of our defense policy should be to defend our faith and country. It is certified by the Qur'an and the Sunnah, and the history of Islam stands witness, that the spirit of jihad alone can make a smaller nation's defense invincible from threats and assaults of a powerful enemy. Former Pakistan Navy Chief, Admiral Sharif acknowledged at an Institute of Policy Studies' (IPS) sponsored seminar that Chinese Premier Chau En Lai reminded him during a meeting in 1968 that the defense of Pakistan lies in the undying spirit of jihad.

-It is not necessary for Pakistan to be at par in nuclear capability with India and Israel but to acquire nuclear deterrence sufficient to desist these countries from launching any attack. The maintenance of this capability is essential for our freedom, integrity and religious identity. Effective delivery systems, short and medium range missiles and efficient air force are an integral part of this deterrence. We must also have a small but smart navy equipped with nuclear weapons to defend our oceans.

Reorganization of the army to bring conventional machinery and other weapons in tune with the new requirements of the times is essential.

Defense industry and research work must coincide with modern requirements and should lead the country to self-reliance in this field.

To maintain a second-line defence, all healthy citizens should be imparted substantive military training. The concept is being successfully implemented in Turkey and most of the Western countries. Switzerland and Israel keep a small but highly professional army equipped with modern weaponry and in addition have four to six fold greater, well trained civilian force ready to assist the army. This force is capable of taking up position at a week's notice! This kind of defense mechanism spares regular army for more sophisticated jobs in war. Pakistani youth have proved its metal in

Afghanistan and Kashmir and need minor training to match well-trained enemy troops.

-Strengthening of the economy and food self-sufficiency form part of reliable defense. It is a shame that while the Indian army was busy in merciless butchering of the Kashmiris and shelling border areas, our indifferent leadership clamored for opening full-fledged trade relations with India to import wheat and other food commodities.

-Restoration of peace and security in domestic environment besides a standard civil defense training programme is also important.

-Steps must be taken for moral rehabilitation and protection of religious, social and cultural norms of country. A programme should be chalked out to stem the tide of Hindu and Western culture onslaught.

What about funds? We have no doubt that Pakistan and the Islamic world has no dearth of financial resources but the problem is how to tap these resources and reform decision making processes. The following points should be considered in this regard.

- 1) Determination and vision: The Holy Qur'an inspires the believers to spend in the way of God and promises manifold returns for all that is spent in preparations for jihad. Rulers and the ruled, both must be clear-minded that security and defense demand inevitable allocation of financial resources.
- 2) Revamping economic and development policies: Without solid, constructive and healthy plans and careful spending, national freedom and cultural identity care not be erasures. In the presence of loan default, frittering away of national wealth on non-development schemes, corruption, concentration of wealth among a few privileged wealthy groups and families, persisting problems of the agriculture and persistent and unmet demands of the people., nation cannot stand on its own two feet.
- 3) Policy-making: Leaders, scholars, scientists and policy-makers should be involved in chalking out new long-term and short-term policies for defense and national security. Efficient use of national money: The wealth of the nation is being ruthlessly plundered in all government sectors. We are not a resource- deficit nation but have been marred by dishonesty and corruption. We lack administrative sense and the fear of accountability before Allah and the public. The national exchequer should be utilized as a sacred trust.

If we do all of the above, Allah shall increase our resources and endow us with new ones. He has promised that if His path is followed with faith and true sense of accountability, the earth with ooze treasures and the heavens will shower bounties.

This concludes a two-part article by the author who is chairman, Institute of Policy Studies, Islamabad.