

## **CLARION CALL BY NAWAZ SHRIF: SIGNS OF CIVIL MILITARY DIVIDE**

**BY**

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Nawaz Sharif is in the news for exposing Pakistan army bluff created so immaculately to keep the civil society on the margins all these years. It sounds good to the Indian ears as what the Indian diplomacy has been talking about all these years has been authenticated by one simple statement of the former PM of Pakistan. The complicity of Pakistan in Mumbai attack by the non state actors has been said earlier also by many other individuals holding high positions in Pakistan including former army chief and president General Musharraf. However, **the connotations are totally different when it comes from the three times elected civilian Prime Minister of the country.** The message is symbiotic of assertion by the civilian society to cast away the shadows of the military establishment who have pushed the country into a state wherein their credibility and self respect is clearly under threat.

**Pakistan, as on date, is known for terrorism as one of their national products with their footprints in number of countries with Islamic strains.** This obviously is not a happy situation for the self respecting and well meaning educated Pakistani citizen. The bubble had to break sooner or later as nothing politically sensible seem to be moving with single minded pursuit of the army to perpetuate their primacy in national affairs. It is unfortunate that Pakistanis have not understood that army is only one of the institutions out of many other ingredients of the government in securing the well being of her nationals in the wider definition of national security. May be they could not express about it openly, lest they are branded as anti national plus army is also known to use coercive ways against voices of political sanity and rationality.

A hype of Indian military threat has been created and reinforced regularly to portray the army as the saviours of the Pakistan. The moot question is as to who has created this narrative of portraying India as enemy of Pakistan. **It is certainly not India as she has never ever crossed her borders to invade any other country to capture foreign lands, now or earlier in her historical accounts.** On the contrary, **it was Pakistan who invaded Kashmir as well as Baluchistan in 1948 to annex the territories of the states who had not opted to cede with them** in aftermath of the partition in conformity with the laid down norms of the British government.

They have not only occupied Indian territories illegally through military means, but also crossed the line of control in J&K in 1965 and 1971 . They also lost their Eastern wing in the face of popular uprising against Punjabi Pakistani elite bent upon denying legitimate political space to their own Bengali nationals. Despite such repeated outrages India has been magnanimous in returning approximately 92,000 prisoners of war without a possible punitive political bargain for the sake of their peaceful conduct in future as promised by their prime minister Bhutto.

Ungrateful Pakistan was back to her old tricks once again in early 90s when they sowed the seeds of insurgency in the J& K and later embarking upon deceitful Kargil face off in 1999. The story continues in the name of unfinished agenda of Kashmir and **a hyped up narrative of Indian hegemony bent upon obliterating existence of Pakistan as a nation**. A blatant lie and a political bluff all the way.

Further, in order to support their hypothesis and concomitant need to create depth again Indian threat, they have been trying to expand their turf into Afghan political space. In that, their complicity in propping up Taliban and duplicity in using them as their strategic assets for ensuring their relevance in Afghanistan affairs is well known. As a result, Pakistan, has been sucked into a spiral of the geo political narratives of extra regional powers for whom Pakistan is nothing more than a media to serve their strategic interests. The US earlier, and now **China is the new patron in chief** with occasional Russian afflictions using/ misusing Pakistan for their politico-economic purposes.

While the US inc have not entered the Pakistani geographical space other than transit purposes, it is China who has been permitted to establish their foothold inside Pakistan in the name of CPEC. The primary aim of the Pakistan in indulging such a political blunder **is to enhance their military deterrence against India**, which is not at all in their national interests from long term strategic perspective. Chinese are here to stay permanently on their terms and conditions as CPEC is the biggest political investment by the China in recent times. **Surely, the Pakistani sovereignty is at stake courtesy myopic self serving perspective of Pakistani army to defend a false narrative created by themselves.**

Nawaz, apparently knowing the flip side of all such political indulgences of the army could not speak up despite he being the chief executive all through three tenures as the PM. As the media reports suggest, he was not even consulted by the army when they planned and launched Kargil operation. He has also suffered the humiliation of being removed from the chair of the PM and forced to go into exile despite being constitutionally elected head of the government.

The recent dumping of Pakistan as a longtime ally by the US and other foreign policy mismatches to accommodate army perspective probably could have been the reason of civil military schism in Pakistan. The sub surface friction probably on such political issues was apparently not of liking by the army. The aspirations of a full political authority vested with the elected civil chief executive is something which is not palatable to the army who enjoy decisive powers sans accountability in the Pakistani establishment. Nawaz, accordingly, had to be weeded out of the system before this idea spreads to remainder civil society sitting on the edge and likely to voice their reservation against military interference in matters of governance, an area not part of their mandate.

The timings and terms of his ouster were so orchestrated on the eve of elections so as not to give him an iota of chance to create a dent in primacy of the army as the ultimate power in the country. Now that the Pakistani establishment has chosen to ban him to hold a public office, Nawaz seem to have spilled the beans in order to save his prestige as a well portray himself as a Patriot who cares for the well being of the country. **His voice is being heard and interpreted as the aspirations of the oppressed Pakistani civil society by the world community in general, who are privy to Pakistan army's role in unconstitutional political dabbling.**

The sound bytes of Nawaz has surely created the right effects in the corridors of power as well as the social media within Pakistan. An idea has been sowed in the minds of the people and a political churning movement seem to have started in the country. While it is too early to say, but it seems to be a **clarion call to garner support to uphold democratic values in Pakistan**, albeit the proponent has chosen to clear his conscience **now that there is nothing left to lose by him as an individual.**

The schism in civil military divide has not been so clear as it is seen in the wake of Nawaz's recent revelations and his open threat to expose the powers to be, if situation so demands. **Kargil fiasco may well be the next salvo in the series of disclosures by the Nawaz Sharif in desperation of restoring his relevance.** A precedence has been set by the former PM which may well prompt few others from the civil society who may jump into 'Pakistani political Me Too' campaign if momentum of Nawaz is not checked.

Sensing the embarrassment and wrath of a section of the civil society for an apparent public betrayal by the army establishment, there are reports of banning a particular English news paper, presumably known for its independent reporting. Interestingly, **the target of this media gag** happens to be a section of the **civil society from the non Punjabi regions.** It has its own political connotations.

The role of Pakistan army in guiding the destiny of Pakistan has not benefitted them in any manner. On the contrary, the army is responsible for Pakistan's economic nemesis and strategic blunders of unethical strains isolating them due to **their afflictions of denial, deceit and duplicity.** Pakistan today stands as a vulnerable nation open to political manipulations by the external forces.

Circumstances apart, Nawaz sharif is making the right noises and it is bound to impact the political space as it reflects whiff of fresh air in an otherwise opaque Pakistani polity. If nothing else, it would put a caution on the establishment to be more accommodative towards views of the civil society in their business of governance. It may well not be the one sided affair in the political matters hence forth in Pakistan, lest someone else spills the beans. The democracy, probably has moved up another notch in Pakistan.

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