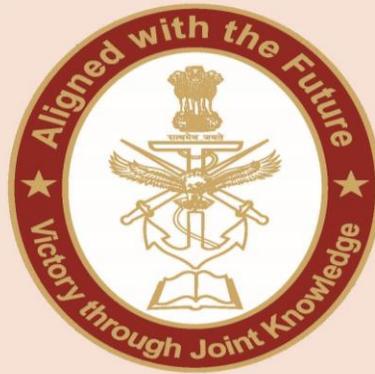


CENTRE FOR JOINT WARFARE STUDIES



CENJOWS

SELF GOAL BY IMRAN: PAKISTAN ARMY'S MUSING

BY

LT GEN RAMESHWAR YADAV, PVSM, AVSM, VSM (RETD)

The unpalatable comments by Imran on visionary inadequacies of Indian prime minister, an experienced and astute political personality with his proven administrative and diplomatic credential is a matter of deep concern not only in India but also world at large. A green horn who has been in the chair barely for month and half and that too in an army directed facade of democracy has chosen to pass such derogatory remarks does not augur well for Pakistani establishment. **It goes without much of analysis to home on to Pakistan army as the script writer of this diplomatic faux pass.** Imran obviously has been used by the army generals who want to perpetuate their myopic and dubious narrative to continue to retain their predominance in matters of governance in Pakistan. **The big picture to usher in peace and economic well being of Pakistani civil society can wait.**

There is a set pattern of Pakistani model as regards to peace talks with India wherein derailment, or a total failure is a pre decided outcome. If by any chance the Pakistani civilian leadership is seen to be cosying up with the Indians beyond their mandate, they are invariably forced to back track from their commitments moment they cross the Redcliff line. Pakistan believes in conducting their foreign affairs by escalating violence on the Line of Control alongside sensational terrorist acts in the Indian hinterland prior to, or during any peace initiative. Such a pattern is also seen whenever there is an important foreign visitor to talk about Afghanistan, India, or for that matter even Pakistan itself. **Anti India rhetoric through verbal or violent means at tactically**

appropriate time and place is the one and only one recipe known to the Pakistani deep state.

The purpose, obviously, is to garner political position of strength, in their wisdom, by showcasing their nuisance value as Pakistan does not have any plausible diplomatic high point in the face of illegal occupation of the part of J&K by them. The fact of the matter is that the Maharaja of J&K ceded with India as per the laid down norm by the British Indian government, and it was non compliance of precondition of withdrawal of Pakistani troops from J&K for conduct of UN sponsored plebiscite for which India had agreed. Pakistan has a weak case, and they probably believe that if you tell a lie number of times, eventually people start believing in it to be true.

Apropos, they have resorted to unethical demographic changes by forcing the Kashmiri Pandits to flee from the valley, and within POK they have settled Punjabis to tilt the numbers in case of a plebiscite. **The beauty is that Pakistan knows that the plebiscite will not take place as it stands irrelevant in contemporary times, but continuation of Kashmir issue suits them for their political outreach of win-win variety.** In that, they have been manipulating their peer group as well as the global powers to seek political leverages on their terms, and also keep a check on internal fratricidal tendencies amongst the regional rebellious polity alongside the discontent of civil society at large.

Accordingly, Pakistan has a history of non compliance of all agreements with India signed by them after every military defeat they have suffered having initiated by them in the first place. Whereas , India has been magnanimous to return 93000 prisoners of war after 1971 Indo-Pak war without imposing any humiliating conditions simply to give peace a chance believing the commitment of Pakistani PM Bhutto to resolve all issues bilaterally. No sooner he went back, the bilateralism as agreed during Shimla summit became the first casualty. He rekindled the anti Indian sentiments to 'inflict thousand cuts on India' and 'produce nuclear weapon even if they have to eat grass' which reverberate even today whenever Pakistani leadership has to rally the country together.

Four wars initiated by Pakistan and their consequent humiliation has exposed the professional incompetence of Pakistani military leadership due to their high self image and misplaced belief in their military capabilities to take on India. In consequence, there is a deep set insecurity amongst the military establishment of exposure of their bluff in front of the civil society whom they

have been subjugating since independence. Therefore, **it is a 'compulsion without any compromise' for the Pakistan army to keep the anti India narrative alive at any cost.**

And to do that, they have created an alibi of Kashmir and hyphenated it with jihad wherein all the muslims ought to provide support to the politico-religious national cause. Any one seen to be opposing this army narrative is looked upon as an anti national and a violator of religious tenets, hence deserves to be punished. Since, Pakistani army is not capable of taking on India as a professional force , they have chosen to use the non state actors, sans any accountability, to initiate the insurgency in the Kashmir with tacit support of few local leaders, and lure of money to the unemployed youth both sides to the line of control.

In addition to above, internationalizing the Kashmir issue is a constant denominator in the Pakistani political lexicon by highlighting the military threat emanating from India, besides gross violation of human rights inside the Kashmir. **To do that, they orchestrate military ante on the LC by resorting to provocative fire assaults and targeting civil population, besides acts of terrorism inside India purported to be executed by the freedom fighters.** As a response to such a pernicious military situation with chances of its overflowing to other areas, the international community must intervene and rein in Indian hegemony, lest the nuclear calculus gets activated by default.

Such a designer military situation orchestrated by Pakistan on their Eastern borders has also been used as an excuse to express their inability to provide forces to US for their Afghanistan campaign unless they are given arms and financial aid. This also serves Pakistan to cover up their complicity in perpetuating insurgency in the Afghanistan. If all goes well between India and Pakistan, then Pakistan would loose all the political leverages that they have been enjoying all this time. Moreover, they will be no excuse not to neutralize Taliban in Afghanistan which happens to be their own creation, an unethical proposition from Pakistan perspective. **Apropos, mending fences with India is not on their agenda at all.** Therefore, what has happened is not out of the pattern and was expected in any case at some stage of the proposed talks as requested by the Pakistani Prime Minister.

The apparent hubris , though unconvincing, by Imran may also have been prompted by the new found political buoyancy post his visit to Saudi Arab and their probable assurance to Pakistan to bail them out of their economic mess. Besides this , by hinting at slow down of the CPEC due to economic reasons,

the Pakistan probably has conveyed uneasy subtle messages to China for enhanced support ,or else be prepared for certain setbacks, albeit with full commitment of Pakistan for its success. If Chinese do not play up, then the US would be too happy to hold the hands to their old ally to nix the Chinese plans of economic expansion through their BRI scheme.

Pakistan surely knows how to create political leverages even against the big powers all due to their unique geographical location. For US, it is logistics from sea ports to Afghanistan for sustenance of their military establishment, and for China also it is their logistics from their main land to sea ports for their economic expansion and security of their energy supplies. Pakistan is adapted at exploiting the geo-political ambitions of the big players and extracting their pound of flesh. This seems to be happening in the back drop of prevailing political flux with onset of trade wars and denial regimes for denuclearization and sale of military hardware with US in forefront to consolidate her turf as the only super power.

Imran, who is known to be a nominated PM by the Pakistan army, has little to contribute towards peace process. **He has no credibility as an administrator, or considered as a political heavy weight who can be engaged in serious and sensitive issues of seven decades of acrimonious legacy.** His comments have foreclosed the little hope of some sensible diplomatic initiative worth consideration by India which Pakistan desperately needs for her politico-economic stability as on date.

It, surely, is a self goal by Imran dipping his personal credibility quotient as the new leader of Pakistan with his grandiose promise of a 'Naya Pakistan' which otherwise stands on the brink of economic implosion. The Pakistani army in their own wisdom probably have achieved their aim with this sponsored provocative jibe on twitter to their musing. India is well aware of sinister designs of Pakistan army, and she is right and appropriate in cancelling the proposed talks with what has happened in J&K. Pakistan, certainly, does not deserve to be engaged till the time they stop their complicity in terrorism and acts to destabilize India. Let the good sense prevail amongst the Pakistani polity soon. India with her cultural optimism is always benevolent and waits that day.

Disclaimer: Views expressed are of the author and do not necessarily reflect the views of CENJOWS.