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Mobilizing People's power

Dedicated to Democratic Ideals, a progressive and politically stable Pakistan, and strong US-Pakistan relations.

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Policy Dilemmas

Amb. Touqir Hussain (Ret.)

June 14 - Ties between the US and Pakistan have been passing through testing times. First the F-16s dispute, and then the drone strike that killed Mullah Mansour, followed by implied threats of more such strikes by President Obama. Is the relationship headed for another of the now-familiar downturns?

Mark Twain once said the history does not repeat; it rhymes. The fact is this F16s dispute is not the re-enactment of the one in the '90s, and the drone strike may not be what it looks like on the surface. Nor does the growing American romance with India translate into abandonment of Pakistan. These are two very different relationships now. The reports of the demise of the US-Pakistan relations are thus 'vastly exaggerated'. The US is not walking away.

When the US walked away the last time it walked away from the region not just from Pakistan. This time it is heavily invested in the region. As US Special Representative to Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Olson said in a congressional testimony in April: "Pakistan

is strategically vital, due to its role in issues that matter to us, as well as its location at the crossroads of Afghanistan, India, China and Iran. American national interests require that we stay engaged as Pakistan charts its long-term future.”

But the question is what are ‘American national interests’? And what would be the best policies to pursue them. Washington is not quite clear about it. There may be two Pakistans that America has to contend with but Pakistan has to deal with more than two Americas. Given the nature of the post 9/11 challenges, foreign policy has become military dominated and ever more politicised. There are multiple stakeholders and competing priorities and interests causing a serious fragmentation of the policy process. Over this welter of confusion presides a White House whose heart beats to the rhythms of electoral cycle and the lure of legacy. And that affects policy towards Pakistan.

Pakistan radiates many potential threats that cause legitimate security concerns to the American public affecting public opinion and thus politics. Then the Afghanistan war has not been going well for which Pakistan is getting exaggerated but understandable blame. All this has made the White House and congressional perceptions of Pakistan very political.

Politics and US national interests are thus badly out of alignment for Pakistan. Even the national interests of the two countries are not fully in sync as some of the interests of Pakistan clash with American objectives in Afghanistan on the one hand and US-India relations on the other. Not only that, their policies on shared interests sometimes differ.

But if you look at the larger context in which US-Pakistan relations will likely operate ie the geostrategic landscape, the regional environment, and the domestic dynamics within Pakistan, the picture changes. We are talking here of the lengthening strategic shadow of China and the US pivot to Asia, the rise of India’s power and ambitions, Afghanistan’s elusive search for peace and stability, and Pakistan’s own struggle against terrorism and extremism, and efforts at stabilisation of the economy and strengthening of democracy.

Pakistan will be in the eye of a veritable geostrategic storm as it faces on one side prospects of failure on Afghanistan, and on the other continued pressures from an assertive and dominant India while it copes with internal challenges. And this has implications for the US.

Pakistan has an important role in facilitating or complicating the advancement of US interests in the future. As Mr Olson had said in the same testimony “Pakistan is critical to a negotiated settlement to the conflict in Afghanistan; strategic stability in the subcontinent; countering violent extremism; and defeating terrorists that threaten the US and the region”.

The administration thus wishes to remain engaged with Pakistan but at a level politically sustainable. Pakistan must not be ignored yet cannot be given a free pass. It is legacy time for Obama and that means Afghanistan has become the single focus of ties with Pakistan. On Afghanistan, Obama cannot leave behind a legacy of inaction and having presided over

its failure, more so as the US election approaches. There is no good solution but just to leave behind the present number of troops and expand their role. And be tough on Pakistan and the Taliban.

But the trouble is Pakistan's Taliban policy remains muddled. And its stance of neither being able to bring the Taliban to the negotiating table nor acting against them has reached a dead end. Both countries face serious policy dilemmas as they address challenges neither can handle alone. And neither has good options except that relations must go on.

Touqir Hussain, a former Ambassador and Diplomatic Adviser to the Prime Minister of Pakistan, teaches at Georgetown and Johns Hopkins University.

The original article, published by DAWN, is available [here](#).



INDUS Newsletter



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2016 Fund Raising Campaign

#CombatExtremism
#PromoteTolerance

[INDUS: Mobilizing People's Power](#) is a Washington, DC, tax exempt think tank and advocacy group dedicated to a progressive and politically stable Pakistan. INDUS believes that, by bringing together Pakistanis from around the world to exchange ideas and create awareness, we can lift the trajectory of Pakistan to become a prosperous and powerful nation.

In this vein, INDUS is focused on mobilizing the youth of Pakistan, who account for as much as 70% of Pakistani society, to develop a system of inclusive and participatory

politics and transforming the public and institutional psyche to promote tolerance and respect for the rights of individuals. As a virtual think tank and advocacy group, we aim to capitalize on the exceptional cadre of Pakistani thought leaders and professionals around the world in order to facilitate important conversations about civil liberties, religious and ethnic tolerance, and inclusive public policy reform.

We strongly believe that sustainable political and social change originates from research organizations, think tanks, and college campuses and we hope to strengthen and sponsor such endeavors. With your essential support, INDUS will be able to help true democratic values and institutions take root in the country and create sustainable and effective policy change.

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(www.gofundme.com/INDUSpk2016)

Your tax deductible GOFUNDME contribution, however small, will go a long way in evolving the desperately needed social transformation imperative in Pakistan and provide direct and material assistance to **INDUS: Mobilizing People's Power** and our programs and initiatives.

OUR FOCUS

Youth Leadership Development

Creating campus-based, strictly nonpolitical Student Government Associations that offer Executive, Legislative & Judiciary functions experience within the campus environment. Elected student representatives, as Members of Parliament, Senators and judges manage all aspects of student affairs, in conjunction with campus administration.

Pakistan Civil Liberties Union

Civil liberties are personal guarantees and freedoms that the government cannot abridge, either by law or by judicial interpretation. However in today's Pakistan, rising violence, intolerance, weak rule of law, endemic corruption, lack of social and economic justice, and religious freedom, social exclusion of the vulnerable and the marginalized are a common phenomenon that the people of Pakistan face on a daily basis. Pakistan Civil Liberties Union – PCLU is a watchdog organization intended to combat all the above issues at every cross section of our society.

Community Integration & Civic Promotion

When successful, the processes of community integration and civic promotion begin with the individual and, alongside support from Federal, State, and municipal programs, advance collectively, often through socialization with informal groups and professional and cultural associations. However, due to regional, organizational, and programmatic differences, the catalytic potential of civil society organizations is underutilized. Partnerships with local, regional, and national civil society organizations will advance community integration, promote the concept of citizenship, and highlight pathways to achieve the “American Dream.”

Policy Research – As It Happens

Campus-based political and social sciences research. Graduate Student and Faculty focusing on policy issues for possible social, cultural, and political reform, followed by advocacy action and awareness creation by the same researchers for the purposes of legislative reform as appropriate.

Cultivating Early Awareness

Aimed at increasing youngsters' awareness of rights and responsibilities of citizenship, and building a national bond at a very impressionable age, leading to real benefits to the nation in evolving future leadership.

MEDIA REVIEW

Pakistan's oil and gas discoveries touch record

Zafar Bhutta

"Pakistan has made the highest number of oil and gas discoveries in the current month as exploration companies found fresh hydrocarbon deposits in six wells that will add 50.1 million cubic feet per day (mmcf) of gas and 2,359 barrels per day (bpd) of oil to the existing production levels. Of these, major discoveries have been made in Sindh that already has a big share in total gas output in the country." [[ExpressTribune](#)]

Despite rising economy, Pakistan still hampered by image problem

Drazen Jorgic

"Pakistan's \$250 billion economy is growing at the fastest pace in eight years but only attracted \$1 billion in foreign direct investment (FDI) in the nine months to April." Despite the decline in attacks in major cities, perceptions abroad have yet to catch up. However, "there are tentative signs foreign companies are eyeing Pakistan's fast-growing consumer market." [[Reuters](#)]

Pakistani Muslims build church for Christian neighbors

Aamir Latif

"In Pakistan's northeastern Punjab province, Muslim villagers are raising funds to help their poor Christian neighbors build a church. The initiative was begun shortly before Easter by a group of Muslims from a village in Faisalabad, Pakistan's textile-manufacturing hub."

[[Anadolu](#)]

The Day I Got My Green Card

Aatish Taseer

In a thought-provoking personal essay, Aatish Taseer documents how he "never felt he truly belonged in the places he and his family were from: India, Pakistan, Britain. In America, finally, he feels free—and at home." [[WSJ](#)]

The Terrorists the Saudis Cultivate in Peaceful Countries

Nicholas Kristof

"For decades, Saudi Arabia has recklessly financed and promoted a harsh and intolerant Wahhabi version of Islam around the world in a way that is, quite predictably, producing terrorists. And there's no better example of this Saudi recklessness than in the Balkans."

[[NYT](#)]

The new foreign policy

Taimur Azmat Osman

The author analyzes key events of 2013, as it marked the first smooth transition of political power after a general election, to demonstrate the way in which they contributed to a change in foreign policy for Pakistan. He specifically analyzes the Prime Minister Modi's rise to power, the launch of Operation Zarb-E-Azb, the Saudi operation in Yemen, the Iranian President's visit to Pakistan, the disclosure of Mullah Omar's death, and the signing of CPEC with China. [[Nation](#)]

Troubled waters ahead for Pakistan

Mohammad Ali Mahar

In this piece the author analyzes the affect of a Trump or Clinton presidency on and in Pakistan. Whatever the outcome, he believes that one thing is clear: "Pakistan has a miserably faulty foreign policy and whosoever is forming and running the policy has failed Pakistan". [[DailyTimes](#)]

Turkey alongside China stands with Pakistan against India in NSG meeting

News Desk

At the Nuclear Suppliers Group Meeting in early June, "China openly opposed Indian inclusion in the Nuclear Supplier Group and made it conditional with the inclusion of Pakistan in the NSG Group." [[TimesOfIslamabad](#)]

India's bid to join NSG hits dead end

Baqir Sajjad Syed

"The Nuclear Suppliers Group failed to reach consensus on India's membership application after several members of the international nuclear trade cartel insisted on adhering to Non-Proliferation Treaty (NPT) condition for admission, thus blocking Delhi's entry for now". Pakistan's case was not taken up by the group. [[Dawn](#)]

Is our Afghan obsession finally over?

Ayaz Amir

The author argues for a restrained foreign policy in Afghanistan, hopes the government stops overreaching, and works to mitigate age-old hostilities between the two countries. [[TheNews](#)]

We are losing the battle in Kashmir: Indian Army Commander

News Desk

"Frustrated after decades of political stasis and worn out by military operations to root out rebels from their midst, many Kashmiris are rising up at the first sight of troops entering their villages, and protecting the very militants Indian forces are trying to locate." "Indian military officials estimate there are some 200 militants in the region, staging attacks on Indian law enforcement and crossing back and forth over the de facto border with Pakistan. It's a steep drop from the 20,000 estimated to have waged the insurgency in the early 1990s, but military officials say their job is getting harder as the villages increasingly get involved." [[TimesOfIslamabad](#)]

Kashmir: A Water War in the Making?

Baba Umar

"With the division, Kashmir became a bone of contention — as did the six major rivers flowing down to Pakistan (the three western rivers) and India (the three eastern rivers). Both countries agreed to sign a World Bank-brokered treaty in 1960, the Indus Water Treaty or IWT. The treaty could not, however, take into consideration all the river-relevant changes that the future was to produce." "Pakistan and India are dangerously energy-starved and nowhere close to an agreement on disputed Kashmir. The intertwining impact of climate change and population pressures offer a forecast on their water conflict that is anything but encouraging." [[TheDiplomat](#)]

The terror attacks you haven't heard about

Robyn Dixon and Aoun Sahi

"To assess the scope and nature of terrorism in 2016, the Los Angeles Times sought to chart the worldwide toll of deaths and injuries in a single month. From government and police reports, terrorism databases, news accounts and their own independent reporting, Times journalists in the U.S. and around the globe compiled a record of every fatal act of terrorism during the 30 days of April." [[LATimes](#)]

Why I Would Raise Chickens?

Bill Gates

Global philanthropist Bill Gates believes those living below the poverty line should raise chickens. Why? They're inexpensive and easy to care for, they help keep children healthy in a variety of ways, they empower women, and -- bottom line -- they're a profitable investment. [[GatesNotes](#)]

Muhammad Ali, boxing icon and global goodwill ambassador, dies at 74

Matt Schudel and Bart Barnes

"Muhammad Ali, the charismatic three-time heavyweight boxing champion of the world, who declared himself 'the greatest' and proved it with his fists, the force of his personality and his magnetic charisma, and who transcended the world of sports to become a symbol of the antiwar movement of the 1960s and a global ambassador for cross-cultural understanding, died June 3 at a hospital in Scottsdale, Arizona." [[WaPo](#)]

Erdogan pens powerful tribute to honor Muhammad Ali

Daily Sabah

President Recep Tayyip Erdogan wrote a powerful tribute to the late boxer, encouraging Muslim nations to take lessons from the champion's struggle as a member of the Muslim minority in the United States. Writing in Bloomberg, Erdogan said Ali, as a member of America's Muslim minority, suffered from injustice, discrimination and mistreatment, and this was "an example that Muslim nations could learn from so that they take steps to ensure that members of Christian and Jewish communities feel included." [[DailySabah](#)]

14-year-old security researcher from Pakistan listed in Google Hall of Fame

Maryam Dodhy

"Muhammad Shahzad, a 14-year-old security researcher from Pakistan, has been enlisted in the Google Hall of Fame for reporting several vulnerabilities in their web applications and also getting them fixed." [[TechJuice](#)]

As always, thank you for reading, and thank you for your efforts. If you have questions or comments, or desire to participate in any way, please don't hesitate to contact us at induspk.usa@gmail.com.

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