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# The leverage factor in US-Pakistan relations

By Michael Kugelman, Wilson Center

In a speech on 21 August announcing his new US Afghanistan strategy, US President Donald Trump minced no words. 'We have been paying Pakistan billions and billions of dollars at the same time they are housing the very terrorists that we are fighting', the US president [declared](#). 'But that will have to change, and that will change immediately'.

Indeed, in the days [preceding](#) and [following](#) the speech, Trump administration officials suggested they're prepared to deepen the pressure on Pakistan to get Islamabad to shut down terror sanctuaries on its soil. US officials have repeatedly issued these demands in recent years. Pakistan has repeatedly refused to budge. The question is whether this time will be different.

Ultimately, the degree of US success will boil down to leverage. Does Washington truly have the ability and influence to compel Pakistan to act against terrorists that threaten Americans in Afghanistan? Arguments can be made both for and against. Sceptics will contend that leverage won't work now because it hasn't worked in the past. In effect, Pakistan has received billions in assistance and loads of weaponry to target [terrorists that attack Afghanistan](#) — and yet it has simply continued to

patronise them. So why should Pakistan be expected to change its policy now? And especially given Pakistan's fast-growing partnership with China, which gives Islamabad an incentive not only to ignore Washington's demands, but also to walk away from Washington altogether?

Others will counter that it's not that leverage hasn't worked, it's just that Washington hasn't used the right tools. This view calls for going beyond mere bluster and oft-used aid conditionality tactics and escalating to harsher measures. These could include taking the drone war deeper into Pakistan (beyond the tribal belt where the majority of strikes have occurred), placing sanctions and travel bans on Pakistani officials with ties to terrorists, revoking Pakistan's non-NATO ally status and even declaring Pakistan a state sponsor of terror. The tagline here is simple: why concede failure when not all options have been exhausted?

In truth, both positions are flawed. The [China–Pakistan Economic Corridor \(CPEC\)](#) is solidifying an already strong China–Pakistan relationship. But it's not as if Islamabad could simply walk away from Washington and waltz into Beijing's open embrace with no repercussions.

Indeed, China arguably has as strong an interest as the United States in Pakistan shutting down its terror sanctuaries. China needs the high-stakes CPEC to succeed, but CPEC requires stability to succeed. Any terrorist group, including those receiving sanctuary in Pakistan, is potentially destabilising. The September 4 [BRICS statement](#) — which marked the first time China signed on to an international declaration condemning the Haqqani Network, Jaish-e-Mohammed and Lashkar-e-Taiba, all of which receive shelter in Pakistan — was likely meant to bring that message home to Pakistan.

Additionally, those arguing for pressuring Pakistan with more escalatory measures underestimate the power of national interests. All nations have interests that die very hard, if at all. Dignitaries from Lord Palmerston to Henry Kissinger have observed that there are no permanent friends or enemies, only permanent interests.

Pakistan has a longstanding interest in pushing back against India, its bitter enemy. The Haqqani Network — which Kabul, New Delhi and Washington have [blamed](#) for attacks on Indian targets in Afghanistan — can be used against India in a nation where New Delhi has [a deep footprint](#) — one that's mainly non-security in nature, but nonetheless alarming for Islamabad. For Pakistan, which has a military conventionally inferior to India's, non-state actors like the Haqqani Network are highly useful assets. Pakistan will be extremely reluctant to turn on them.

Accordingly, the Trump administration will struggle to put the squeeze on Pakistan, no matter how tight its grip.

Perhaps Washington's best chance of success is to make the costs of Pakistan's status quo policy prohibitively high. But this would entail implementing highly risky actions (like airstrikes on militant infrastructure) or downright inconceivable measures (like airstrikes on military facilities). Even policies a notch down on the risk scale — sanctioning Pakistani officials, revoking Pakistan's non-NATO status — could lead to damaging Pakistani retaliations, such as shutdowns of supply routes in Pakistan that serve NATO personnel in Afghanistan.

A more feasible option for Washington may lie in the economic realm. Islamabad has [long depended](#) on the IMF to bail out its economy. Some Pakistani economists, citing a growing current account deficit, [predict](#) that Islamabad could soon approach the IMF for another bailout. Washington — which wields great influence within the IMF — could lean on the institution to refuse future bailouts until Pakistan takes appropriate counterterrorism measures. Then again, CPEC-related assistance may provide enough of a safety net that being deprived of IMF funds wouldn't be as damaging now as during pre-CPEC days.

Ultimately, the jury remains out on how much Washington can do to address Pakistan's terrorist sanctuaries — an enduring tension point in an always volatile relationship.

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**Athar Javid, Presenting INDUS- Mobilizing People's Power at NED Alumni Association held in Detroit, Michigan, on September 8-10, 2017.**



## Upcoming Event

**Peer to Peer Dialogue**

## **Religious Orthodoxy and Intolerance Management at University Campuses**

**Organizers:** INDUS-Mobilizing People's Power and AdvoPak in Washington, D.C. Table Talk, a non-profit organization in Peshawar, Pakistan/International Islamic University Islamabad.

**Time:** 10:00 A.M. Washington, D.C. and 7:00 PM Peshawar

**Medium of discussion:** Video Conferencing

**Number of participants on each side:** 15-20

**Duration:** 90 minutes

**Date:** October 28, 2017

For the last several decades Pakistan's social fabric has been a target of extremism and intolerance. Extremists are using various means and ways to extend their agenda. A recent United Nations Population Fund report makes the claim that out of 200 million people, 63 percent of Pakistan's population comprises of youth. Of these, 58.5 million are 20-to-24-year olds while 69 million are aged under 15.

This naturally makes youth the main target of extremist outfits who exploits young impressionable minds in the name of religion. By keeping in mind the threat spectrum it is prime need of time to cultivate awareness of the menace among young Pakistanis. It is believed some students of natural sciences are a soft target on religious orthodoxy and there is a dire need to educate them about the social conflict management so that they can resist the extremist ideologies. On the other hand, though students of social sciences are generally aware of religious orthodoxy and extremist ideologies but none the less, they are also a target these threats.

Therefore, a comprehensive approach is required to address growing threat of extremism and intolerance at the university campuses.

**Proposed Steps:** Besides cultivating greater awareness, educational campuses perhaps need to provide diverse set of extracurricular and social activities on the campus such as Science Club, Debates Forum, Fine Arts, Student Government & Leadership Association, etc. Besides providing these outlets, there is a definite need to block student access to extremists social media sites. Following methods could be considered.

- Academic institutions faculty inter-communication aimed at sharing student issues and discussing resolution of such issues,
- Building Parent teacher relationship to discuss student focus periodically to maintain a positive and healthy outlook to combat influence of extremist organizations and agents of intolerance,.
- The issue of extremism, intolerance and religious orthodoxy must be discussed by the board of each academic institution and a uniform policy of maintaining focus on education and learning is adapted with rules of

implementation to be observed by all faculty members and imparted to the student body.

- The focus should be on providing avenues for student activities on the campus for evolving passionate and committed leadership for a stronger and stable Pakistan
- Academic institutions environment, faculty and teaching courses must foster a strong sense of citizenship, responsibilities of citizenship and primacy of the nation-state of Pakistan and obligations towards others and the society.
- Each Faculty member must be required to sign an acceptance and strict observance of the academic institutions Board policy with respect to extremism and intolerance
- Extra-curricular activities of students must be monitored and faculty members should be aware and activities linked to extremism and violence must be shared with law enforcement agencies.
- Students violating university rules must be subject to strict disciplinary actions.

By adopting these and some other steps we can contribute in countering extremism and spread of religious orthodoxy at our university campuses, remembering that growing religious orthodoxy and extremism or, religious radicalization cannot be addressed by sharing student data with intelligence agencies or by asking them to get a character certificate from the police. These are non-starters. There is a need to rationalize the courses, academic programs and teaching the notion of citizenship, being a Pakistani first and awareness of the rights of individual. One .page document based on the derivatives of this discussion will be produced that will suggest how to deal with extremism and religious orthodoxy at our campuses and will be shared with relevant stakeholders.

Further ideas and suggestion would be welcomed!!!

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## Upcoming Event

### **Communities' Integration – Home Land USA**

Promoting, Protecting, and Enhancing the pursuit of cherished American dream and Democratic Ideals

**INDUS — Mobilizing People's Power** convened several local associations, last year, highlighting this need. We are pleased to announce the Community Integration & Civic Promotion program, in collaboration with local civic organizations. It is our effort to facilitate and deepen community integration, promote the concept of U.S. citizenship, and highlight pathways to realize the cherished "American Dream."

**Venue:** Arlington Public Library, Arlington, VA

**Date:** Sunday, November 26, 2017

**Time:** 2:00pm to 4:00pm

**Partner Organizations:**

Organization of Pakistani Entrepreneur (OPEN)

Association of Physicians of Pakistani Decent of North American (APPNA)

Pakistani American Congress (PAC)

Pakistani American Political Action Committee (PAKPAC)

**Panelists:**

Michael Kugelman (Moderator)

Dr. Marvin G. Weinbaum (Speaker)

Riffat Chughtai (Speaker)

Silveth Khawaja (Speaker)

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# British-Pakistani Actor Riz Ahmed Makes History by Winning Emmy

## By Riaz Haq, Haq's Musings

Emmy award wins this year by British-Pakistani Rizwan Ahmed and Indian-American Aziz Ansari make the duo the first South Asian men to win the prestigious television academy award . It's the equivalent of Oscars given each year by the Motion Pictures Association of America (MPAA).

Rizwan Ahmed, an actor, rapper and activist also known as Riz MC, won his Emmy for Outstanding Lead Actor in a Limited Series or Movie for HBO's The Night Of. The show tackles issues of racism and Islamophobia in the United States.

Riz has seen a meteoric rise starting with films like 'The Reluctant Fundamentalist', 'Four Lions,' 'The Road To Guantanamo' and more recently the Star Wars Anthology film 'Rogue One'. In April 2017, Ahmed was featured on the cover of Time magazine as one of its 100 most influential people in the world.

Riz was born in London in 1982 to British Pakistani parents who had migrated from Karachi in 1970s. He is a great grandson of Sir Shah Muhammad Sulaiman, the first British Indian to become the Chief Justice of the Allahabad High Court during the British Raj. He is a graduate of Oxford University with a degree in PPE (Philosophy,

Politics and Economics). He later studied acting at the Central School of Speech and Drama.

“It’s always strange reaping the rewards of a story that’s based on real world suffering,” Riz said in his acceptance speech at the Emmy’s award ceremony. “But if this show has shown a light on some of the prejudice in our society, Islamophobia, some of the injustice in our justice system, then maybe that’s something.”

In addition to Riz Ahmed and Aziz Ansari as award winners, the Emmy Awards show also featured Pakistani-American Kumail Nanjiani, the star of "The Big Sick", on the red carpet.

Although Riz has begun “inching towards the Promised Land,” he still gets stopped and searched before boarding a plane every time he flies to the U.S., he wrote. One person’s win does not fix “a systemic issue of inclusion,” Ahmed told the Washington Post backstage after the Emmys. “I think that’s something that happens slowly over time.”

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## 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**

### **Understanding radicalisation in academic spaces**

Hasan Askari Rizvi

The failed attempt to kill an important MQM leader was not the first time that educated youths with a university background were associated with radical Islamic movements. The author describes what is happening in universities and how the issues should be addressed. [[Express Tribune](#)]

### **Banking 2017: the walk towards extinction**

Nadeem Hussein

"Banks in Pakistan can be likened to the dinosaurs which roamed our world during ancient times. They were large, unwieldy and comfortable in the mindset that their world will never change. Banks do not realize that the perfect tech storm is forming to make them extinct – or at least marginal in the near future." [[The News](#)]

### **Of obscure laws and insidious leaders**

Ikramul Haq

"It is high time a public campaign is launched to amend electoral laws so as to block the way of the plunderers of national wealth, tax evaders and criminals... In other civilised societies, such elements are put behind bars, their ill-gotten money and assets seized. In Pakistan, on the contrary, they make the entire system captive so they can continue looting the masses." [[Daily Times](#)]

### **'India mother of terrorism in South Asia,' Maleeha Lodhi tells UN**

In her response to the allegations of terrorism levelled against Pakistan by India's External Affairs Minister Sushma Swaraj, Pakistan's Permanent Representative to the United Nations Maleeha Lodhi said that India is the mother of terrorism in South Asia. "Indian spy Kulbhushan Yadav has confessed of committing terrorism in Pakistan," Lodhi said. [[Dawn](#)]

### **Pakistani student develops stick to cure Parkinson's**

A Pakistani student at University of West England (UWE) has invented a technological solution that may alleviate symptoms for those suffering from Parkinson's disease. [[The News](#)]

### **How Has Bangladesh Left Pakistan Behind in Per Capita Income?**

Riaz Haq

Citing an Economist article, Haq explains the recent jump in Bangladesh's per capita GDP versus Pakistan's, and the census results were a major factor. The Bangladeshi economy has been growing faster than Pakistan's for a decade or more. [[Haq's Musings](#)]

#### **Notes to a modern-day political 'princess'**

Haider Mehdi

The author remarks on the potential for dynastic political succession surrounding Maryam Nawaz: "So "princess," I am sorry to say, now is not your time. The winds of change are in control of our existence — just in case you have not noticed!" [[Express Tribune](#)]

#### **Are India-Pakistan Peace Talks Worth a Damn?**

Ashley J. Tellis

"The international community's routine call for continuous India-Pakistan dialogue is not only misguided but also counterproductive. [...] The international community may never be able to convince Rawalpindi of the benefits of accepting the status quo, but it should certainly avoid reinforcing troublesome Pakistani behavior through a premature and futile call for dialogue." [[Carnegie](#)]

#### **India spent Rs 7 billion in Switzerland to run anti Pakistan campaign by BLA**

According to Political analyst Agha Iqrar Haroon, India spent Rs7 billion to run an anti-Pakistan campaign in Geneva, Switzerland, and that the campaign has originated from Canada. Haroon said the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA) last year started getting anti-Pakistan articles published in Canadian newspapers. [[Times of Islamabad](#)]



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