

## Scenario 78

### **PAKISTAN RUNS UNDER US GOVERNANCE:**

Once in December 2010, the Lahore High Court dismissed a petition registered by one Arif Gondal seeking a ban on the WikiLeaks website. In his petition Mr Gondal had termed the leakage of secret information by WikiLeaks a conspiracy to create a rift among Pakistan, Saudi Arabia, Iran like Muslim countries and the Western world. Requesting the court to issue orders for imposing a ban on the website, the petitioner argued that since Pakistan had good bilateral relations with a number of countries, particularly Saudi Arabia and Iran, the leakage of secret information would adversely affect these ties.

LHC's Justice Sh Azmat Saeed dismissed the petition, calling it non-maintainable. The Court passed the remarks that **'we must bear the truth, no matter how harmful it is'**.

Earlier **on 29<sup>th</sup> November 2010**, Pakistan's Foreign Office spokesman Abdul Basit had told the media that they were taking stock of the revelations concerning Pakistan. Officially Pakistan had termed uncovering of sensitive documents by WikiLeaks as irresponsible behavior declaring it as *'condemnable, misleading, contrary to facts and extremely negative'*.

The **Daily Dawn of 3<sup>rd</sup> December 2010** expressed about **WikiLeaks** in the editorial lines that:

*'..... the sheer scale of the revelations is staggering. The world has perhaps never before been provided with such a large volume of evidence about the wheels within wheels and the shady deals and negotiations that lurk in the shadows of inter-state diplomacy.'*

*'State relations and governance across the world have historically been conducted on the assumption that certain information should and can be kept out of the public domain. It is unsurprising, then, that governments and political players have on different occasions succumbed to the temptation of resorting to means that are hardly considered acceptable.'*

One of the most important lessons to be learnt from the **'WikiLeaks'** disclosures was that states and governments should not assume that their secrets would forever remain under their control. Transparency is required to win the people's trust both by political and military circles. The meanness of many national leaders had been exposed by their sayings they were quoted in the leaked cables. More depressing, perhaps, was how most of the Pakistan's civilian and military leaders appeared to consider the US envoy as some sort of viceroy who was urged (better to say begged) for help in gaining power to govern Pakistan after achieving certificates of loyalty from America.

### **US CONTROLLED PAK - PRESIDENCY:**

Ironically, the people of Pakistan had always been fooled both by 'Pakistan and US officials' through long-repeated denials about the US military presence on Pakistani soils. Later it was revealed that the US Special Operations Forces have been conducting joint operations with Pakistan's military forces further proving that Pakistan's leaders had quietly approved the

drone attacks inside its Federally Administered Tribal Areas [FATA]. All blatant lies from PM Gilani and the Pakistan's Foreign Office before the general populace - but they continued to raise verbal demands for *'no more drone attacks'*.

**WikiLeaks**, whatever be the truth or background, had then attracted the whole attention of media and intelligentsia all over. Various opinions popped up from anchors of the TV talk shows, from opinion makers of leading newspapers, from spokesmen and front-persons of all political parties and even from so-called first grade leaders themselves.

Most of them tried to convince the people that *'WikiLeaks are designed to sour our relationship with the Islamic world and to malign our army'*. Some opined that *'Julian Assange (who controlled the WikiLeaks internet site), deserves a Nobel Peace prize for upholding the freedom of information and advocating transparency in the functioning of democracy.'*

On the other hand, for some people **WikiLeaks's** revelations were shocking. Especially quoting Afghanistan and Saudi Arabia's remarks about Pakistani leadership, headlines as:

- 'President Zardari being the great hurdle in the progress of Pakistan';
- 'U.S. trying to remove enriched uranium from the soil of Pakistan';
- 'Pakistan being the most bullied US ally',
- 'Gen Kayani's intended threat to intervene for ending the lawyer's long march',
- 'Gen Kayani informed US envoy in Islamabad of his intention to de-throne Zardari and replacing him with NAP's Asfandiyar Wali Khan';
- President Zardari's apprehension of being assassinated and proposing his sister to succeed him.

And much more like this have really shaken people's confidence in the democracy and political wisdom of their heroes. See a little details of American concern in the aftermath of emergency of 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2007.

According to a US Embassy in Kabul dispatch, released by **WikiLeaks** the United States had expressed 'dissatisfaction' over the imposition of emergency and promulgation of the Provisional Constitutional Order (PCO) by Gen Musharraf on 3<sup>rd</sup> November 2007.

Just three days after the sweeping steps taken by Gen Musharraf, Secretary of Defence for Policy Eric Edelman told Afghan President Hamid Karzai that US-Pakistan Defence Consultative Group (DCG) talks were postponed to mark the US dissatisfaction with the imposition of the PCO; whether Pakistani interlocutors would be able to focus on the DCG agenda, given the current political turmoil.

Another cable: Gen Musharraf recognised that ***'if and when [Benazir] Bhutto takes power, he will be out, and he may not be ready yet to take that step.'*** Pakistani authorities should move against terrorist sanctuaries and the Taliban's Quetta Shura; arresting lawyers will not help in this regard. The White House had said that:

*"We are urging Musharraf to focus on keeping to the election schedule, completing the deal with Bhutto, and taking off his uniform. Although there are special interests that are seeking to extend the period for martial law, it must be kept short. If not, Musharraf's interests and those of the Pakistani Army may begin to diverge."*

However, the Afghan president expressed hope that Gen Musharraf's extra-constitutional approach would work, but Karzai was not sure that Gen Musharraf was ready to fulfil the deal with Benazir Bhutto. He emphasised that the issue of Taliban sanctuary in Pakistan had to be solved, noting with dismay that the Taliban flag had been raised in three districts in FATA of Pakistan. *'Musharraf must be sincere because he has no further room for **more games**,* Karzai held.

More details of **WikiLeaks** revealed that Mr Zardari had met Anne Patterson, the US Ambassador in Islamabad, **on 25<sup>th</sup> January 2008**, and said that **'the US was their 'safety blanket'** and recalled how Benazir Bhutto had returned despite threats against her, because of support and 'clearance' from the US.

### **PAK – POLITICS INTERFERED:**

See another **'episode'** that how the PPP government was **advised** by the US aides in early 2008:

**On 15<sup>th</sup> February 2008**, National Security Advisor [NSA] Tariq Aziz met twice with Zardari, who asked him for "advice" on *'who should be prime minister if the PPP is asked to form a government, [the PPP won elections on 18<sup>th</sup> instant].'* Director ISI Nadeem Taj and Tariq Aziz had urged Zardari not to pursue the premiership for himself, as it would split the party and reduce PPP's national influence. Zardari had raised the idea of becoming Prime Minister with Tariq Aziz a day before.

In series of meetings immediately before and after elections, Tariq Aziz had encouraged Mr Zardari to support Amin Faheem for PM's slot. Zardari complained that Faheem was a poor administrator who lacks the skills needed to run the government. Aziz admitted that this was true; when Amin Faheem was Minister of Communications he spent much of his time at his home in Karachi. Though Tariq Aziz had tried to convince Zardari that Faheem's shortcomings could be mitigated by appointing a strong staff, but Zardari continued to stick to his point that Faheem was too weak to be the next prime minister.

Tariq Aziz had also told Asif Zardari that after being elected as a prime minister, Shah Mahmood Qureshi could challenge his authority, as Zardari was considering Qureshi as a PPP candidate for prime minister.

NSA Tariq Aziz had conveyed the whole conversation to the US Ambassador the same evening. She was also told by Aziz that Saudi Arabia had provided heavy funds to Nawaz Sharif for his election campaign in order to defeat Pakistan Peoples Party [PPP]. He had also told Anne Patterson that ISI Director Nadeem Taj had met with the Saudi Ambassador to request Saudi Arabia to stop funding Nawaz Sharif.

US Ambassador Anne Patterson sent comments to the White House:

*'Mr Aziz was clearly depressed and pessimistic about the possibility that Gen Musharraf could remain in the power corridors any more; we see Zardari's continuing contacts with the government's key figures as a sign that he will **deal with Musharraf soon.**'*

**On 25<sup>th</sup> July 2008**, a cable from the then US Ambassador in Pakistan, Anne Patterson, was sent to Washington that Gen Musharraf was planning after just six months of February 2008 elections to send the National Assembly home and replace the PPP government with technocrats.

Gen Musharraf, the then President of Pakistan was, most probably, thinking so in view of weakening relations between Nawaz Sharif and Asif Zardari. If the two would part ways, Mr Zardari would need new allies to keep his majority from falling and under the circumstances; the PML(Q) could come forward. That was the reason - the PM Gilani and Mr Zardari wanted to raise a voice during their visit to the US apprehending that they could be at political disadvantage by working with Gen Musharraf.

Another leaked document revealed that President Zardari had dismissed a suggestion by the

then US Ambassador Anne Patterson that the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP)'s Chief Baitullah Mahsud was the only person responsible for Benazir Bhutto's death, saying he was 'just a pawn' in the process. **Mr Zardari was not very much interested in knowing that who the sniper was or exactly how Benazir was killed. This was not as important as finding out who financed the killing, and which were the 'hands behind' it.**

As per another **WikiLeaks** exposure, President Zardari had said that:

*'He doesn't like the MQM's aggressive behaviour. MQM was gerrymandering in Karachi, by ensuring alterations in the electorate boundaries according to their suitability, to make sure its rule; while the Muslim League (N) also resorted to the same tactics in the Punjab'.*

Another leaked document revealed that the United States Embassy in Islamabad believed there were some officers in the ISI who were out of control (working against the US interests) and Gen Musharraf and Chief of Army Staff (COAS) Gen Kayani had shown reluctance to remove ISI's Gen Nadeem Taj from the slot.

The cable of **25<sup>th</sup> July 2008** had stated that the Pakistan Army and ISI could take action against the extremists at Pak-Afghan borders but they followed the old policy of giving offers, secret action, divide and conquer instead of fighting in the battlefield. The government was concerned that military operation would lead to an uncontrollable war in the tribal areas. The analysis was communicated that **'the government had failed and it was losing writ in the tribal belt daily'.**

**On 19<sup>th</sup> August 2009**, Afghanistan's Minister of Interior Hanif Atmar lodged a formal complaint to the US that public claims by his Pakistani counterpart Rehman Malik [*that Afghanistan admitted to hosting Anti-Pakistan terrorist training camps*] was an outright lie and an attempt to please the ISI.

Atmar said that Pakistani Interior Minister Rehman Malik raised this issue when he visited Afghanistan last month as a special emissary of President Asif Ali Zardari; but, contrary to Malik's claims to the Pakistani media [*Geo News was named*], he had presented neither details nor evidence to support this assertion. Also that Malik was trying to please the ISI by showing that he was brave enough to say these things to President Karzai.

Though Afghan MOI was disappointed by several other factually incorrect comments of Mr Malik but he [Hanif Atmar] had accepted that **there was a refugee camp in Kandahar serving 400 to 500 Balochi and Sindhi separatists who fled Pakistan following former President Musharaff's crackdown on their separatist movements** – adding that *"Neither the Afghan Government nor UNHCR run official refugee camps in Kandahar."*

Hanif Atmar had also taken note of Mr Malik's statement that 90 percent of terrorists arrested in Pakistan were of Afghan origin.

### **US & UK RUN PAKISTAN AS JOINT VENTURE:**

**WikiLeaks** revealed another affair in one of the cables sent by former US Ambassador Anne W Patterson to her government **on 9<sup>th</sup> February 2009** saying that:

**'President Asif Ali Zardari wanted judiciary of his own choice, and believed that the Supreme Court will declare PML-N Chief Nawaz Sharif disqualified.**

*Anne Patterson had called on President Zardari prior to the visit of US Special representative for Pakistan and Afghanistan Richard Holbrooke. The same was proved to be correct on 25th February.*

***President Zardari also explained his plan to halt restoration of CJP Iftikhar M Chaudhary'.***

The cable further revealed that *'the President was confident that the Chief Justice would not be reinstated. The US government was also against the restoration of CJ.'*

This cable also highlighted the role of PCO judges, saying that:

- The judges under the leadership of Justice Hameed Dogar, worked on the directives of the rulers.
- The President wanted constitutional amendment for extending the retirement age of the judges.
- President Zardari was also prepared for a deal with Shahbaz Sharif, the Chief Minister of Punjab, but the latter was seen reluctant.

President Zardari also informed the US envoy that Shahbaz Sharif was preparing against Nawaz Sharif as PML(N) Chief and had chalked out a plan to bring nuclear scientist Abdul Qadir Khan in his party.

**WikiLeaks** had also made open a cable from the US Embassy in London dated **21<sup>st</sup> October 2008** saying that:

*'During a meeting with a high-level US delegation, British Chief of the Defence Staff Jock Stirrup claimed that the British government had urged Zardari and civilian leadership to get control over the ISI but **"when we put pressure on the Pakistanis they rearrange the furniture."***

*Stirrup asserted that Gen Ahmed Pasha's recent appointment as head of the ISI by the Pakistani Army Chief Ashfaq Kayani (former ISI head) reflects Kayani's efforts to get control of the ISI and make sure that Zardari won't control the ISI.*

*Britain's Permanent Under Secretary for Security Affairs Peter Ricketts described **Pasha as "Kayani's man"**; also noted that during his recent trip to Pakistan "everyone spoke highly" of Pasha'.*

The same **WikiLeak** communication revealed that the Foreign and Security Adviser to the British Prime Minister Simon McDonald acknowledged US concerns about former Premier Nawaz Sharif, including ties to Islamists, but asserted that:

*'He has indicated he is willing to change and some in the system believe he has already done that. Although Sharif's moment may not come for a couple of years, he is in line to be Pakistan's next president. Ricketts observed, however, that many members of the opposition are publicly irresponsible although some, like Sharif, are reasonable in private'.*

It is worth mentioning here that the UK government was pessimistic and cynical about Pakistan those days, especially in the light of President Zardari's alleged poor leadership and the bad economy. However, UK had liked Zardari's efforts to cooperate with Afghan President Hamid Karzai.

The British PM wanted to "encourage communications" between Zardari and Karzai. Ricketts, who had just returned from visit to Pakistan, praised Zardari's efforts to reach out to Karzai. **Stirrup concurred that the Pakistani leadership was not at all troubled by US drone strikes** that killed "Arabs" and Taliban, although Stirrup cautioned that such attitudes could change any time.

While discussing Afghanistan's military capabilities, Cabinet's Deputy Head of the Foreign and

Defence Policy Secretariat Margaret Aldred wondered whether one solution might be **to follow Pakistan's model and "give the army some sort of economic benefit"**.

### **ON PAK – INDIA [Odd] RELATIONSHIP:**

The leaked cable of **3<sup>rd</sup> January 2009**, sent from US Ambassador in Pakistan, Anne Patterson had also revealed that just a month after the Mumbai attacks episode, the **US had brokered a secret agreement between Pakistan and India** on information sharing.

Anne Patterson had informed her [US] government that:

***'The ISI Chief Ahmad Shuja Pasha had just approved the sharing of tear line information on Pakistan's investigation (into the Mumbai attacks) with Indian intelligence, after assurances from the CIA that information would be held in intelligence channels only.'***

Anne Patterson wanted Washington to ask India not to release information about their investigation into the Mumbai attacks, which might jeopardise the new information-sharing arrangement. She said if Lt Gen Pasha was *'embarrassed by what is essentially public dissemination without the Indians providing the results of their own investigation to Pakistan, it will undercut Pakistan's ability to pursue its investigation, generate a public backlash in Pakistan and could undermine Pasha personally'*.

Two days after this cable, India handed over material related to the Mumbai investigation to the Pakistani High Commissioner in New Delhi. Information about the attacks was shared subsequently with other countries. To prevent another potential attack, Pakistan needed to keep channels of co-operation and information sharing open...the goal was not only to bring the perpetrators of this attack to justice, but also to begin a dialogue that was likely to reduce tensions between India and Pakistan.

The tension between the two neighbouring countries was escalating those days. It went up so high that in ending June 2009 the then Indian Army Chief Gen Deepak Kapoor had alleged that ***'there are 43 terrorist camps in Pakistan, 22 of which are located in Pakistani administered Kashmir'***. Gen Kapoor had said this during a meeting between senior US officials including the then US National Security Advisor James Jones and Indian officials including Defense Minister A.K. Anthony.

*'Although the Pakistanis raided some camps in the wake of Mumbai attacks of November 2008 but some camps have reinitiated operations,'* Gen Kapoor had asserted. Gen Kapoor told James John that Pakistani military's statements regarding the Indian threat on its eastern border were wholly without merit.

According to another **Wikileaks** cable sent **on 16<sup>th</sup> February 2010** by US Ambassador in India Tim Roemer to the US State Department Washington saying that:

*'The Indian Army's Cold Start Doctrine is a mixture of myth and reality. It has never been and may never be put to use on a battlefield because of substantial and serious resource constraints, but it is a developed operational attack plan announced in 2004 and intended to be taken off the shelf and implemented within 72-hour period during a crisis.'*

*Cold Start is not a plan for comprehensive invasion and occupation of Pakistan. Instead, it calls for a rapid, time and distance limited penetration into Pakistani territory with the goal of quickly punishing Pakistan, possibly in response to a Pakistan linked*

*terrorist attack in India, without threatening the survival of the Pakistani state or provoking a nuclear response.*

*It was announced by the BJP-led government in 2004, but the government of Prime Minister Manmohan Singh has not publicly embraced Cold Start and GOI uncertainty over Pakistani nuclear restraint may inhibit future implementation by any government. If the GOI were to implement Cold Start given present Indian military capabilities, it is the collective judgment of the Mission that India would encounter mixed results.'*

### **FORGOTTEN PAGE OF PAK – HISTORY:**

**WikiLeaks**, in one of his documents has, however, revealed an unturned page of forgotten history saying that:

*'Russia assesses that Islamists are not only seeking power in Pakistan but are also trying to get their hands on nuclear materials. Russia is aware that Pakistani authorities, with help from the US, have created a well-structured system of security for protecting nuclear facilities, which includes physical protection.*

*There are 120,000-130,000 people directly involved in Pakistan's nuclear and missile programs, working in these facilities and protecting them. However, regardless of the clearance process for these people, there is no way to guarantee that all are 100% loyal and reliable.'*

One can recall the Western propaganda of those days that Pakistan had hired people to protect nuclear facilities who had strict religious beliefs. And that the extremist organisations had more opportunities to recruit people working in the nuclear and missile programs. This thinking was developed then because at times, the extremists had attacked vehicles that carried staff to and from Kahuta facilities; some were killed and some were abducted with no trace of them.

It is worth-mentioning here that the COAS Gen Kayani told the former US Ambassador Anne Patterson in a meeting in March 2009 that **'he did not want to see PML(N) Chief Nawaz Sharif rule the country and had made it clear that regardless of how much he disliked Zardari, he distrusted Nawaz even more.'**

When the above feeling appeared in media, the DG ISPR had to dispel it in a briefing to the media conveying that *'the COAS Gen Kayani holds all national leaders, including the PML(N) Chief Nawaz Sharif, in high esteem. The armed forces give preference to national interests in dealing with the challenges confronting Pakistan.'*

It remains a fact that to repair the damage and to off-set the embarrassment caused to Pak-Army and the Presidency those days, US Secretary of State Hillary Clinton called President Zardari and reportedly regretted the leaks and assured him that the leaks would not affect bilateral relations between the two countries.

However, the point to ponder was that ***at nowhere the Secretary had challenged the authenticity of the leaked material.*** The cogent widespread opinion was that:

*'These WikiLeaks have proved that terrorism is not the only threat which the people of this country are confronted with, but the biggest threat for Pakistan is its insincere political leadership who stands totally exposed before the world now'.*

Let Pakistanis wait for the time when their leadership would start giving priority to the national interest, start behaving responsibly, start considering people as partners in govern-

ment, start trusting their own voters and start respecting their own words which they uttered while reading oath.

One more evidence of **US 'GUIDANCE' on Baluchistan:**

Solecki, an American, was kidnapped **on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2009** from Quetta where he was working as head of the local office of the UN refugee agency UNHCR. US Ambassador Anne Patterson and UN Resident Representative in Islamabad Akcira met Pakistan's Interior Minister on 19<sup>th</sup> February 2009 as follow up on the Solecki kidnapping case.

The **WikiLeaks** disclosed that:

*'[Rehman] Malik continued to insist that Brahamdagh Bugti was primarily responsible for [Solecki's] kidnapping. He also suggested that the Bugtis and the Marris, although rivals, were in fact colluding in this case and that their accusations against each other were only stalling tactics.*

*In the end Rehman Malik agreed to send his brother to reach out to Mir Gazin Marri (aka Kaiaga Marri) in Dubai to talk about the release of kidnapped UN official John Solecki. He proposed efforts to split them by telling each side the other was privately accusing it of kidnapping Solecki.*

*Mr Malik also urged that the US (through intermediaries) begin to threaten [Brahamdagh] Bugti with extradition to Pakistan in the event something happened to Solecki. The ambassador said in that case Bugti would be extradited to the US to be tried for allegedly murdering a US citizen'.*

Mr Malik confirmed that the Balochistan Frontier Corps had cordoned off an area in which they believed Solecki was located near Quetta. They were surveilling an individual connected to kidnappers; this individual reported the abductee was in failing health and referred to his moving into Afghanistan. Malik expected to hear additional information from this individual next day but the interior ministry did not have geo-coordinates on the individual.

**Mr Malik asked the US Ambassador for guidance** on whether the interior ministry should facilitate or block the kidnappers' movement across the border. He was concerned that the kidnappers' failure to steal an ambulance and Solecki's deteriorating health meant that time was of the essence and clearly did not want the GOP to be blamed for failing to rescue Solecki.

Solecki had been working for the United Nations refugee agency for several years before he was seized on 2<sup>nd</sup> February 2009 while on his way to work. His driver was a 17-year employee of UNHCR who was killed in the ambush. **On 4<sup>th</sup> April 2009** Solecki was thrown away with his hands and feet bound, otherwise unharmed, along a dirt road at Pak-Afghan border.

A previously unknown group, the **Baluchistan Liberation United Front**, claimed responsibility for his abduction, threatening to behead him on 13<sup>th</sup> February 2009 amidst issuing a grainy video of a blindfolded Solecki pleading for help. The said group renewed the threats in March, demanding the release of hundreds of people from alleged detention by Pakistani security agencies.

As per American media reports dated **8<sup>th</sup> April 2009**, John Solecki returned home and in good spirits. He was sent back from Pakistan on a special medical flight after spending one night in a military hospital in Quetta.