

Scenario 130

PAK-ARMY: HARD TASK MASTERS

PAK-ARMY: MYTHS & FACTS:

In and around December 2012, the relationship amongst superior judiciary, Pak-Army and the politicians had gone so tense that even JUI(F) leader, Maulana Fazal ur Rehman, had become the critic of the 'establishment' – its role and the defence budget.

The press campaign to revile the armed forces was undermining the security and well being of the country more than murderous attacks by ethnic nationalists and sectarian militias.

A think tank very rightly narrated that the army should not indulge in politics; definitely not. The army should not be buying off politicians; no question about it. Every citizen of Pakistan, whether an army General or a civilian minister, should be punished if found guilty by a court of law. Absolutely no debate about that one either. Pak-Army knew its limits - that a uni-dimensional national security strategy singularly focused on 'defence' would not prevail in the Pakistani nation-state. Country's future really depends on **three 'Ds' - defence, development and diplomacy**; other things come up later.

Dr Farrukh Saleem's essay in media on **7th December 2012** is referred herein which he enlightens about myths and realities about the Pak-Army.

Myth 1: *Pakistan's military had eaten up the largest chunk of the annual budget.*

Not true. The ***largest chunk went for servicing of debts*** and the second largest chunk was eaten up by losses at public sector enterprises like the Pepco, PIA, Pakistan Steel and Pakistan Railways. The third largest chunk was routinely allocated for the Public Sector Development Program. In 2012-13, the fourth largest chunk, an amount of Rs:545 billion, was allocated for ***'defence affairs and services'***.

Myth 2: *The military consumed a very high percentage of government expenditures.*

Not true. In 2012-13, ***'Defence Affairs and Services'*** consumed a meager 17% of all government expenditures. What that meant that remaining 83% of all government expenditures were non-defence related.

Myth 3: *Over the time, country's expenditures on the military had been on an increase.*

Not true. In the 90s, Pakistan's defence budget used to be 3.6 percent of the GDP. Since then there had been a steady decline. In 2012-13, allocation for defence was under 2.5 percent of the GDP – a 33 percent decline over a decade.

Myth 4: *Pakistan used to spend a very high percentage of the GDP on defence.*

Not true. There were at least fifty countries that spent a higher percentage of their GDP on defence. They included: India, Egypt, Sri Lanka, the United States, the United Kingdom,

South Korea, France, Eritrea, Oman, Saudi Arabia, Israel, Jordan, Liberia, Brunei, Syria, Kuwait, Yemen, Angola, Singapore, Greece, Iran, Bahrain, Djibouti, Morocco, Chile, Lebanon, Russia, Colombia, Zimbabwe, Turkey, Georgia, Guinea-Bissau, Ethiopia, Namibia, Guinea, Turkmenistan, Kyrgyzstan, Algeria, Serbia and Montenegro, Armenia, Botswana, Ukraine, Uganda, Ecuador, Bulgaria, Lesotho and Sudan.

The above noted information from Dr Farrukh Saleem was true till ending 2012. The situation has dramatically been changed since then. See the following script:

On 22nd November 2015, msn News published interesting information on media pages titled as: "**Best defense – the countries that spend most on their militaries**".

Tim Graham published 25 slides with Annual Defence Budgets of respective countries with the following details:

USA – \$569.3 billion; China – \$190.9 billion; United Kingdom – \$66.5 billion; Russia – \$53.2 billion; France – \$52.7 billion; India – \$49.7 billion; Japan – \$49.3 billion; Saudi Arabia – \$46.3 billion; Germany – \$43.8 billion; South Korea – \$35.7 billion; Australia – \$34.3 billion; Brazil – \$30.7 billion; Italy – \$29.0 billion; Canada – \$17.2 billion; Turkey – \$15.9 billion; Israel – \$15.6 billion; UAE – \$14.7 billion; Taiwan – \$14.5 billion; Spain – \$13.9 billion; Algeria – \$12.4 billion; Poland – \$12.2 billion; Netherlands – \$10.6 billion; Singapore – \$10.4 billion; Pakistan – \$10.3 billion And Iraq – \$10.3 billion.

Pakistan was one of the two least spending countries on military budget – yet Pak-Army was worldly known for having the most professional army. Count the factors –.

One factor may be Pak-Army's '*internal system*' to rein the best norms of justice within. They don't mince words in the name of Pakistan's 165 years old legal procedures and admissible evidences – they are quick in delivering justice like of Qazis in Islamic history.

Myth 5: *The Pakistan Army received billions of dollars in the form of coalition support funds from America and the NATO.*

Not true. Of the \$10 billion that the US claimed to have reimbursed to the government of Pakistan, the army had received a total of \$1.8 billion, presumably the rest had gone into filling the deficit, training, Drone attacks, charges, weaponry, instrumentation and communication equipment. Remember; the \$1.8 billion was not additional funds for the army but mere reimbursements for expenses already incurred under the '*war on terror*'. Pakistan had demanded about \$76 bn as an accumulated loss.

Myth 6: *Commercial undertakings by the military have been a burden on Pakistan's economy.*

Not true. To begin with, commercial undertakings have literally nothing to do with active duty personnel – and everything to do with the welfare of retired soldiers. Defence Housing Societies are self-financing and popular both among investors and residents (because of superior management and security of title). Fauji Fertilizer, a public limited company, for instance, contributed wholesome Rs:91 billion to the tax pot per year.

And then some facts:

Fact 1: Fiscal administrative losses during 2012-13 at Pakistan's public sector enterprises could pay for 100 percent of country's defence budget.

Fact 2: Pakistan's armed forces are the sixth largest but our expenses per soldier are the lowest. America spends nearly \$400,000 per soldier, India \$25,000 and Pakistan \$10,000.

Fact 3: Pakistan's armed forces undertook successful operations like Operation Rah-e-Haq (Swat), Operation Sherdil (Bajaur), Operation Zalzal (Spinkai), Operation Rah-e-Nijat (SWA) and Zarb e Azb in Sindh without any significant additional financial allocation.

Fact 4: Of all the armies in the world, Pak Army is the largest contributor of troops to the UN peacekeeping missions. Of all the armies in the world, Pak Army has received the highest number of UN medals.

OSAMA BL: PAK-US JOINT OPERATION:

GEO News TV's live programs '*Aapis ki Baat with Najam Sethi*' of three consecutive days [**dated 3rd - 5th May 2011**] had told the true story but the political leadership and military elite continued to make statements that Pakistan had not known about the American intentions of Osama's killing.

In the first **TV address of the American President Obama on 2nd May 2011**, immediately after Osama's killing, it was clear when he said that '**....the success was not possible without the cogent help of Pakistani intelligence agencies; they have led us to the right place and we have succeeded**'.

The US president had told his nation and the whole world proudly that the ISI's personnel had taken the SEAL team exactly upto Osama's residence and they made the marvellous achievement to keep the America and their global partners safe.

Secondly, it is still available on record that **President Obama rang Mr Zardari** immediately to convey congratulations over the success of the said Osama Operation. Same day the **US Secretary Hilary Clinton had talked PM Gilani** and the **US Commander Mike Mullen had told the Army Chief Gen Kayani** about the successful raid over Osama BL.

The most important factor was that the three top American figures had exchanged their good wishes and offered reciprocal congratulations to each other. Both parties were joyful and smiling amidst satisfaction over the development. None of the Pakistani statesmen took it as odd 'NEWS' or unexpected attack; none exclaimed with sorrow nor shown any worries whatsoever. The heads of both the countries talked just in normal way as it was a 'joint task' but accomplished by one party as had been worked out before.

An article in the '**Washington Post**' dated **2nd May 2011** in the name of Mr Zardari [*said to be written by MNA Farahnaz Ispahani for Mr Zardari*] was sufficient to indicate that top Pakistani leadership knew about the operation; that was why the '*undated*' article was placed with the said newspaper in reserve to publish it when the '**Operation Giranimo**' would be successfully completed.

Hussain Haqqani, Pakistan's ambassador in Washington, and Wajid Shamsul Hassan, Pakistani High Commissioner at London, both on the very next day of Osama's killing on 2nd May 2011, had categorically answered media questions on TV that '**Pakistan knew about the operation and it has been carried out as a joint operation of intelligence agencies of both the countries.**'

One can also recall a live TV interview of the then US Secretary State Hilary Clinton in which she had clearly said that '**....many people in Pak-Army and ISI know that where are Osama and Mulla Omar hiding in Pakistan; we also know those people – but it is government of Pakistan's prerogative [to do the next appropriate job]**'.

In fact, after getting lead of a high value target's residence [*till then not sure of Osama Bin Laden's presence there*] in Abbottabad, the American intelligence had started working on the proposition that:

- Why this lonely house, and so big, suddenly built after 2005 without Municipal Authority's approval for building plans etc. Then it was virtually constructed in open fields.
- So big house but no car or jeep going in or coming out; no telephone connection going in and no mobile registered at this home address; possibly no TV antenna on the roof.
- Why 18ft high walls outside; no windows towards the streets though there were two towards open fields.
- Within that big 18ft walled premises there was another house with 8 ft high walls [it was seen through satellite photography].
- No interaction of residents of that big house with anybody outside; seldom some person coming out or going in without any communication with anyone around.

The answers of above questions lead towards the conclusion that the residence was suspicious thus worth intensive surveillance. Then Doctor's testifying drama proved the DNA of Osama's presence [details are available in **'Judges & Generals in Pakistan Vol-IV'**].

An important question that **'why Pak-Army was not made part of the operation'**. It was because the script was written so. This was the only American [intelligence] operation in Pakistan which was accomplished without the active participation of the Pak-army. **The Pak-army refrained and preferred to sit in the back to avoid the Taliban & Al Qaeda's possible revenge and strike backs** which they continued to inflict even otherwise – and with more intensity.

The frequent denials from the Pakistani government and military top-heads, pretending having no prior knowledge of the US operation, were the replica of Pak-US compromise over the 'Drone Attack Policy' [*.....that the Pakistan leadership would stick with issuing press statements for denunciation and disapproval of drone attacks BUT the US government would continue to go by its plans*].

Even when 369 Pakistanis were handed over to the US intelligence & interrogation agencies [*though there was no extradition treaty or diplomatic protocol existing between the two countries*] in the name of WOT [**Gen Musharraf's book is referred here**]; when they were taken to Bagram Base in Afghanistan or to Guantanamo Bay in Cuba; when most of them were killed at either place during interrogation; when the handed over lots also comprised of certain suspects who were ten years old – the Pak-army, ISI, IB & FIA and the American CIA and Pentagon were always seen hands in gloves. However, this time it was planned to be so, it was successfully played; it was termed a lonely operation by the US only.

Then the next question: **when the leaderships of the two countries, Pakistan & the US, planned to do this operation**. Simply check out the dates within two weeks prior to 2nd May 2011, when the two American war-lords, Gen Mike Mullen and Gen Petraeus, were together in Pakistan; one coming directly from Washington and the other through Afghanistan, holding one to one meetings with top civil and military leadership of Pakistan – but then smilingly left for the US without leaving any 'bullshit' note for Pakistan having **'Do More'** instructions.

One more aspect be kept in mind that Pakistan's military elite knew about American tradition or strategy *that 'they never try to catch their high value target alive – they are trained to kill that'*. Whereas the Pak-army people are trained otherwise so they did not opt to be part of that killing game.

Another question: *'why the SEAL team preferred to put the dead body of Osama Bin Laden in the sea instead of burying it'*. Here one can believe that the suggestion might have come from the Pakistani leadership because they knew that Muslims and especially the Pakistanis are known for *'dead hero worship'*, little matters how much controversial one would have been in his life; ZA Bhutto & Gen Ziaul Haq can both be quoted as examples.

After Osama Bin Laden's killing in Abbottabad, the world media started thinking that:

- Whether the US forces would quit from Afghanistan after declaring WoT over. OR
- The US would remain there, would intensify its operations, using Osama's presence in the region as an excuse.

The answer came immediately after as the very next day, the BBC released a list of 16 die-hard Al Qaeda members, all Arabic speaking, who were allegedly hiding themselves in the Pak-Afghan border region [North Waziristan] on whom similar operations were indicated.

It was conveyed to the world by the US very harshly that more severe attacks would be launched over the suspected places. The plans were acted upon. Consequently, dozens of suspected hide outs of Haqqani group and Al Qaeda were drone attacked but with no considerable success; civilian women and children were mostly killed.

ISI OFFICE SUKKUR ATTACKED:

On 24th July 2013, suicide gunmen and car bombers mounted an unprecedented attack on the local office of the country's premier intelligence agency ISI in the otherwise sleepy town of Sukkur sparking a shootout that killed eight people and injured over three dozen. The gate and front walls were blown away; several vehicles and nearby buildings were damaged and it left a deep crater near the ISI premises.

There was no immediate claim of responsibility for that brazen attack on the ISI office in the Sukkur Barrage Colony but it revived fears that the reach of militants was spreading in the country. Next day, Tehreek e Taliban [TTP]'s **Jundullah group** claimed responsibility of that attack - saying that it was a revenge of Waliur Rehman's death and drone attacks because both the ISI and army were working with America. However, TTP's former spokesperson, Ehsanullah Ehsan, denied the association of **Jundullah** group with the Taliban.

The Sukkur Barrage Colony is a high security zone where offices of top government officials – including Commissioner House, DIG House, Sindh Rangers Headquarters and Judges Lodges – are situated. Four terrorists, armed with hand grenades, suicide vests and assault rifles, launched the organised attack just as local residents were busy in the *'maghrib'* prayers.

Apparently a suicide bomber first blew himself up in front of a police building and then a second bomber drove his explosive - laden vehicle into the main gate of the ISI office. Later investigations suggested that 30kg explosives were used in the car bomb blast while two suicide bombers had blown themselves up. Other terrorists started firing and throwing hand grenades at police. Eight fatalities were confirmed including four terrorist, three ISI officials and a civilian.

However, Edhi volunteers told that they shifted five bodies and 50 injured to different hospitals of Sukkur and Rohri. They added that the terrorists' bodies were lying at the site. The Commissioner House and the DIG House were partially damaged.

Police and Rangers sealed the entire area and disconnected the electricity supply to the building where the remaining two terrorists were held and then were killed in a shootout with police and Rangers. Media persons were not allowed near the site while the operation continued.

Later, it was estimated that one ISI officer Maj Zeeshan, had important documents containing details of terrorists. The officer was having evening meal after fast in his office when the terrorists mounted the attack - Maj Zeeshan was probably the main target and was killed. **On 26th July 2013**; a computerised national identity card (CNIC) recovered from a terrorist killed during the attack was discovered to be fake.

In May 2009, a suicide attack outside a police building next to the local ISI office in Lahore had killed 24 people. In November 2009 a powerful car bomb had ripped through ISI's HQ in Peshawar, killing 10 people and destroying part of the fortified building. A month later in Multan two suicide attackers had fired at soldiers while driving a truck past security checkpoints in an attempt to approach the local office of the ISI.

On 26th October 2013: An operative of al Qaeda possessing valuable information about the attack on Benazir Bhutto's convoy on 18th October 2007 and the ISI office blast in Sukkur was arrested from Baloch Colony. Shaikh Adil Azeem, who was also a Lashkar e Jhangvi [LeJ] activist, was a subordinate of al Qaeda's Sindh and Balochistan supervisor Talat Hussain. Talat Hussain was responsible for the attack on Benazir Bhutto's homecoming caravan and also sent militants to attack the ISI office in Sukkur.

Adil Azeem had disclosed during interrogation that he was asked by Talat Hussain to carry out the suicide attack on Benazir Bhutto's homecoming rally, but he had refused. Later, Talat Hussain convinced two other al Qaeda members, Rehan and Azeem, into attacking the convoy.

However, Azeem did not know whether Rehan had survived after the attack or not. Azeem also revealed that Talat Hussain had sent 15 militants to Sukkur to attack an ISI office. The attack was carried out to avenge the killing and arrest of al Qaeda members arrested by the ISI in Hyderabad, Sukkur, Nawabshah and Dera Ghazi Khan.

Adil Azeem admitted that he was trained in Afghanistan's Kunar province and he was an expert in making improvised explosive devices. He [Azeem] had brought explosives from Balochistan to Karachi to provide them to the militants - and was found in possession of a Kalashnikov and two grenades when arrested.

PAK-ARMY'S GENERAL KILLED:

On 15th September 2013, a roadside bomb killed a Pakistani General, another officer and one JCO near Pak-Afghan border. They were visiting troop positions in the Upper Dir district of Khyber PK when their vehicle hit an explosive mine. Maj Gen Sanaullah, Lt Col Tauseef and a Sepoy Imran embraced martyrdom at the spot while two soldiers got injured in the blast. Taliban spokesman Shahidullah of Maulana Fazalullah faction claimed responsibility for the bombing.

Shahidullah had once welcomed the new government's move to begin peace talks, but maintained that it must show its sincerity. He reiterated:

'First of all, troops in the entire tribal area should go back to barracks and then our prisoners should be released. The Pakistan government must take steps which can develop an atmosphere of trust. We cannot move forward unless the government accepts these two demands.'

Shahidullah was speaking after the Taliban's *Shura* [decision-making Council] held three days of talks about the Pakistan government's offer of dialogue. *Shura* members from across the country took part in the meeting and stressed the need for confidence building measures. "The government has to announce the ceasefire if it is really sincere in peace talks," the Taliban Council held.

The said pre-conditions appeared as a meaningful jolt but Taliban's activities of attacks, killings and abduction continued. The more devastating news was that the seven Wapda employees, taken hostage while working for the Gomal Zam Dam project, were released by the Taliban not for love but a hefty ransom [Rs:25 million]. The same day as all this happened, there were other casualties, again from IEDs across Fata.

Contrarily, the All-Parties Conference [APC] was so shy and timid, that it did not mention the word Taliban but termed **"our people in the tribal areas..."** The PM's statement was not at all saying anything harsh about them thus the picture of appeasement and cravenness was boldly drawn by the APC.

Complying with the above demands appeared to be a non-starter since it meant surrender, not negotiation. As Taliban were aiming to get their fighters back and no military to hinder their training and organisation in FATA, they were likely to gain more strength and always ready to attack at will – as happened twice before. The policy strategists held that:

'Just because the state may favour talks with the TTP does not mean it should become suicidal and give the militants an opportunity to increase their influence in these important territories.'

'Previous peace negotiations have shown the TTP to be a slippery and deceitful adversary. Combine that with their latest act [of killing the senior army officers] and you have an enemy that is not to be trusted at all. The memory of Maj Gen Sanaullah and others who died must not be besmirched.'

The army in 2009 sent 30,000 troops to battle Taliban fighters controlled by cleric Maulana Fazlullah, who since 2007 had taken control of the scenic Swat valley and waged a campaign of beheadings, other violence and attacks on girls' schools. More than 20,000 troops remained in Swat and adjacent districts in Khyber PK province after the operation had concluded.

The Swat people had a general fear that Maulana Fazlullah and his loyalists, who had escaped into Eastern Afghanistan, could make a comeback in the event of a complete army pullout.

The Chief Minister of Khyber PK, Pervez Khattak, had approved the phased withdrawal of Army from Swat and Malakand Division just a day earlier. In the initial stage, 300 soldiers were to be withdrawn from neighbouring *Buner* and *Shangla* districts in October 2013.

On 16th September 2013, however, Pakistan's Army Chief Gen Ashfaq Kayani delivered a tough warning to terrorists, a day after the roadside bomb attack killing the two senior army officers. Reiterating the army's resolve and unflinching commitment in fighting terrorism, Gen Kayani vowed to spare no effort in bringing the terrorists to justice. While reaffirming army's support to a political process for peace, the COAS also said that **'terrorists will not be allowed to take advantage of it.'** He emphasized that:

"While it is understandable to give peace a chance through a political process but no one should have any misgivings that we would let terrorists coerce us into accepting their terms. Army has the ability and the will to take the fight to the terrorists."

PPP's Mr Zardari joined the orchestra by conveying an open warning that: **"If there has been any doubt about the futility of appeasing the militants, these must be removed by the incident in Upper Dir."**

The highly trumpeted unconditional peace talks' offer by the APC soon met with a bizarrely violent response by the militant forces at war. Just a night before [**14th September 2013**] militants had attacked a patrol of tribal Khassadar police near the Bannu town killing one and injuring four. Next day morning, two army posts in Miranshah of North Waziristan tribal area were subjected to attacks, leaving two soldiers dead and two injured.

The militants continued to keep its pace of striking irrespective of peace-talks initiatives - rather preferred to fill their coffers with state funding. The print media, in their editorial comments, deplored that the civilian leadership was unable to even issue a strong condemnation of the TTP's group that claimed responsibility for the [Dir] attack. One pinching line from '**Dawn**' dated **16th September 2013** was that:

*"With the kind of political leadership [**PML(N)'s Rana Sanaullah in focus**] on display in recent days, a fairly legitimate question would be — ought the country to fear the TTP more or its own elected leadership; surely the situation demands that the politicians rectify their pusillanimous approach."*

Most of the political leaders were justifying the offer of negotiations to TTP by stating that **'we have fought a war with TTP for years and have achieved nothing - we must give peace a chance'**.

Actually no one had fought any war with the Taliban; during South Waziristan operation hardly any terrorist was killed while most of them moved to other areas to re-group later. Unfortunately, Pakistani leadership, both PPP & PML(N), always went undecided during six years of suffering that how to deal with the terrorists – an utter confusion. In the words of Ayaz Amir [**the NEWS' of 17th September 2013** is referred]:

'Wounds of Pakistani people are open and their leaders are pouring salt over them.... cups of humiliation are full and leaders want to add more to it. The leadership has no Plan B, no line of retreat, no other options - but have put all eggs in the appeasement basket.'

No surprise - the present rulers [Nawaz Sharif] were Gen Ziaul Haq's most loyal supporters back in the 1980s; they were jihad sympathisers then AND Taliban sympathisers later.'

Nawaz Sharif of PML(N) and Imran Khan of PTI offered negotiations with terrorists from a point of utter weakness - they totally succumbed to them and accepted them as stakeholders. One could recall PML(N)'s call of three years back that **'their views were in line with the TTP and, as such, they should not carry out bombings in Punjab.'**

This time, though being in power, the PML(N) had again covertly conveyed to the TTP that **'they were in line with them but the Army was not.'**

At what cost? The Taliban were not hitting them; they spared Punjab. It was the army out there in the front, taking the most hits, and the luckless *khassadars*, poor police and the Frontier Corps. The academics of PPP & PML(N) had gone too far by saying that *'wasn't it the army – or the ISI – which nurtured the Taliban? So if the ghosts have come to haunt their creators there is poetic justice in that.'* It was self-punishment.

In the given situation [like killing of GOCs & Lt Cols], Pak-Army should have given a befitting response, massive retaliatory strikes on known Taliban hide-outs, but there were only statements; the people started raising fingers of martial status of Gen Kayani.

No cogent response came from the main political parties on that post - APC offensive by the militants except a futile resolution in the parliament. Contrarily the retired military officers felt their Generals being killed badly and were dismayed at Pak-Army's response to the event – see some scripts:

- *'There should have been a massive air force strike and heavy artillery bombardment of known TTP positions to let them know that when they hit the Army and accept responsibility, there are consequences. Simply issuing a statement has no effect on them; that is disappointing. In the past immediate retaliation was the policy, now timidity is – not acceptable.*
- *.....the hare-brained idea of peace talks with Taliban, no body is sure about its success. This would soon give in to the same situation that arose before Swat operation in 2007. Dialogue's failure is already written large on the wall. Now they [the political leadership] will not make the Army a scapegoat for their failure.*
- *The recent killing of a General shows how much the TTP cares for niceties of negotiations. They see it as surrender negotiations offered by our cowardly politicians. They are talking and behaving as if we have lost and they are the victors. Will the Pak-Army accept the death of a valiant General with a whimper? Will his death go in vain? - Shame on all who surrendered at the APC moot to share the blame for cowardice.*
- *General Kayani should stand up and reject Nawaz Sharif's peace Plan, which is nothing but an outright surrender to the terrorists and thugs. Pakistan is more important than a motivated mandate to undermine the country.*
- *Killing of a popular General by TTP who had done so much for the people of Swat - may GOD show the right path to our political and military leadership and give them the courage to call a spade a spade and act with determination to eliminate this menace in supreme interest of Pakistan.*
- *Pakistan's history is littered with the carcasses of APCs. All governments have been wedded to the notion that "consensus" is the alternative to action. The media during this process has been on a long watch, each night presenting "theories" which have been fed to them by their "handlers". The deliberations of so-called experts, intellectuals, pundits, academics, and veterans went misleading. Peace talks and peace-making require blood and courage, not submission and inaction.'*

The nut shell of numerous letters to editors, editorials & opinions, and internet blogs conveyed that:

'If the Pak-Army or the state intelligence agencies have information about the hideouts of terrorists, they need to be struck from the air. Why does Pak-Army not use the most effective weapon they keep - helicopter gun-ships and Ground Attack aircrafts?

The American drones and the TTP do not care about co-lateral damages – the Pakistan's troops should reply in the same way.'

One Brig (rtd) Usman Khalid [of Rifah.org] told that:

*'I was posted in Bannu in 1970 when **a lady doctor was abducted and taken to South Waziristan**. The response of the military was a warning to target villages followed by aerial bombing of those who had harboured fugitives. It was not known who had abducted the lady doctor but it was well known who harboured fugitives. No statement issued by the military or the Governor NWFP.*

***The lady doctor was driven back to Bannu the very next day.** The life and honour of the lady doctor was endangered but no one waited for negotiating a ransom; prompt and strong response was more important.*

Actions speak louder than words.'

Here, the army chief Gen Kayani had responded firmly saying that the army would not be arm-twisted into accepting the terms set by the Taliban for a truce. He had vowed to bring the perpetrators of the attacks on the security forces to justice – but no practical move was seen from the army side.

Army Chief's deliberation was a pointed reference to the PML(N) government, hinting that unconditional peace talks without naming the adversaries or militants in this battle for the

survival of the nation were not the best choice. The intelligentsia had also felt that though the two highest ranking army officers were there in the APC but the political leadership and the military establishment were not on one page.

Rana Sanaullah group of the PML(N), of course with the able consent of Shahbaz Sharif, suggested the APC to forward their demands, three at least, before commencing negotiations with Taliban. The hard group, however, took it a strategy to mild the military minds – the death event of senior army officers would fade away with time and Gen Kayani's retirement would come closer to make the matter diluted. The three points were:

- *A ceasefire, the renouncing of arms, and stopping the infiltration of militants from across the Pak-Afghan borders.*
- *The militants should hand over all the prisoners that were whisked away by the Taliban to safe havens in the remote tribal hideouts from D I Khan and Bannu jails as those convicts and under-trials were locked up as part of due judicial process.*
- *The militants have to agree to negotiate within the constitutional and legal framework of Pakistan which they have been denying since a decade.*

The serious minds could understand that TTP would not be admitting even one part clause of that offer – but they would definitely get more time to gain more strength. Referring to Tariq Khosa's essay on the subject appeared in the **'DAWN' dated 18th September 2013:**

'Maj Gen Sanaullah Niazi's sacrifice should not be in vain like that of IG Police Sibghat Ghayur, Commandant of Frontier Constabulary, who was targeted in Peshawar by the Taliban in 2010.

There comes a time in the history of a nation when its character is tested; Pakistan faces that moment today.'

GEN KAYANI RETIRED:

Gen Kayani had an eventful tenure - had inherited a highly demoralized army while taking over from Gen Musharraf in ending 2007. Among a number of other such incidents, 207 soldiers under a Lt Col had surrendered to a handful of Taliban in August the same year – perhaps the officer and his troops were not convinced of the morality of that war due to Gen Musharraf's flawed policies. During Gen Musharraf's times, the army could not succeed in Kurram, Orakzai and Khyber as it did in Swat within months,

Gen Kayani, on assuming charge, had switched his divisional commanders, addressed all garrisons, and announced the return of all serving officers employed on non-military duties. He had also convinced his troops that WOT was Pakistan's war – a morally justified one.

Gen Kayani knew that an unconventional war would not be won through the strategy and tactics of a conventional war. ***Rejecting American advice, he demonstrated his superior understanding of this new generation warfare during the Malakand and Swat operations in 2009, stunned his American counterparts with his success in less than six weeks from commencement.***

Pakistan's Prime Minister Yousaf Raza Gilani once visited India for the India-Pakistan cricket semi-final after the visit was cleared by the Army. He would not have been able to board the flight had Gen Kayani not smiled. Gen Kayani, while in command, retained the support of the soldiers; largely because he stayed away from the media. He was never interested in publicity

unlike his predecessor Gen Musharraf and had shown little interest in becoming the politician in uniform. This all went to his credit ensuring only with one extension as Army Chief.

During Gen Kayani in chair, the politicians were able to focus on the civilian institutions of state and went for strengthening democracy in Pakistan. This policy also allowed the Army to consolidate its hold on matters of strategic importance. Gen Kayani went successful in improving relations with Afghan President Hamid Karzai from freezing to almost warm levels and ensured a level of cooperation between the two.

Gen Kayani's clearest warning was on the economy and time and again he blamed the civilian rulers entirely for the failure. He recounted so many instances and asked –

*'..... do you blame the army for this, for that and for everything? **He, however, tolerated the corrupt civilians to do the damage before his own eyes.***

The media did not disagree with him on that count. Politicians always held that the piles of dirt and filth were left behind by the army after 'nine years of misrule', thus could not be cleared – but the history keeps all facts and figures in tact. **Why the PPP had not published his achievements during their five years rule making comparison with those of Gen Musharraf's era** - simply because there was none to mention with.

Gen Kayani's South Waziristan operation was less successful – mainly because **the US troops had mysteriously vacated six posts on the Durand Line** just as the operation began, permitting Hakimullah Mehsud and his supporters to escape.

Gen Kayani once accompanied President Zardari during a **visit to Siachen**. Within a year of taking over he had, not only restored morale in his force, but had also won it back the respect and support of the people of Pakistan. However, his second, extended tenure of another three years undid most of what he had done during his original tenure. **Gen Kayani's second term was a period of innumerable controversies.**

Raymond Davis could have been interfered to be kept and tried in Pakistan – putting behind the vicious planning of Rehman Malik, the CIA agent in Pakistan. Osama Bin Laden's execution by US Marines alone in Abbotabad was another negative point. The **'Memo-gate Scandal'** followed soon thereafter. The Salala attack by NATO troops, followed by a prolonged closure of the routes to Afghanistan – all events happened in quick succession.

Referring to **the 'Friday Times'** of **18th October 2013:**

*'The army [under Gen Kayani's command] was not succeeding in its anti-guerrilla operations as it had been earlier – **its leadership was not as confident as it was in 2009.** Gen Kayani seemed to have lost some of the confidence that of his troops. Perhaps the mere fact that Kayani was given an unprecedented additional three years..... making too many compromises.*

I [Najam Sethi – the Editor] can certainly state unequivocally that the antics of his siblings which have made them rich beyond their wildest dreams did not help....Gen Ashfaq Kayani might not be a direct beneficiary of their schemes but he was guilty of turning a (not-so) blind eye to them.'

Moreover, the intelligentsia held that Gen Kayani retired as **another Gorbachev in South Asian region** – he could do a lot more to make institutions better without army's direct interference but he avoided – saying it was not his domain.

On 25th November 2013: 'the News' dared to publish a story about alleged corruption done by his brothers especially of Amjad Kayani, a retired Brigadier of the Infantry Division of the Army, second oldest after Gen Kayani and retired in 2005. Kamran Kayani, the youngest brother, is in business thus the richest among all the brothers.

Brig Amjad categorically denied while talking to media correspondent Azaz Syed that none of the four brothers ever used Gen Kayani's name in business circles. The facts appeared that:

- Brig Amjad Kayani had once hired a plaza in Rawalpindi to start a restaurant. The people talked about that *'this is the plaza of Gen Kayani's brother'* – it was never my plaza.
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- Gen Kayani's other younger brother Maj (R) Babur Kayani, lived in an ISI apartment allotted to his doctor wife who used to serve the agency. He installed stone-crushing machines in Hattar district of the Khyber PK. Babur developed some issues with his landlord in Hattar. The landlord violated the agreement with Babur and not only ordered him out, ***but also started giving applications here and there. The matter was in the court.*** Babur was depositing the rent with the court; the issue is going on.
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- Gen. Kayani's youngest brother Kamran Kayani is the CEO of JKB Constructions which once handled the Ring Road Project in Lahore. Kamran Kayani came into the media glare in 2009-10 when Ch Nisar Ali Khan once told media reporters outside Parliament House that Gen Kayani's brother had not done good work in Punjab – a deliberate move to defame Kayani family.
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- Kamran Kayani had won that contract in an open bidding; it was around 2004. After that project Kamran stopped doing contracts with some departments. However, his construction business always went good - a BMW was in Kamran's use in 2004. Kamran's company had been a no-limit company since 2005. No-limit company is the one that can get a project of any cost. *"We rose from the ashes to the skies; why would we use the influence of our brother?"* Brig Amjad told proudly.

The nutshell remained that the stories of corruption regarding Gen Kayani's brothers were seemingly baseless – spread by certain angry media anchors.

Kamran Khan, in Geo News Live TV talk show of 30th June 2014 said that former spokesman for the Army, Maj Gen (R) Athar Abbas, in an interview to the British media, acknowledged that due to Gen Kayani's reluctance and weak decision making, the Pakistan Army, despite having made up its mind, could not launch an operation against the terrorists in North Waziristan in 2011.

The former Army Chief had not been willing to rid North Waziristan of terrorist hideouts despite the willingness of some key commanders of the Army to do so. All the preparations for an operation had been completed then and final briefing had also been given to the concerned commanders at the Military Operations HQ. It had been estimated that if a comprehensive military operation was launched, the centres of terror would be destroyed within three weeks; but Gen Kayani could not make up his mind.

Kamran Khan said that former president Zardari had also communicated his 'No Objection' but Gen Kayani had not only been unwilling to go with the decision of his corps commanders but he also kept telling the political leadership that the chances of success of the operation had been quite remote. Gen Kayani had shared his point of view with Nawaz Sharif and told him that there had been only 40 percent chances of success of an operation in North Waziristan.

Gen Kayani's thoughts on the matter were incorrect. Later, Gen Raheel Sharif's decision to go after the terrorists and to eliminate them was praised by everyone in Pakistan and equally by foreign powers.

However, it also remains a fact that the former DG ISPR Maj Gen Athar Abbas was not promoted by Gen Kayani.

There were other issues also over which Gen Kayani remained reluctant. His most controversial decision was the one in which he accepted extension in the tenure of the post of Chief of the Army Staff - the speech of the then prime minister Mr Gilani in which he had announced the extension in the COAS's tenure was sent to the Army House by PM Gilani for prior approval.

However, his younger brother Brig (rtd) Amjad Kayani once told the media that ***'almost every family member was against the extension'***.

Yet another incident during the tenure of Gen Kayani had been the attack on the GHQ – the COAS was himself present in his office which was close to where the terrorists had attacked rendering the Army HQ operationally inactive.

Regardless of all the points which were raised by Gen Kayani's critics be kept aside and let the nation praise him that despite the utter disappointing performance of the PPP government, the General never tempted to interfere in the democratic process. In Pakistan's chequered history Gen Kayani's that stance deserved a big credit note.