

COMPULSIONS OF POWER

BIOGRAPHY OF GENERAL MIRZA ASLAM BEG

COL. ASHFAQ HUSSAIN



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Sani H. Panhwar

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Biography of General Mirza Aslam Beg, former Chief of Army Staffs Pakistan Army, compiled through extensive interviews conducted over the span of many months. It is not the biography of an individual only, but encompasses many important events of our national life and lays bare many facts of national and international issues, shrouded in mystery so far.

COLONEL ASHFAQ HUSSAIN

*Dedicated to those
Who laid down their lives in defence
of the Motherland*

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PREFACE

Pakistan Military Academy is a prestigious institution of the army where future leadership is trained and groomed. Cadets come here from all walks of life; from rich, poor, middle or lower middle class families but treated alike and assessed on the bases of their performance. Many a time it was observed that cadets from poor families; sons of soldiers or junior commissioned officers won sword of honor and rose to the ranks of generals. One of the army Chiefs was son of a Subedar Major. Two Army Chiefs rose from the ranks.

After preliminary interviews they have to pass through the rigorous selection tests at Inter Services Selection Boards located all over the country. Selection procedure is very fair and transparent. Irrespective of their choice for the Army, Navy or Air Force, the candidates for commission have to appear at some station of ISSB.

Since the selection criteria is very strict, out of many aspirants, very few are selected. Surprisingly, the ratio of girl candidates is higher than the boys. On the whole, very few are selected, hence the rumors that nobody can be selected here without strong recommendations by some senior military officers. It is a false myth. I have observed many a times, wards of senior military officers failing and youngsters coming from poor families or sons of sepoy, non Commissioned Officers or Junior Commissioned officers getting qualified. I can quote my own example. I was selected in the very first attempt, despite being the son of a poor baker and confectioner but my son was rejected in his first attempt while I was still serving as Lieutenant Colonel.

Thereafter comes the stage of medical test in which the candidates are thoroughly checked by military doctors. Those who are declared fit are then sent to Pakistan military Academy, Kakul. Other cadets for Navy and PAF to their respective academies. All the three services operate in different fields, therefore their academies are also different and the training methodologies also differ.

Cadets of PMA are observed roaming around the hillocks of Abbottabad and Kakul, Naval Cadets are seen diving in the Arabian Sea and PAF cadets get bashed from their instructors while flying.

I have narrated the story of selection procedures and details of the strenuous training at PMA in a humorous style in my first book, "Gentlemen Bismillah". Though narrated in the first person pronoun, it is the story of every officer who gets commission after completing his training there. Be sure, any officer that you come across, has been to PMA. This book became tremendously popular. Twenty eight editions of this book have been published so far. It was on the eve of publication of its 28th edition that I thought

why not to talk to the officers who rose to the zenith of their careers and became heads of the army and record their memoirs of the time when they were cadets at PMA and the stages they passed through before becoming heads of the most prestigious army. I thought that these stories would not only inspire our youth, but also serve as guide lines for junior officers and be read with great interest.

General Mirza Aslam Beg was the first to be contacted in this regard. All the army chiefs who headed the Pakistan Army before general Beg have expired. Then, he is the first Army Chief who was trained at PMA. The previous ones were either trained at Royal Military Academy Sandhurst or the Institutions established in India by the British. For the interest of the readers the details are given below:

Gen Sir Frank Masarvi	15 Aug 1947 to 10 Feb 1948	Royal Mil Academy, Sandhurst, UK
Gen Douglas Gracy	11 Feb 1948 to 16 Apr 1951	Royal Mil Academy, Sandhurst, UK
FM M. Ayub Khan	17 Jan 1951 to 26 Oct 1958	Royal Mil Academy, Sandhurst, UK
Gen Mohammad Musa	27 Oct 1958 to 17 Dec 1966	Royal Indian Mil Academy, Dera Doon
Gen Agha M. Yahya Khan	18 Dec 1966 to 20 Dec 1971	Royal Indian Mil Academy, Dera Doon
Lt Gen Gul Hassan	20 Dec 1971 to 2 March 1972	Royal Indian Mil Academy, Dera Doon
Gen Tikka Khan	3 Mar 1972 to 1 Mar 1976	Royal Indian Mil Academy, Dera Doon
Gen M Zia ul Haq	01 Apr 1976 to 17 Aug 1977	Officers Training School, India
Gen Mirza Aslam Beg	17 Aug 1977 to 16 Aug 1991	Pakistan Military Academy, Kakul

While writing my Book, "Witness to Blunder" (Urdu Translation, Gentlemen Astaghfirullah), I had consulted General Beg. He had generously given very useful advice. I sent him an e-mail and also sent a questionnaire about his training at PMA. Next day, I rang up his secretary to confirm the receipt of E-mail. Phone was picked up by General Beg himself. I was surprised by his affectionate gesture and pick up the courage to tell him the purpose. He agreed. Written reply was also received the same day.

It was a pleasant morning in the beginning of April when I, along with a cameraman Ameen, reached his residence. Bougainvillea in the lawn was in full blossom with its pink flowers. There were beds of multiple color petunia on the edge of the lawn. There were fruit trees also. His secretary Sadiq Hussain greeted us and escorted to the drawing room. Cameraman Ameen was still arranging his equipment when General Beg arrived, wearing a smile on his face. Attired in simple white *Kurta* and *Shalwar*, he was looking smart and graceful. After preliminaries, he asked,

"From where do you want me to start?"

"Sir! Before PMA. From college days. Narrate your family background also." He started talking in a gentle tone.

This sitting continued for about three hours and we had a very comprehensive conversation. I had planned to talk about PMA days only but since the conversation was very interesting the story prolonged. After PMA days he started talking about early days of his career. He is maintaining good health and never showed any trace of fatigue or tiredness. So we kept meeting once a week. Initially he used to narrate and I kept recording and taking notes. Later he also started writing various events of his life. He had generously given me full rights to edit and amend what he wrote and I extensively took the liberty to amend and modify where ever I found it fit. At times I asked him very bitter questions but he never showed any annoyance, maintained his composure and replied with patience and calmness. Thus a comprehensive biography of General Beg has been prepared which would serve as guideline for the future generation. It is not his personal story only. It throws light on contemporary issues and reveals many aspects which were shrouded in mystery. He has analyzed various events according to his vision and wisdom. It reflects his broad vision, faith and conviction.

I wish to thank my friends and colleagues who encouraged me to complete the task and helped me in improving the quality of the text. The daunting task was the translation of the text into English, completed with the help of my colleagues and friends. Colonel Shabbir Ahmed is my Course mate and next door neighbor. He voluntarily read the text and pointed out some of the mistakes. Professor Akram Tahir was our senior at Islamia College, Lahore, doing his Masters in English. He retired as Principal Government College, Okara. Brigadier Muhammad Bashir Bajwa is again my Course mate. On promotion to the rank of Brigadier, he served as Principal Army Bum Hall College, Abbottabad. Presently he is serving as Registrar, Lahore Garrison University. I am grateful to them for reading the text, correcting the mistakes and rendering valuable advice. And finally I want to thank Miss Aleena Saeed who lives in our neighborhood. When Computer was misbehaving in my raw hands and text and pictures were flying at their own, she cheerfully helped to fix the text and pictures at right places.

The painstaking work of drafting, typing and several retyping of the draft was undertaken by Mr. Sadiq Hussain Jafri, Secretary to General Mirza Aslam Beg, since 1987. The composition and word processing of both, the Urdu and English texts was done by Mr. Mohammad Ali Omar - the one time computer section in-charge of FRIENDS, think tank.

Colonel Ashfaq Hussain
May 15, 2021

Why "Compulsions of Power"?

Colonel Ashfaq Hussain is author of many books. He consulted me while writing his book, "Witness to Blunder", and later asked me many questions about my stay at PMA. He pursued me to write my biography. It seemed to be a gigantic task. After many discussions it was agreed upon between us that he would ask me questions and I would try to answer to the best of my knowledge. This experience proved fruitful and after prolonged sittings which stretched for many months, he has compiled this book. After editing, corrections and amendments, the text was assigned to my secretary Sadiq Hussain who has painstakingly composed the text and the book is ready to go to the press.

After making the corrections and necessary amendments, Colonel Ashfaq asked me what should be the title of the book. Many titles came to the mind but did not look appropriate. I was in search of an appropriate title when one day I recalled the words of General Zia ul Haq, "Office of authority has certain limitations and compulsions" (Chapter 5).

I could not understand this at that time but now I could make sense and it helped me finding the title of this book. There is an encrypted message in it that our rulers despite being in power become so helpless that they put the national dignity at stake. The steps taken due to this helplessness are given in this book.

General Muhammad Ayub Khan was helpless when he handed over the power to General Yahya Khan under compulsion instead of handing it over the Speaker of National Assembly as envisaged in the constitution. (Chapter 10)

General Yahya Khan was helpless when he postponed the National Assembly session *sine die* under compulsion after convening it on 3rd March 71 at Dacca. (Chapter, 3)

General Zia ul Haq was helpless when despite his promises to spare Z. A. Bhutto, he signed on his death warrant. (Chapter 5)

General Pervez Musharraf was helpless when he collaborated with the foreign powers to invade brotherly country Afghanistan under compulsion. (Chapter 9)

Yet more dangerous is the fact that our intellectuals aspiring to gain certain benefits, keep quiet and do not point out the mistakes of the rulers. This is also a tragedy. (Chapter 8)

General Mirza Aslam Beg
Rawalpindi, May 30, 2021

CHAPTER 1

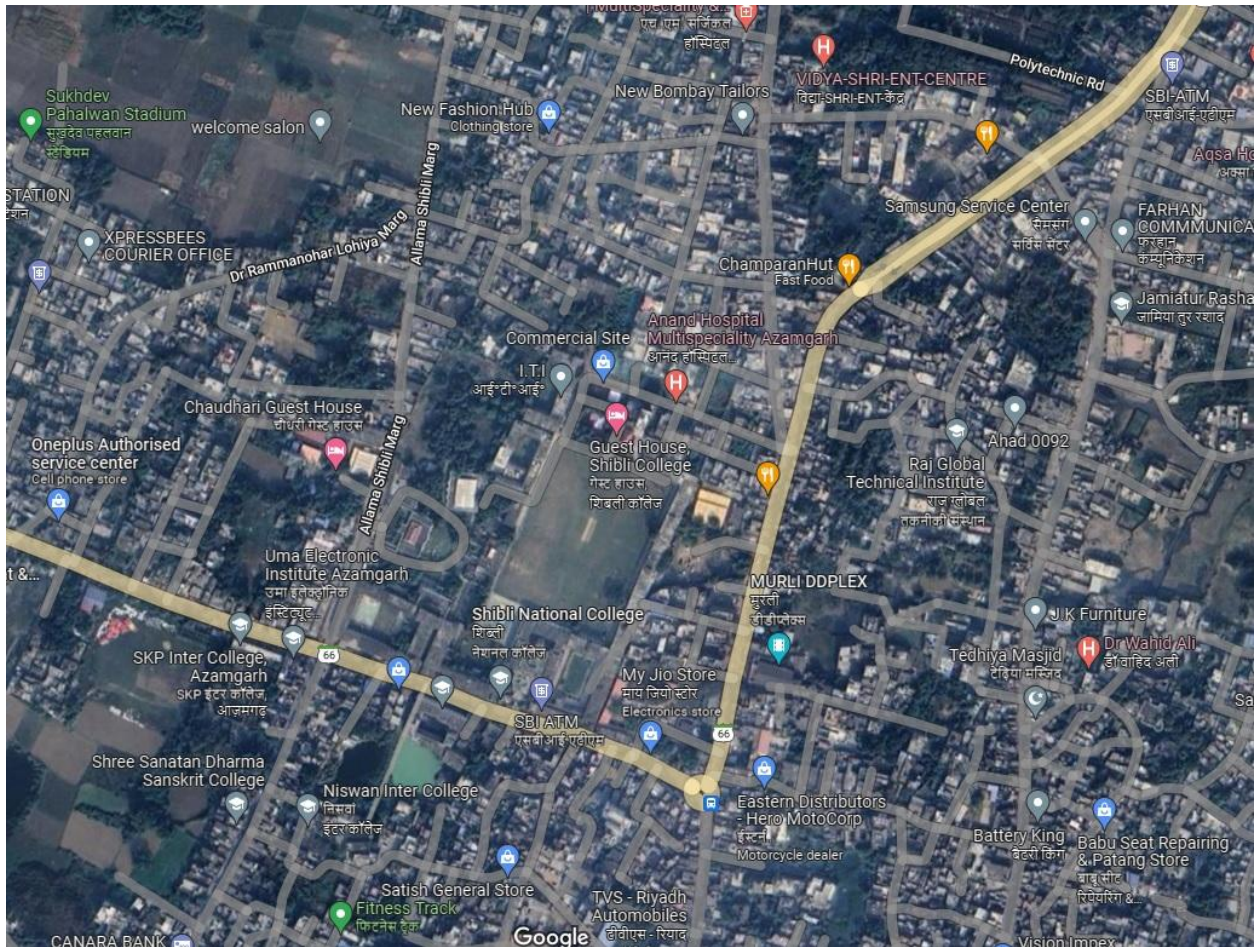
THE LINEAGE

Ancestors and Primary Life

The ancestors of General Mirza Aslam Beg belonged to Chechnya. They migrated to Uzbekistan in the thirteenth century and settled in the valley of Farghana which is the birth place of Zaheer ud din Babar, the founder of Mughal Empire in the sub-continent of India. Farghana was the capital of Indiman. Babar was a fearless soldier, a good administrator, a competent army chief as well as a stylish writer. On the death of his father Umer Shaikh, he became the ruler of the area at the age of twelve years on 5th Ramadhan 998 H, (6th June 1494). Keeping in view his young age, his paternal uncle Sultan Ahmed Mirza and maternal uncle Sultan Mehmood Khan tried to usurp his kingdom by invading from the north and the south but did not succeed. Babar has narrated the geography of his kingdom and the incidents he encountered in detail in his autobiography, "Tuzk e Babri".

Ancestors of General Aslam Beg were part of Babar's Army at this crucial time and rendered valuable services. "Mirza" and "Beg" used as prefix with the names are memories of the same time. "Mirza" is in fact abbreviation of a Persian word, "Meerzadah" which means "the son of a prince". This title was bestowed upon some chief of a tribe, a military commander or a great scholar. "Beg" is a Turkish synonym. Similarly suffixes like Chughtai, Bukhari, Lodhi, Ghauri Mughal and Barias are used by the persons whose ancestors belonged to Northern Central Asian states. Zaheer ud din Babar was also called Mirza Babar before his coronation. He belonged to Barias tribe. Babar in Turkish means a tiger.

During the reign of Emperor Jahangir, one of the ancestors of General Mirza Aslam Beg, Muslim Beg was appointed at Azam Garh, twelve kilometres from the confluence of the river Ganga and Jumna. The area was not peaceful and frequently disturbed by riots and protests. Mirza Muslim Beg enforced strict discipline and restored peace. As a reward, he was granted a piece of land which he named as "Muslim Patti" (Muslim Belt) and got settled there. It still exists with the same name. A map is enclosed showing the ancestral Home of General Aslam Beg, Azam Garh and renowned Shibli College.



Location of Muslim Patti on Google map. GR 26.0899896 and 82.9885502

In 1857, when the Muslims tried their last to revive the Mughal rule, 500 men from this area also came out with a gun to help the last Mughal Emperor Bahadur Shah Zafar. They tried to march toward Delhi but some local people betrayed them and informed the British. They were surrounded by the British army and were mercilessly slaughtered. Only a few survived.

Hindu Raja & Elephants

After this incident, the land was confiscated and handed over to a Hindu Raja. This Raja was kind to his people and maintained good relations with them. He had a few elephants also which were borrowed by the people on the occasion of marriages. General Aslam Beg was a young boy at that time but still vividly remembers when three elephants were borrowed for a marriage in his family. The elephants were garlanded with multicoloured flowers and brightly decorated and the party left for the bride's village. Aslam Beg also mounted an elephant. By the time they returned, the night had fallen. The bells around the necks of the elephants tolled and vibrated through the stillness of night which he still retains in his memory. The same elephants

were used as punishments also. An elephant was sent to the house of a person who was found creating law and order problems or quarrelling with neighbors. He was asked to "Take care of the royal guest". It was a fun for the children as they enjoyed playing with him or mounting him but the "host" had a tough time. An elephant eats up a hundred kilograms of fodder. He is a vegetarian and lives on simple food like tree leaves, vegetables, fruit or bark of trees. Arranging this huge quantity was a big problem for poverty stricken host. Within a few days he came to his senses, appeared before the Raja with folded hands on his chest and asked for forgiveness. Pardon granted, the "royal guest" was withdrawn leaving the children of the area sad.

Family of Mirza Aslam Beg

Grandson of Mirza Muslim Beg, Mirza Kifayat Ullah Beg had two sons; Mirza Mustafa Beg and Mirza Murtaza Beg. They were born in 1889 and 1891 at Muslim Patti which is a part of Azam Garh Uttar Pradesh of India. They were at the age of six and eight years when their father died. Their maternal uncle Muhammad Sami who was a government official at Joan Pure took their responsibility. Both did their matriculation with distinction and were admitted in Allahabad University. They did their graduation in law in 1914 and 1916 respectively. The uncle of Aslam Beg Mirza Mustafa Beg started practice of law in 1915 at Azam Garh. He rented a house near Jamia Masjid and started living there. Unfortunately he developed pleurisy. He was brought to Almora Hill Station sanatorium where he breathed his last on 9th May 1916. He is buried there. He was married but had no children.

Father of Mirza Aslam Beg, Mirza Murtaza Beg started his practice of law on 23rd August 1917. He lived in the same house which was acquired by his brother on rent. He was married to Shafia Begum, daughter of Najeeb Ullah Beg. Allah blessed him with many children; eight sons and three daughters. He worked hard and gained a place of distinction among his community. He was considered the top class lawyer of Azam Garh. He also practiced in the High Court of Allahabad.

Recalling the memories of his father, Aslam Beg says, "My father used to go to his chamber at ten A.M and returned at 5 P.M in the evening. After resting for a while, he went to club where he played tennis and met his friends. On return from the club he studied the legal cases in hand and kept working till midnight. Then he used to wait for me. When I arrived after my engagements with National Students Federation, he simply asked,

"Aslam! Have you come? Go to sleep"

"Yes father! Why are you still awake? Please go to sleep "

He had full confidence in me and never stopped me from my activities with NSF.

Elder brother of Aslam Beg, Mirza Arshad Beg served as Session Judge at Karachi. His elder son, Mirza Aadil Beg is also in the profession of law. He was once elected president of Karachi Bar Association.

Other elder brothers of Aslam Beg Mirza Ashad Beg and Mirza Afzal Beg did their graduation from Allahabad University. Later Mirza Ashad Beg served with Habib Bank for some time then left this job and started his own business. He flourished in his business.

Mirza Afzal Beg applied for commission in Pakistan Army while still in Azam Garh. He appeared for ISSB tests at Dacca in 1948 and was declared successful. Rejoined the first graduate course at PMA. After completing his training at PMA, he was commissioned in 2 Field Artillery. Later he commanded 174 Anti-Aircraft Regiment. He defended Mauripure Air Base in 1971 War. He kept the enemy aircraft away from the base. When they didn't succeed in reaching the base, they dropped the bombs at civilian population. One bomb landed right at his residence at Defence Housing Authority. Whole house was destroyed. This is how they took revenge for keeping them away from the base.

"Colonel Afzal Beg patronized me very affectionately and did more than what a brother could expect from his brother. His advice was a great source of strength for me in the early days of my military life. I never felt alone. His son, Mirza Shahab Beg, FRCS, is considered the best surgeon in Plastic Surgery in Pakistan".

His younger brothers, Mirza Azfar Beg and Mirza Azhar Beg graduated from Ali Garh University. The youngest brother, Mirza Asad Beg died in an accident at Azam Garh when he was thirteen. Another brother Mirza Asad Beg did LLB from Karachi and practiced law. Mirza Azfar Beg did his MSc in Nuclear Sciences and joined Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission in 1962. He did MSc in Nuclear Engineering from USA and obtained Specific License from American Atomic Energy Commission to run Atomic Power Plant. He returned to Pakistan in 1969 and joined the team which was responsible to administer Karachi Nuclear Power Plant.

He served there as Deputy Plant Manager. He was appointed head of Design and Engineering Team of Chashma Nuclear Power Plant. The team consisted of 100 highly qualified Engineers and Scientists. He headed a forty member team which was selected to go to Belgium and get training of designing Atomic Power Plant. This was the team which provided technical support in designing Chashma Power Plant. An agreement was signed with China in 1992 to provide technical assistance for Chashma Power Plant and he was promoted to the post of General Manager of the Project. He was to retire in 1996 but his services were extended for three years till completion of the project. Later his services were hired by China as Plant Commissioning Consultant for a 600 Megawatt Heavy Water Plant which was being established by a Canadian Firm. Now he is leading comfortable retired life.

"My younger brother Mirza Azhar Beg was born on 16th June 1940 at Azam Garh, Utter Pradesh, India. He has a bright educational career. He did his Matriculation in 1953 and Intermediate in 1955 from Shibli College, Azam Garh. He was offered scholarship after he passed his MSc with a Gold Medal. He migrated to Pakistan in 1960 and taught at Edward College Peshawar for two years. Later he joined Zoology Department of Agricultural University, Faisalabad from where he won a scholarship to do PhD from USA. After serving as Dean of Sciences for five years, he retired in 1989. During his 39 years of service at the University, he wrote more than a hundred research articles which were published in the science journals of international repute. He supervised ten PhD scholars. After retirement from Agricultural University, Faisalabad, he joined Barani University, Rawalpindi where three students completed their PhDs under his supervision. He was bestowed with many awards during his prolonged service; like Dr. Khan A Rehman Award 1996 for Research in Agriculture and Education and Dr. Z. A. Hashmi Award 1997 for research in Education."

Aslam Beg had three sisters; Sarwari Begum, Yasmin Begum and Afsari Begum who got education from Girls School. Sarwari Begum was very fond of reading and writing. She had her own library and contributed to many magazines. All brothers migrated to Pakistan after completion of their education. Sisters also came to Pakistan after marriages. Parents arrived in 1967.

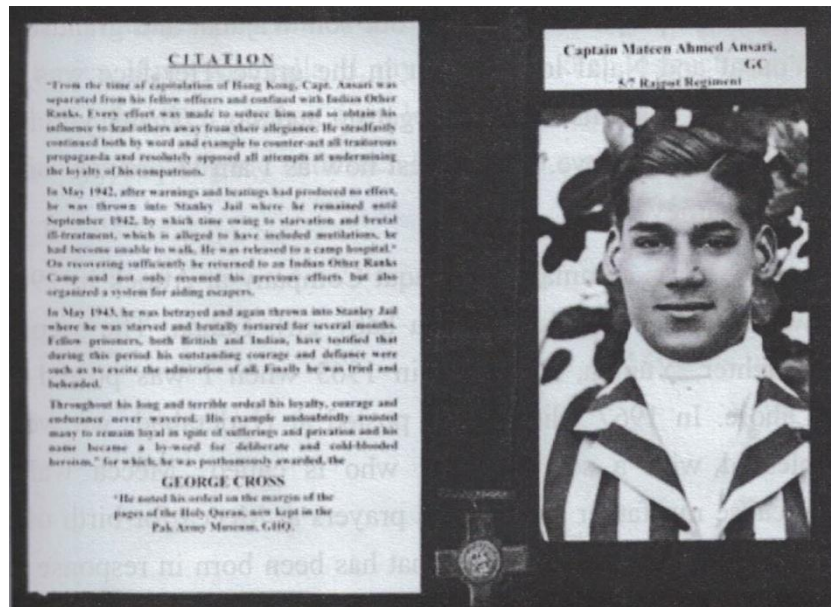
Educating their sons and daughters was a great responsibility. Our parents devoted their lives to discharge their duties. I never saw them going out for any excursion. They used to visit the ancestral place Azam Patti once a year to meet the old friends and to offer Fateha on the graves of elders. It was a routine for the brothers that whosoever attained the age of six years, he was admitted in a religious school attached with a mosque. We got education of Quran and Sunnah and other religious matters. A religious scholar visited our home to teach Urdu and Persian.

I had finished Gulistan e Saadi when I was in class eight. Our teacher, Syed Asif Hussain taught us other subjects also which helped us in our school life and we passed in all subjects with distinction.. All brothers played various games. Hockey was our family game. Elder brother Mirza Arshad Beg was a champion of Allahabad University. Younger brother Mirza Azhar Beg was a team member of Ali Garh University. Elder brother Mirza Afzal Beg, Ashad Beg and younger brother Azfar Beg were all members of their College teams. I headed the hockey team of Shibli College.

In 1959, when I was serving with Special Services Group, (SSG) I was married to Asma Mehmood Shaukat Ansari. She was in Hyderabad Deccan. When she came to Pakistan, she stayed with her uncle Colonel Masood Rifaat Ansari. I was married on 21st June 1959. Asma Mehmood Shaukat Ansari belongs to Ansari Family of Hyderabad Deccan. Her grandfather, Hameed Uddin Ansari was author of many books and served as

Registrar of Hyderabad University. Her father Shaukat Mehmood Ansari served as colonel with Hyderabad Army before surrender of Hyderabad. Later he resigned. His younger brother Masood Rifaat Ansari had migrated to Pakistan and served as Colonel with Army Supply Corps.

Her third brother Mateen Ahmed Ansari was a captain in 5/7th Rajput Regiment. He was taken prisoner of war by Japanese during the Burma war. He was mercilessly martyred during the prison because he had refused to serve with Indian National Army. He was put behind the bars from where he tried to escape. His companions betrayed him and he was arrested again. He was inflicted with severe tortures. He had a copy of Quran which he used to recite regularly and wrote the details of his tortures at the sides of Quranic pages. This copy of Quran has been donated to the Army Museum by his elder brother Colonel Masood Rifaat Ansari. When Mateen Ansari did not submit, Japanese murdered him. He is buried in Stanley Graveyard in Hong Kong. In 1996, on return from China, we both went to Hong Kong and offered Fateha on his grave. At the end of the Second World War, the British government awarded him George Cross, posthumously. His citation is enclosed along with his picture.



Capt Mateen Ansari with recommendation for Gorge Cross

We were married on 21st June 1959 and had completed 61 years of pleasant partnership in 2020. She conducted herself with dignity and grace through ups and downs of my military career, various postings and transfers and particularly when we had to leave our families behind and proceed to East Pakistan in 1971, she looked after the children patiently and ensured that they studied regularly.

She died on 22 December 2020 after prolonged illness for two years. She was bestowed with special blessing of Allah. We all were present on her bed side, reciting Holy Quran

when she breathed her last and left for her eternal abode. Our daughters Lubna and Yumna bather her, our parent unit, 16 Baluch prepared the grave, our son Wajahat and grandsons Yousaf and Najaf lowered her in the grave. Her face was so fresh that it seems she would get up and say, "Thank you my children! Good bye. Let me rest now as I am to proceed on a long journey."

I was commanding Liaqat Company at Attock in 1960 when we were blessed with a baby girl, Lubna. The second daughter, Yumna, was born in 1963 when I was posted at Lahore. In 1967 when I was posted at Hyderabad, we were blessed with a son, Wajahat who is called "Mecca wala" because my father had offered prayers at Mecca for birth of a son and he thought that Wajahat has been born in response to his prayers. My daughter Lubna is in the United States. Her three sons Wali, Najaf and Taimur won three President's Education Awards which is a unique record. The son of Yumna, Yousaf won a certificate of outstanding Education Standard from UMBC University of USA.

My daughter Lubna teaches at a school. She has also been Vice President of Montgomery Islamic Centre at Mary Land. All the daughters are leading a comfortable and pleasant life with their husbands and children. They offer their prayers regularly and have trained their children in accordance with the injunctions of Quran and Sunnah. All the three children have acquired higher education and have been posted to important posts despite their young age. My daughter Yumna is at Karachi and leading a comfortable life with his son, Yousaf and two daughters. She is expert in Interior designing and Event Management and remains engaged in many social activities. If my wife falls ill, my daughters keep instructing me to look after their mother. I am lucky and thankful to Almighty . Allah for blessing me with such loving and caring progeny.

My son Wajahat has done his MSc from EME College Rawalpindi. He was married to the daughter of General Ahmed Jamal, Maryam in 1992. They live with us and their children are a source of pleasure and happiness for us. My daughter in law is very hospitable and generously serves the guests which has helped to maintain good relations with family members and acquaintance. My son, Wajahat is a man of independent thinking. He never asked me to use my good offices to find him a job. He served with a bank for nine years. He was about to be promoted to the post of Assistant Vice President when he left the job and said that he did not like interest based profession. I encouraged him and said, "You have taken a correct decision, Allah will help you; find some other job".

He served for three years with a private company and left that also. He said that there was cheating and fraud there. Now he is doing his own business and is more than satisfied. He has vast experience and advises me in many affairs. He stopped me from doing many things which could prove harmful to me. He remains worried about me due to a judicial case which has prolonged for many years.



Grandsons of General Aslam Beg with their Certificates awarded on their performance

Participation in Pakistan Movement

I participated in the Pakistan Movement. It was in 1945 when I got admission in Shibli College. Pakistan Movement was at the climax in rest of the sub-continent but there was no such activity at our place. A few students came to us from Ali Garh University and invited us to establish National Students Federation and disseminate the message of Pakistan Movement in and around our area. We responded to that call, established a branch of NSF and actively participated in Pakistan Movement. I was captain of my college hockey team and an athletic champion. I could easily influence my fellow students. Soon I was elected President of NSF. It was a crucial time. The Muslims in our district were only 11 percent of the total population. There was a Shastria College in our district where the majority of students were Hindu. Obviously they did not like our activities and many a time we had clashes with them. It was a great challenge to lead NSF as well as maintain my educational standard.

We organized a meeting in the football ground of our college. We invited Sardar Abdul Rab Nishtar, Chaudhry Khleeq Uzzaman and Bi Amman, the mother of Ali Brothers. On the arrival of the leaders, we brought them to the college in a big procession. When that procession passed through the city, Hindus got frightened and all shops were closed. People were surprised to see such a mammoth gathering. Football ground was packed to its capacity. In fact the Muslims from our surrounding districts like Gorakhpur, Ballia and Joan Pur also enthusiastically came to attend the meeting. We had prepared a flag of green cloth which had a crescent and a star in the centre. Bi Amman was requested to hoist the flag. She did. Speaking on the occasion, she said,

"My Dear Children! I have hoisted this flag with my frail hands. Now it will need your strong hands. Don't let it get down."

We did our best to keep her words and always kept the Pakistan flag high.

General was immersed in the memories of the past. While mentioning Bi Amman his eyes were moisturized and he lost his voice. He pointed towards the glasses. The servant had placed them before us while we were engrossed in the talk. It was prepared by the mint plant leaves and tasted very pleasant. I took a sip or two and then asked him, "Did you ever ask your senior leaders what would happen to those who would be hundreds of miles away from Pakistan"?

I did ask Sardar Abdu Rab Nishtar. He said, "A prosperous and strong Pakistan will be source of strength for all Muslims and provide protection to all Muslims of the sub-continent. After the British are gone, we shall be safe from the financial dominance and political hegemony of Hindus. An independent and strong Pakistan will cause the Muslim World to be represented in the world comity of nations more prominently".

"In 1990, I had gone to Karachi on a visit when a person with the name of Ahmed Razi contacted my staff to see me. He came and introduced himself! He was Secretary General of UP Muslim Students Federation. He was Managing Director of Eastern Shipping Company Limited and settled at Karachi. We met at the Corps Officers Mess and revived the old memories. He gave me an invitation card which was supposed to be sent to me to participate in the meeting of the Working Committee of UP NSF. It was to be held on 23rd April 1947 at Ali Garh University at Old Boys Lodge. It could not be held due to certain reasons but he had saved the cards.

He also gave me a copy of the report which was . presented in the Annual Meeting of the Working Council of UP NSF. I was elected as a member of the council. Saeed Ahmed Qidwai was elected as Joint Secretary and Aziz ud Din Ahmed was elected as member of All India NSF. It was the time when division of India had been announced and fragrance of the independence could be smelt all around. Spring was about to come. This report reflects true conditions of that time.



یو-پی-مسلم اسٹوڈنٹس فیڈریشن

مذکورہ دفتر

ملر گروہ

From:

Hasan Ahmed Razi Beg,
General Secretary,
U.P. Muslim Students Federation.

To

All the Members of the
U.P. M.S.F. Working Committee.

Ref: No: 425

Dated, Aligarh, the 10th; April, 1947.

Bear brother in faith,

of the U.P. M.S.F.

It has been decided to hold a meeting
of the Working Committee on April, 23, 1947.

The Meeting will be held in the Old
Boys Lodge at 4.30. p.m. sharp.

AGENDA:-

1. To present a Fare Well Address to Prof: A. B. A. Hale our out-going President.
2. Election of a new President.
3. Election of a member to the A. I. M. S. F. Council.
Any other item with the permission of the President.

Sincerely Yours,

Hasan Ahmed Razi Beg

To,

Mr: Aslam Beg.....
.....Azamgah.

Invitation from Gen Secretary of UP Muslim Students Federation,
inviting Aslam Beg to participate in the meeting of Working Committee

Unity.

Faith.

Discipline.

A Short
REPORT
OF THE
Annual Meeting of the Council
OF
U. P. Muslim Students Federation,
(FEBRUARY 23, 1947)

Published by:
HASAN AHMAD RAZI
General Secretary, M. S. F.

To
The Secretary,
M. S. F.

.....

*Report of annual meeting of the working Committee
of UP Muslim Students Federation*

The annual meeting of the Council of the U. P. Muslim Students Federation was held at Moradabad in the Town Hall at 9-30 a.m. on the 23rd of February, '47. Professor A. B. A. Haleem presided. A large number of delegates from the various branches attended the meeting.

The meeting began with recitation from the Holy Quran.

Professor A. B. A. Haleem, in his opening speech acquainted the members with the present situation in the country and the responsibilities, the Muslim students have to shoulder and the part they have to play in the struggle for their cherished goal of Pakistan. He exhorted the Muslim students to strengthen and consolidate their organisation because without it they would not be able to render proper service to the cause of national freedom. "The Muslim Students Federation was their organisation, and it was their solemn duty to make it strong and powerful."

After Professor A. B. A. Haleem's speech, the outgoing General Secretary read out the annual report.

Then the elections of the office bearers of the U. P. Muslim Students Federation for the ensuing session were held. The following office bearers were elected:—

President:-	Professor A. B. A. Haleem (Aligarh)
General Secretary:-	Hasan Ahmad Razi (Aligarh)
Treasurer:-	Dr. Afzal Husain Qadri (Aligarh)
Vice-President:-	Mustafa Kamil (Aligarh)
Social Secretary:-	Ameerul Hasan (Cawnpore)
Literary Secretary:-	Usman Ahmad (Moradabad)
Propaganda Secretary:-	Abul Khair (Cawnpore)

The General Secretary has also nominated the following as the Joint Secretaries of the U. P. M. S. F.

1. Viqar Ahmad (Aligarh)

2. Saeed Akhtar Qidwai (Azamgarh)

The following were elected members of the Working Committee:—

1. Abul Hasnat (Aligarh)
2. Qazi Sabeehuddin (Aligarh)
3. Viqar Ahmad (Aligarh)
4. M. A. Arzoo (Aligarh)

5. A. M. Mekhari (Aligarh)
6. Akbar Yazdani (Aligarh)
7. Abul Qasim Mohd. Idris (Bara Banki)
8. Mohd. Arif (Bara Banki)
9. Noor Elahi (Bara Banki)
10. Vilayat Husain (Cawnpore)
11. Shahid Ali (Cawnpore)
12. Mohd Sulaiman (Cawnpore)
13. Syed Ali Zaidi (Cawnpore)
14. Hafeez Ansari (Mussoorie)
15. Mirza Aslam Beg (Azamgarh)
16. Saeed Akhtar Qidwai (Azamgarh)
17. Khaliq Mohammad (Moradabad)

The following were elected members of the All India Muslim Students Federation Council:—

1. Abul Hasnat (Aligarh)
2. Zahur Alam (Cawnpore)
3. Ashfaq Husain (Cawnpore)
4. Ameerul Hasan Iraqi (Cawnpore)
5. Syed Ali Zaidi (Cawnpore)
6. Azizuddin Ahmad (Azamgarh)
7. Nabi Ahmad (Kanauj)
8. Syed Adil Hasan (Lucknow)

After the elections were over, the Council unanimously adopted the following nine resolutions:

The first resolution calls upon the Muslim students of U. P. to strengthen and consolidate the Muslim Students Federation and help in making it a powerful, organised, disciplined and independent body.

The second resolution most strongly condemns the Bihar Government for their failure to protect the life and property of the Muslim minority in the province.

The third resolution appeals to the League High Command to formulate a clear cut and practicable plan for the rehabilitation of the Muslims of Bihar.

By the fourth resolution the Council condemns the policy of repression adopted by the Punjab Government towards the Muslims of that province and its most inhuman treatment towards the League leaders of the Punjab. It also demands the immediate release of all the Muslims wrongfully

arrested and the dismissal of the unrepresentative ministry of the Punjab.

The fifth resolution condemns the action of Sir Mirza Ismail in stopping the grant of Hyderabad Government to the Anjuman Taraqqi-e-Urdu and demands the immediate cancellation of the order

The sixth resolution warns the U. P. Government against taking any step towards the introduction of the joint electorate system for District and Municipal Boards. Any such steps would be highly detrimental to the Muslim interest.

The seventh resolution demands the immediate repeal of the public safety ordinance bill which the U P Government has been using as an instrument for crushing the Muslim movement in the province.

By the eighth resolution the Council demands the release of Capt. Abdur Rashid and other I. N. A. Officers and men without any further delay.

The last resolution condemns the U. P. Government for its failure in protecting the life and property of Musalmans in many places like Gurhmukteshwar, Allahabad etc. and demands the immediate appointment of an impartial committee of enquiry.

After the resolutions were passed, Dr. Afzal Husain Qadri and Professor A. B. A. Haleem made short speeches.

The meeting concluded with the speech of the General Secretary in which he thanked all the members for taking the trouble of coming from far and near to participate in the meeting.

At 4 p. m. the Moradabad M. S. F. gave an at home to the members of the Council. Many prominent citizens were present.

After the Maghrib prayers a public meeting was held in the Town Hall under the auspices of the local Muslim Students Federation.

Prominent among the speakers were, Professor A. B. A. Haleem Dr. Afzal Husain Qadri, A. K. Mohd. Idris and Mr. Abul Hasnat.

The meeting concluded at about 10-30 p. m.

N. B.—A full report of the proceedings of the council will be published in URDU shortly.

I did my Intermediate in 1946. Due to the activities of NSF, I could not concentrate on studies. I passed with second division. My father asked me to go to Ali Garh University for graduation. My elder brothers were already studying there but I was so grossly involved in NSF activities that I could not even think of leaving Azam Garh. I refused to go to Ali Garh University. Father was annoyed but then consented to my admission at Shibli College. I remained engaged in NSF activities and did my graduation in the second division".

The General smilingly said, "I am the least educated person in my family. All three elder brothers graduated from Ali Garh University with distinction. Younger brothers Mirza Azfar' Beg and Mirza Azhar Beg also studied at Ali Garh University. They are PhDs, double MA or LLB. I was the only simple graduate in the second division. My father again asked me to go to Ali Garh University for higher education but. I decided to come to Pakistan."

It was on 15th August 1949 when I decided to migrate to Pakistan. It was a very difficult decision for me. Very difficult to leave my family, my fellow students with whom I worked day and night for Pakistan. They loved me tremendously and were ever ready to respond to my call. It was very difficult to leave such sincere and devoted friends but you have to sacrifice your sentiments when you decide to migrate for the sake of Allah's will.

My Father's Advice

I went to my father to seek his permission. I had tears in my eyes. While recalling these moments, General was again in tears. He told in gentle tone, "My father took my face in his both hands, kissed at my forehead and said that I was going towards a new life. I would face a lot of difficulties. Remember a few things:

- Offer prayers regularly.
- Act upon the injunctions of Quran and Sunnah.
- Earn your livelihood through fair means. (Rizq e Halal)
- Always speak the truth.
- Give the share to the person who deserves it.

I had done my best to act upon the advice of my father and tried to abide by the injunction of Quran and Sunnah and despite my weaknesses tried to keep myself on the right path. I am at peace by the grace of Allah.

In the united India, Muslims were free in their religious, financial and social affairs. This was the situation during the reign of the British. Our leaders fully realized that the Muslims would have no freedom whatsoever if they were to live under political hegemony of Hindus. Hindu mind is explicitly reflected in the words of their Leader,

Gandhi, who wrote," Muslims are either the progeny of Arab invaders or persons separated from us. There are three remedies:

- One, they should be weaned away from Islam back to their old Dharam.
- Two, if that is not possible, they should be returned to their ancestral land.
- Three, if this is difficult, they should be kept as subjects in India. Modi's government is acting upon the advice of Gandhi these days.

To do justice with history it is of paramount importance that it should be studied with open mind. As a worker of Pakistan movement I have the right to record my observations. In my opinion, there were religious, economic, historical and political aspects of Pakistan Movement. If we ignore any aspect it will not be justice to Pakistan. We remained ignorant and committed mistakes due to which East Pakistan got separated. Despite lapse of seven decades, we have yet not acquired the political and social stability that our people deserve.

CHAPTER 2

IN THE LAND OF MY DREAMS

Migration to Pakistan

After saying good bye to my family I went to Bombay. Travelled by a ship and reached Karachi on 17th August 1949. My two elder brothers had already come to Pakistan and were settled in Karachi. Mirza Afzal Beg was in 20 Field Regiment at Lahore. I stayed with my brothers. It was a small room near Aaram Bagh in which we lived; three brothers and one of our relatives.

Next month I applied for Commission in the army. I went to Lahore for ISSB. After clearing these tests, as usual I was medically examined. After thorough examinations, I was rejected on medical grounds".

I was shocked to hear this. *"How? Why? On what grounds? Then how you came to the army?"* I instantly asked.

General smiled on my surprise and continued talking calmly.

"I was very much disappointed. So was my elder brother when I broke the news to him. He asked me on what grounds I was declared unfit. I told him that military doctors had found that I had a systolic heart which meant that one heart beat missed after every eight to ten beats. My elder brother consulted three heart specialists in the city who told him that it was no reason to declare a candidate unfit. In consultation with my brother I appealed against it and enclosed the opinions of the heart specialists with the appeal. After a fortnight, I was asked to report to Military Hospital, Rawalpindi. Military authorities had formed a Medical Board to decide my case which was being headed by a Colonel. I appeared before the board. Keeping my file in front of them, they kept discussing something among them. Then I was asked, "One of your heart beat misses after every ninth or tenth beat. Since when are you suffering from this?"

"I think for the last five months" I replied.

The Board members were taken aback. They bent forward and simultaneously asked, "How? How can you say that?"

"It was five months earlier when I migrated from Azam Garh to Pakistan. I left my parents, family members, relatives, friends and thousands of my friends with whom I

worked day and night to promote the cause of Pakistan. They were very close to my heart. I think while leaving them I left some of my heart beats with them" I replied.

The head of the Board instantly stood up, embraced me and said that I was medically cleared. Observing his sentiments, I thought that he had also left some of his heart beat behind. He told me that I would receive further orders within a few days.

Joining the Army

I did receive the orders from GHQ after a fortnight. I was directed to report to Quetta for pre-cadet training. Cadets of all the three services used to report for such training which was of six month duration.

I reached Quetta and in the freezing cold of February, our course started. We were accommodated in the barracks of CMH. There were fifty to sixty cadets in a barrack. The weather was very cold but the barracks were centrally air conditioned and we lived comfortably. We got Rs. 35/- as monthly stipend. Most of us had hired bicycles for ten rupees a month. The roads used to be covered with snow but we used to cycle every month to the city and enjoyed Tai Kababs" (meat rolls) and ice cream. The stipend was Rs. 35 only but it was more than sufficient for our simple needs.

Our Commandant was Colonel K. M. Azhar Khan who performed great deeds defending the area between Runn of Kachh and Chore in 1965 war.

Our training completed in July, after availing one month vacation, we reported to PMA on 12th August 1950. Our course was sixth PMA Long Course which consisted of ninety cadets.

Stay at PMA

"Please relate in details, what happened on the very first day at PMA?" I asked.

He replied calmly, "Vehicles were waiting for us at Abbottabad to take us to Kakul. An officer and his staff received us. Necessary documentation was completed soon. I was allotted Qasim Company. There were four companies at that time; Tariq, Qasim, Salahuddin and Khalid. We were accommodated in a barrack which was called Qasim Lines. These were old barracks of the 2nd World War time. Our barrack was in front of Neelore Spur which afforded a beautiful panoramic view. The weather was very cold and cold winds pierced through the bones. We were then taken to the Mess where we took our lunch. Thereafter, we were sent to our barracks to rest. Strenuous training was to start next day".

The General briefly narrated the whole day proceedings. I was surprised and asked, "No punishment. No ragging by the seniors?"

"No. It was our first day. We were received respectfully and accorded full protocol".

I told him that these days, the very first day was very tough for the new cadets. After entering into PMA through the main gate, it took about fifteen to sixteen hours to reach their room. The ragging by the senior cadets was so severe that new cadets were tired to their bones once they reached their rooms.

"No. It was not the culture at that time. Punishments were there but self-respect was maintained. Punishments like Front rolls, Pithho Parade, saluting some tree or poll for forty times were there but no cadet was degraded. Punishments were within the limits of humanity and civility". He replied.

"Next day we were taken to Parade Ground. Our Drill Instructor was a British Sergeant Major, Defeild. Remarks by the drill instructor are very witty and circulate very rapidly. Defeild was no exception. Once a cadet tried to argue with him. He flew into rage and said,

"Youngman! I was in uniform when you were a speck of blush on your mother's cheek and you have cheeks to argue with me. Fall out and keep running around the parade ground till further orders."

I asked him the details of his officer instructors. He told that his own Platoon Commander was Captain Zakria who later retired as a colonel. Another Platoon Commander was Captain Iqbal who later became Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and retired as a General. Another was Captain Qamar Ali Mirza who rose to the rank of Lieutenant General and served as Quarter Master General.

Term Commander was Major Huzoor Ahmed, Battalion Commander Colonel Saeedudin and Commandant of PMA was Brigadier G. H. Tarver At the end of the first term, a weeklong exercise was held which was very tough and aimed at assessing the mental and physical endurance and capabilities of the cadets. At the end of the exercise, a briefing was held with all platoon and term commanders present. A critical analysis was carried out pointing out the weaknesses and good points. A similar briefing was held at Bhallar Stupa after some exercise. A group photo was taken on the occasion in which all cadets, officers and drill instructors were present. It is a memorable photograph and keeps reminding us of good old days.

We used to get one month vacation at the end of each term. On the first vacation I went from Rawalpindi to Karachi by Tezgam. Railway services were very good those days. It was very clean train having an attached Dining Car. I still remember the delicious food I had in the dining car. The fare of air-conditioned coach was rupees sixty only. We decided to stay at PMA during the subsequent vacation. My companion was Gentleman Cadet Jameel ur Rehman (GC. No. 722)



Standing: Left to Right: RSM Duffield, Rashid, Jameel, Latif, Iftikhar, Maj Riaz Azim, Sarfraz, Salahuddin, Capt Bhatti, DS, DS, Maj Shaikat Raza, Capt Qamar, Capt Asraf, Maqsood, Yaqoob.

Sitting: Left to Right: Khaliq, Nazir, Aslam Beg, Akram, Abid, Qamar, Azhar, Qayyum, Kizilbash, Akhtar, Imtiaz, Saeed, Asghar, Khalid, Safdar, Sarwar, Taufiq, Rashid, Tressler, Nishat, Masud, Latif, Zaman, Razzaq, Ishtiaq, Aqil-Dad, Abbas, Zafar Iqbal, Ghulam Hussain, Anwar, Yusuf-Zai, Sarwar, Abdullah, Saadat, Manto, Bokhari, Mubarik, Masoom, Sattar, Haq Nawaz, Azam, Arshad, Basit, Ghulam Muhammad, Ihs-uddin, Dr. Hai, Hamid, Fazal Karim, Mahmood, Saghir, Habib Anwar, Haq Nawaz, Wazir, Vehra, Siddiqui, Jail, Afzal, Sardar Alam, Shakoer Jan, Hamid, Maj Hazoor, Sharif, Jarral, M. Hussain, Afzaal, Habib Zaman, Zaribad, Rauf, Mumtaz, Rehmat, Arbah, Fayyaz, G.H. Chaudhry, Aslam Janjua, Bashir, Qayyum, Ameer, Sehgal, Capt Iqbal, Capt Zakaria, Mohsin, Mahmood.

Cadets of the 6th PMA Long Course with their instructors during an exercise at Bhullar Stupa, on the GT Road near Rawalpindi

After packing necessary items in our haver-sack bag, we used to go around the hillocks of the surrounding areas. It was a beautiful place and we enjoyed loitering around.

When it was time for lunch, we stopped at some house and asked for Paratha, omelette, Lassi or curd. People were very hospitable. We used to eat to our fill and then slept under the shadows of fragrant Pine trees. This was our practice every third or fourth day.

It is a routine in PMA to have intercompany competitions. The Champion Company leads the parade. It was a matter of pride for us that ours was the Champion Company in 1951 and 1952. I was the color bearer of my company. We passed out in 1952 and then Prime Minister Khawaja Nazimuddin presented us the Championship color.

The cadets at PMA study for the graduation also. Since Aslam Beg was already a graduate so he did not have the relief of not having to study academic subjects. He concentrated on military subjects or played hockey. Captain Atif was the captain of PMA Hockey team who became famous national hockey star and retired as brigadier.

I particularly asked him,

"Which was the difficult task for you in PMA?"

"None, every task was easy and interesting for me", he replied.

One mile is a very dreadful test for most of the cadets, so I asked,

"Not even one mile run?"

"No. I used to do one mile practice during the college days. It was no problem for me. One mile test was conducted every week and I passed it comfortably.

"It is said that youngsters of Urdu speaking folks are very soft and it is very difficult for them to undergo the hardship of PMA. What do you say?" I asked.

"No. It is a wrong myth. We from the Urdu speaking families never fell out or absented from any event like drill square, PT ground, one mile or obstacle course. I always topped in 100 and 200 meter race, secured the second or third position in long jumps and I was also member of PMA hockey team. " He replied.

Aslam Beg also participated in debate competitions in English as well as in Urdu. He used to write his own speech. On one occasion when he won some competition, his English teacher presented him a book, "Wuthering Heights" by Emily Bronte. At the end of the second term, he was elected president of the Debating Club. He told, "The practice in those days was that on the occasion of some debate or symposium, all officers including platoon commanders, term commanders or even Commandant of PMA used to be present. President of the Club was the last to enter. All officers used to rise

as a mark of respect. When it happened for the first time, I recited Allah's praise and thought that some important job was in store for me in future."

He asked if this practice was still followed in PMA. I told him that this practice was followed till recent past in Islamia College Peshawar when the elected president of the Students Union entered last and all audience including principal of the college rose. It was no more practiced in PMA. Now the Commandant or some guest speaker with him are last to enter.

It was 16th October 1951, when GC Aslam Beg coming out of his room to proceed to preside over some debate, heard the news of the Prime Minister Liaquat Ali Khan's assassination in Rawalpindi on transistor. When he entered the hall, all were seated. On his entrance, proceedings of the debates started. General Aslam Beg says that he spent that time in great distress. When the session of debates was over, he went to the Commandant and told him the news. He was taken aback, asked for the details but Aslam Beg had just the information, he heard on radio. He came back to his room and kept crying. He did not go to the mess for lunch.

On completion of training at PMA, they passed out. One of their fellow cadets, Battalion Senior under Officer Abdul Qayyum got the sword of honor. He was the first cadet from East Pakistan who got the sword of honor. He also won the Norman Gold Medal for topping in academic subjects. He was posted to an Armoured Corps Regiment, 11 Cavalry. Later he commanded this unit. He was in the rank of colonel when he resigned from the army and joined Ministry of Religious Affairs as Additional Secretary.

When the Army started military action in East Pakistan on 9th March 1971, brother of Abdul Qayyum was killed in Dacca. Yet he preferred to stay in Pakistan. He was called professor. He had extensive knowledge of Quran and Sunnah and was frequently invited by various institutions to deliver motivation lectures. He wept while delivering lectures and also made his audience weep. So heart moving and inspiring was his talk that he was invited to deliver motivation lectures at PMA, School of Infantry and Tactics and Staff College, Quetta. While talking to cadets or officers, he emphasized on character building.

General Aslam Beg told that he had good relations with many of his course mates, particularly with Chaudhry Muhammad Sharif and Colonel Jameel ur Rehman. Chaudhry Muhammad Sharif took the initiative to arrange get-together of the sixth PMA Long Course every year which enabled them to know each other's affairs intimately and exchange feelings of love and brotherhood. He maintained this tradition for forty years but then he was disheartened because every year some course mates were found to have left for their eternal abode. Only about twenty five course mates are left. Those who still survive are waiting for their final call.

"I have already mentioned that Jameel ur Rehman was my companion when I decided to stay at PMA during vacation. The memories of the time we stayed together are still refreshing for me. My respect for him further increased when I went to see him twelve years earlier and found him suffering from cancer. He was very ill but was happy to meet me. I was informed after a few days by Brigadier Sharif that he had passed away. I went to his home for condolence. Some relative told me that during last days of his life, despite his severe illness, he insisted that he wanted to go to Mecca to perform Hajj. All family members tried to persuade him to wait till he recovered but in vain. His wife, brother and his cousin, narrator of this incident took him to Mecca. He narrates, "After staying at Arafat, we went to Muzdalfa where he had very high temperature. Ice-cold water was poured on his body which helped to bring the temperature down. After offering morning prayers, we went to Mina where again he suffered from fever. He was bathed again with ice-cold water and temperature was controlled. He went for Tawaf e Ziarah and performed Saae and Tawaf. After completing all rituals of Hajj, we returned to Pakistan. He died after a few days."

I firmly believe that those who do not care for their bodies for seeking Allah's pleasure are blessed by Almighty Allali with a status of Shaheed. It is beyond our comprehension to understand this status. I shall like to narrate another incident in this regard.

I established FRIENDS (Foundation for Research on International Environment, National Development and Security) after my retirement. The responsibility of the province of KPK was assigned to Professor Zaheen Ahmed and his associates Mr. Lodhi and Bukhari sahib. Young son of Bukhari suffered from nephritis and his kidneys failed. He pooled the resources and sent him to Bombay for treatment. New kidneys were transplanted and he came back hale and hearty. After three years his kidneys failed again. His father tried to pool up the resources again for another transplant but he refused to be treated. Rather he insisted to proceed to Mecca to perform Umra. His parents and other family members tried .to persuade him to refrain from taking such a long journey but they had to relent when he said that he would go alone for Umra. He had accumulated some money and borrowed some from his parents and said that he would return safely after performing Umra. He went and returned after a fortnight. His father asked him how he did. He replied that he was helped by same Allah who had called him for Umra. Describing the details, he told when he entered the great mosque, a young Arab boy of about fourteen years of age met him. He took hold of him and helped him meeting all his needs. He arranged for his food and helped him performing all the rituals of Umra. "He spoke Arabic and I spoke Pashto and Urdu but there was no hindrance in communication."

"*Didn't you fall ill during your stay*" the parents asked.

"*Look!, I have returned in the same condition that I went with.*" He replied.

After a few days he died.

Bukhari sahib was returning after burial of his son when an old man met him. After salutations he congratulated Bukhari Sahib. He was surprised. He asked the old man what was the occasion of congratulations when his son had died.

"Allah has given your son a status for which I am worshipping Him day and night for last twenty years." He replied.

"Where do you come from?" Bukhari Sahib asked.

"I live in Lahore in the big "Court"

"Who guided you to our home?"

"The same who ordered me to come here."

The old man did not stay any longer and went back.

Very few people get this spiritual status. My friend Jameel ur Rehman and the son of Bukhari Sahib had acquired that status. Almighty Allah grants determination and perseverance to our martyrs to attain that status.

Posting to 16 Baluch

After passing out, Second Lieutenant Aslam Beg was posted to 8 Baluch Regiment which was later converted to 16 Baluch. It was 15th February when he reported to his unit which was busy in collective training around Sangjani near Rawalpindi. It is a routine in the military units that individual training is conducted within the units. Twice they come out for collective training in winter and in summer. The aim is that military personnel should remain acclimatized with all types of weather to be able to fight whenever needed in all types of weather. Second Lieutenant Aslam Beg travelled by train from Karachi and descended at Taxila. An officer received him at the station and took him to the unit. Captain Manzoor Ahmed was acting as Adjutant who took him to the commanding officer Rehmat Ullah Qureshi. He welcomed him, gave him some advice and told him that the Adjutant would give him the instructions about his activities in the coming days. Aslam Beg was to act upon those instructions cheerfully.

The instructions given by the Adjutant were not pleasant at all but the orders were to act upon them cheerfully. Aslam Beg did not have any choice. His only pip, he had earned after two years strenuous training at PMA, was removed and he was asked to live with the soldiers. After a fortnight he was "promoted" Lance Naik. After another fortnight, Naik, then Platoon Havildar and then Company Havildar Major (CHM). He

was then appointed Company Quarter Master Havildar. Officers' mess was out of bounds for him during those two months and he ate at Langar (Soldiers kitchen). At last after serving as Platoon Commander he was promoted to Company officer and his rank was restored.

Aslam Beg considers himself to be lucky enough to have been posted to 8 Baluch. After a couple of months stay at the unit, he was sent for a course to the School of Infantry and Tactics, Quetta. He stayed at Baluch Centre which was then located there. He was to attend Infantry Weapon Course serial IW-21. Later he attended Junior Officers Leadership Course. He got AY grade in the weapons Course and A in the Junior Officers Leadership Course. A grade is granted on attaining 80% or above marks. Second phase of his unit life started after those courses.

The unit to which an officer is posted for the first time is called his "Parent Unit". All personnel in a unit live like family members and this relationship is maintained throughout the life. Every officer desires to command his parent unit on promotion to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel. I was not lucky to get this honor. 16 Baluch is however, very lucky to have two Army Chiefs from it, myself and General Qamar Javaid Bajwa. On the Raising Day of the unit, present Commanding Officer, Lieutenant Colonel Raja Afzaal Ahmed presented me an insignia of the unit which is a piece of art having all the important historical events of the unit and pictures of the both Army Chiefs engraved on it. It has been designed and prepared by two NCOs of the unit.



*Insignia of 16th Baluch Regiment with carving of the two Army Chiefs,
A unique distinction of the unit*

Since Aslam Beg was a good hockey player, he was picked up for Division and then Corps team and very soon he was selected for the Army Hockey team. Captain Atif and Captain Afridi were included in the Army Hockey team. When Aslam Beg went out from the unit to play various matches, he visited various cities like Lahore, Rawalpindi, Peshawar, Multan Quetta etc. He returned after four months. He was presented before the Commanding Officer who was damn annoyed. He asked:

"Do you know how much time you were absent from the unit?"

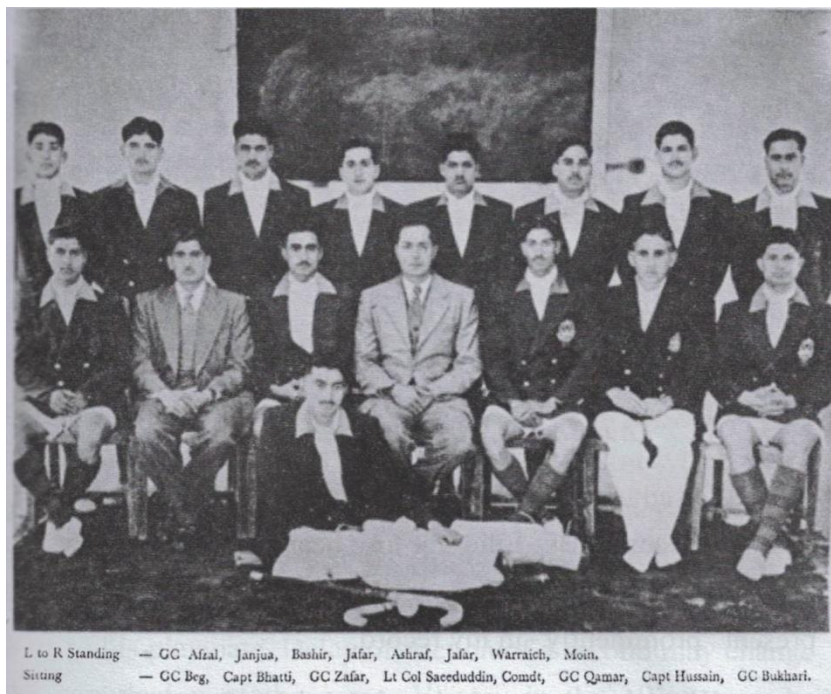
"Yes sir! For four months and eleven days."

"You want to become an officer or a champion of hockey?"

"Sir! I want to be a good officer."

"Then stay in the unit. It is time for you to learn. I don't stop you from playing hockey. Do play but don't go beyond the divisional level."

General Aslam Beg is thankful to his CO who put him on the right path otherwise he would have wasted his energies in playing only. He laughingly told.



GC Aslam Beg (sitting first on the left) with PMA Hockey Team

"Immediately after returning to the unit I was sent on a Law Course in Rawalpindi. I have been busy in playing and did not study at all. I got grade "C" which remained

present in my dossier throughout my life". The courses in the forces are of utmost important. While selecting the officers for higher studies, good posting or secondment abroad, their performance in various courses is assessed. During such an interview, an officer kept his dossier in front of him and asked me to confirm my grading in various courses:

"Infantry Weapon Course, Grade AY, Is it right?"

"Yes Sir."

"Junior Officers Leadership Course, Grade Y. Right?"

"Yes Sir."

"Chemical Warfare Course Grade Y. Right"

"Yes Sir."

"Law Course, Grade C. Shame on you"

I used to think, "Ya Allah how should I obliterate this "C" from my record". But I did not lose heart, worked hard on rest of the courses and secured good grades. But "C" remained present "prominently" in my record.

When I was promoted to the rank of Captain, I was sent on a "Military Police Course". I got grade "B+Y+" in it. On the basis of this performance I was considered to be sent abroad for higher studies in the same field. Chief of General Staff. Major General Yahya Khan (Later General) was presiding the interview panel. After a few questions, General Yahya told me that I stood selected. He asked me to get prepared and work hard on the course. But I was in another mental agony. I thought that if I went on that course, I would remain with Military Police and would be out of the main stream of the army. I had already applied for Special Services Group and was very keen to join SSG. I told this thing to General Yahya. He asked other panel members why I was called for the interview. Thus I lost the opportunity to go abroad of my own accord.

Most of the people let themselves be driven away with the current of circumstances. Waves of time may throw them in any direction. Very few are the people who carve their own path and determine their destinations then keep moving in that direction perseveringly. Aslam Beg is one of them. Apparently, he is very calm and quiet, speaks gently with appropriate pauses and conducts himself with dignity and grace. Nobody can make out that his is a very fiery personality. He has been a good player of hockey. Hockey players are very smart and quick witted. He keeps an eye on the ball like a falcon, darts towards it like a leopard and throws the ball in the net or passes it on to his playmate. Delay of friction of a second may change the complexion of the game. Victory

in the offing may be converted into shameful defeat. Timely decisions are of paramount importance. If it becomes a habit of a person, timely decisions lead to very useful results.

Infantry life is tough as compared to other arms and services. Fall in early in the morning in which Platoon Commander present parade state to the Company Commanders giving details of the persons who are on leave, on duty at some other places, admitted in hospitals or Medical Inspection Room and how many are present. All five Company Commanders report to the Second in Command and he hands over the parade to the Commanding Officer. After parade state, drill is carried out. Then whole day is spent in weapon training, education classes or firing at shooting ranges. Weapon cleaning is a must after shooting. Various games are played in the evening and everybody has to be present. At night "all OK" report is to be obtained.

In addition to all this, junior officers have to perform other duties also like checking the protecting posts around the unit, checking quarter guard, hold various examinations as members of the Examination Board, serve as members of some inquiry committee, formed to inquire into details of violation of rules or discipline and count the spoons, forks, dishes and other cutlery items as the members of a survey board to assess the mess property.

Five Years in SSG

"It is already a tough life. Was it not sufficient that you applied for SSG"? I asked Aslam Beg.

"SSG was a new thing in the army, formed after Ayub Khan took over the reins of the country. Then Pakistan was part of Baghdad Pact. SSG was raised on behest of Americans. Its headquarters was at Cherat where American Marine team trained our officers. Special procedure was adopted to select the officers for this corps. It was a new thing. Their uniform, weapons and conduct was different and every young officer aspired to join it. I also decided to become part of this group. It was a correct decision. It gave me a novel experience where mental and physical efficiencies were always at trial. Slightest mistakes were observed and penalized.

I appeared along with other candidates in 1957 at Attock Fort. We were subjected to various tests which aimed at assessing if we could maintain our wits and take correct decisions after tiresome exercises. After those tests, I was presented before Colonel Abu Bakar Usman Mitha, who is considered to be founder of SSG. He asked me if I had read any books during last six months. I had read two books. He asked me many questions about the book which dealt with survival techniques and fighting. I was selected and asked to attend a basic course of three month duration.

Basic Course is in fact breaking Course in which the students are subjected to very tough conditions and they are supposed to keep their wits about and remain alert to quickly response to the changing scenario which were depicted by the umpires. The course was completed successfully. I was given the command of Liaqat Company. There were A, E, G, H and L companies. L company was a signal company. Operational Planning and training was organized in building no 33. I spent my time commanding my Company. There were some fortunate people who spent all their time in building no 33. We spent our time in foot slogging. People at the building used to say that our feet were for Jeep accelerators.

The story of establishing SSG group is very interesting and dramatic. It was 1954 when General M Ayub Khan was the Commander In-Chief of Pakistan Army. At that time United States Military and Advisory Group (USMAAG) was formed. It was meant to supply necessary arms to Pakistan and to train military officers in various training institutes of America. Lieutenant Colonel Abu Bakar Usman Mitha was posted as GSO-1 at Military Training Directorate. One day he was directed to report to then Deputy Chief of General Staff, Brig (later General) Yahya Khan. On arrival at DCGS office, he was introduced to an American officer, Lieutenant Colonel Don Bunte.

Yahya Khan told Col Mitha that Colonel Bunte had come to Pakistan to conduct a preliminary survey with a view to assess whether some SSG units could be established in Pakistan or not. Colonel Mitha was directed to provide all help that Colonel Bunte asked for and take him anywhere that he wished to go. Written instructions were also given in this regard. All activities were to be kept secret. Later Colonel Bunte told Colonel Mitha that he wanted to see whole the Pakistan by road and then by air. Col Mitha told him that it would take about six months.

The journey started from Peshawar. The first destination was Quetta. A platoon escorted us for security purposes. They went to Jewany from Quetta and then reached Rawalpindi via Multan. En-route, Colonel Mitha told him that it was very hot in Sindh so it was excluded. East Pakistan was not included in the survey.

By that time Colonel Mitha had understood the motives of Americans. They feared that Russia, in search of hot waters, would try to reach Arabian Sea by conquering West Pakistan. They wanted to form a force which could destroy the enemy while staying behind them. In English it is called "Stay behind Force." After the journey, Colonel Bunte wrote a report for his superiors in which formation of such force was recommended. What all was required for the purpose was also mentioned. After submitting his report, Col Bunte went back to America.

This report was initially submitted to DCGS, Brigadier Yahya Khan and then to General M. Ayub Khan. General Ayub called Col Mitha and asked his opinion. Colonel Mitha told him that if we could form a force which was capable of functioning while staying

behind the enemy, it would meet our important operational requirement. General Ayub approved the recommendations.

Colonel Don Bunte returned to Pakistan in August 1955, accompanied by two more officers, Captain Russ Miller and Lieutenant Shaupy. He also brought the news that American authorities had approved establishment of Stay Behind Force in Pakistan. Col Mitha was again called and told to work in collaboration with Americans.

The foremost task was to decide where that force would be established. The requirement was that the place should be away from civil population, Communication structure should be better and where residence for American instructors and Pakistani trainees could be provided.

American Colonel Don and Colonel Mitha once again toured whole West Pakistan including Fort Munro, Chaman, Wana and Razmak. Final decision was that Cherat and Attock forts were the most suitable places for establishing such force. The houses, barracks, other buildings at Cherat needed renovation. Similarly, road leading to Cherat also needed extensive repairs. Americans agreed to bear all the expenditures for repairs and renovations.

Col Mitha had no experience of working with Stay Behind Force. It was decided to send him to America for training. When this proposal was put up to the Commander in Chief, he instantly approved. Colonel Mitha went to United States where he was accorded VIP treatment. Four teachers were detailed for his training in New York. He was given para drop training in some other city. Frog man training at Los Angeles which is located on the western coast of America. On return, Colonel Mitha met the Commander in Chief and submitted his report about his visit and training in America. General Ayub approved establishing SSG units. He told Colonel Mitha to see him directly if he faced any problem and needed his help. This is how SSG was established in Pakistan Army.

This was the time when I reported to Cherat. Colonel Mitha had set a very strict criteria for selection of officers and men. How strict the criteria was, can be guessed by an incident. Colonel Mitha requested Frontier Corps Inspector General, Brigadier Rakhman Gul (Later Lieutenant General) to provide soldiers for SSG, 400 scouts were provided but only a few were selected, rest were all returned. Similarly, criteria for officers' selection was also very tough. Officers were required to stay at Attock Fort for three four days like ISSB. Initially written test was held which aimed at assessing the officers psychologically. The other tests as mentioned earlier.

I was selected and posted to 19 Baluch which was considered SSG unit. The three month basic course started. Officers and soldiers remain under extreme pressure during that course. They are exposed to such severe conditions that they could never imagine

in their lives. For instance, they were asked to reach a hideout at forty miles away. When they reached there, they were told that the enemy got clue of that hide out so it had been moved to another place, somewhere ten miles away. Such exercises were meant to assess the physical endurance. In addition, they were taught to use various arms and ammunition. How much ammunition will be required to blow a building, a bridge or any other installation?. Where to place the ammunition. Types of mines; antipersonnel, anti-tanks. How to lay mines and how to neutralize the enemy mines.

We were taken to Mangla for training in frogman ship. The most difficult was survival course in which individuals are left in some deserted place without any means. They are neither provided any ration nor allowed to keep any money with them. They are to live off the ground, seek some eatables and quench their hunger. You have to hunt for sparrows, birds, lizards, frogs even reptiles like snakes or eat berries, leaves, barks of the trees mushrooms etc.

The ensignia of SSG truly reflects their activities. Its background is black which represents night. Most of the time they operate in the darkness of night without letting the enemy know about their presence. Two currents of atmospheric lightening reflect the speedy and suddenness of commandoes attacks. Two daggers express the power of Commandoes. The star above the daggers reflects heights, commandoes desire to achieve. Parachute wing reflects heights, a falcon flies through and the silver color represents the distinction, Commandoes have over other services.

Training area of Cherat is infested with snakes which are good sources of food. I asked the general:

"Did you ever eat snake"?

"Why not. We are taught how to catch snakes. Its head is cut out which contains its poison. Rest of the body can be eaten raw but if you get the opportunity to cook it, it tastes like fish and is very delicious."

The second commando course ended in March 1959 and three new companies were raised; J, K, and L. Captain Z. A. Khan was given the command of J Company. He retired as a Brigadier. He is author of a book, *"The way it was"* which is about the last days of East Pakistan. Major S. A. Durrani was given the command of "K" Company and I as a Captain commanded the L Company. There were three more officers in my company, Captain Hanif Muhammad, Mushir Muhammad and Abdul Rauf. When raising of companies was completed, their officers were sent on reconnaissance to various geographical locations.

The operational responsibility of my Company was to take care of Baluchistan Coast, from the river Hangal to Jewani and from Khuzdar to Panjgoor. A report was also to be

prepared exploring the possibility of formation of "Stay Behind Force". I went to Karachi first, surveyed the area of Lasbela, Khuzdar, Turbat, Gawadar, Ormara, Pasni and Jewani. Gawadar was previously part of Musqat but purchased by Pakistan. My Company was the first Pakistani military unit to visit it. That company carried out the reconnaissance of the area and survey for about four months and returned to Cherat in May 1958. That was the time when military action was launched against Khan of Qalat. My Company also participated in it."

Life is full of ups and down. At times you are to toil in the sun, some other times you find thick shadows of trees to rest. Deep sorrows, moments of pleasure, fragrant, balmy springs, leafless barren autumn keep alternating in life. Determined people do not lose heart in difficult times. Setbacks in life give fillip to their resolution. They can see streaks of hope in utter darkness and find out their way forward. Disappointment is infidelity for them. God also help those who help themselves. He says in Quran, "Every difficulty is followed by easiness, surely every difficulty is followed by easiness". Aslam Beg regularly saw the ups and downs in his life. Promotions, demotions, threats of court martial, fear of termination of service but his full faith in Almighty Allah kept him steadfast, persevering and unyielding and he rose to the highest rank in the army.

"When I returned after reconnaissance of Baluchistan, my company stayed for another year in Cherat then we were shifted to Attock and accommodated within the ramparts of the Fort. I was married in June 1959. I asked him,

"Sir! It was love marriage or arranged one?"

"It was arranged by my parents", he replied.

It was a matter of great courage to get married in the adventurous life of Cherat. I was lucky that two other officers, Captain Naseem Iqbal and Captain Sarfraz got married a bit earlier and our wives, known as "three Brides" could stay together and share their feelings with one another in the absence of their husbands. The wife of our Commanding Officer, Begum Indo Mitha took good care of these newly married brides. Wife of our second in command, Colonel Aslam, Begum Kishwar also patronized them affectionately. There were more than a dozen bachelor officers who invaded our kitchen whenever they got an opportunity and wiped out everything, eatable. Mess waiter Baba Muhammad Yousaf on such occasions was a great help. He would bring the meal in a tray and saved us from going hungry.

I got married accommodation in a Rest House, located on a high mountain. The confluence of the two rivers were clearly visible from this place. The currents of the transparent water of the River Kabul and muddy water of the river Sindh flowed some distance side by side and then mixed with each other. On the banks were the stony rocks. What an attractive place it was for honey-moon!



Gen Aslam Beg with his wife Asma Shaukat Ansari

An unfortunate incident happened at that time. Some company personnel were being taught the use of mines. Subedar instructor was clearly directed by me to hold the class away from the ammunition magazine. He was in charge of the magazine and that day was maintenance day for magazine. He was to frequently go in and out, so he held the class near the magazine. He was teaching the students how to place a mine under a chair. It was supposed to blow off when somebody sat on it. Phony mines are used for training purposes. But somebody placed a real detonator in the mine being used. When Subedar sat on the chair, there was a big explosion and the Subedar flew into the air. The magazine also caught fire. The area was surrounded by black clouds of smoke. Two men martyred and many injured. Myself being the Company Commander was held responsible and removed from the command of the company and it was handed over to Major Suleman. I got the command back after six months.

I was blessed with a daughter in August 1960 who was named, "Lubna". Next year, my younger brothers, Mirza Azfar Beg and Dr. Mirza Azhar Beg came to Pakistan after graduating from Ali Garh University. They stayed with us. Azfar Beg got employed in Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission and Dr. Azhar Beg went to Peshawar where he taught at Edward Medical College for two years, then got employment with Agriculture University, Faisalabad as lecturer.

Those were the days when General Ayub Khan decided to take military action against Nawab of Dir. Since the creation of Pakistan, relations of Nawab Sahib with the government of Pakistan were constrained. One of the stated reasons was that he was under the influence of Afghan Rulers who had created the issue of "Pashtoonistan". Another reason was stated that he was annoyed with Government of Pakistan because it had good relations with Nawab of Swat but paid less heed to Dir. The government tried many times to remove this misunderstanding but of no use.

Commander in Chief General M. Ayub Khan met the Nawab of Dir along with Defence Secretary Iskandar Mirza and apart from other gifts, he was also presented four hundred 303 rifles. But no change was felt in his attitude. Information was received in 1960 that his son, Khan of Jandal had gathered an armed group of twenty five men in collaboration with the Afghan rulers.

A company was sent to Chitral by air. My Company was to travel by road to Dir. No resistance was encountered when military action was launched. Nawab of Dir quietly came out of his residence and sat in a PAF helicopter. Colonel Mitha accompanied him. Later, it was learnt that the information of raising an armed group of 25,000 was wrong. "We got a medal also for participation in this military action but I think that the action was launched on the basis of wrong information and it is the same mistake, we are repeating since that time. I shall like to explain that".

It is a tradition of our tribal brothers that when they protest or their demands are not met, they ascend the mountain with their arms. It is termed "mutiny" by the government and military action is launched. Military action has been taken five times in Baluchistan. Military actions in Dir, Bajaur, Waziristan and Fata are also based on misunderstanding.

Tribes of Kohistan were disturbed on some restrictions on cutting of trees from jungles in 1976. They went to the mountains. General Zia ul Haq sought permission for military action. I was Chief Instructor of War Course at National Defence College. My companion of SSG, Brigadier Imtiaz was Military Secretary to then Prime Minister, Z. A. Bhutto. I approached Brigadier Imtiaz and requested him to tell the Prime Minister that it was not a mutiny. It was matter of livelihood for them. Negotiations could solve the issue. Talks were held and the problem was resolved.

Another reason is non provision of justice. When justice is not meted out, problems arise like it happened in Dir and Swat. Laws prevalent in those areas were replaced with Pakistani Laws in 1969. These laws have inherent flaws. It has been observed that if a party desires to avoid the court proceeding, they easily get it postponed indefinitely in collaboration with court clerks. Inhabitants of these areas waited for two decades. They were fed up with the delay in justice, so they demanded that their previous laws be restored. They started taking out processions and then turned violent. Prime

Minister Benazir Bhutto had accepted their demands and approved establishment of the courts in accordance with their previous laws in 1994. Implementation was prolonged inordinately. General Musharraf closed this chapter and decided to crush the movement with force. The movement under the leadership of Soofi Muhammed and his son in law, Faizlullah spread to Bajaur, Khyber Agencies and adjoining areas. The army launched military action and they were forced to take refuge in Afghanistan. Faizlullah has formed his own group and now they operate from Afghanistan to spread terrorism in Pakistan. Due to military action" about one hundred thousand tribal people have gone to Afghanistan and the rulers of Afghanistan are using these people against us. This curse of terrorism is our self-created problem.

Keeping these incidents in view, we must be careful while merging FATA with KPK. We might face same problems, we encountered in Khyber, Mahmand and Waziristan Agencies."

Justice is a blessing. Timely provision of justice helps maintaining equilibrium in society while delay in justice and obstacles in its provision destroy the system and endanger administration and security of state. Pakistan is facing similar dangers these days. There are more than thirty eight thousand cases in Supreme Court waiting decisions. While there are many hundred thousand cases in the lower courts pending decisions. People face a lot of problems in seeking justice and are helpless to find it. This situation has created many problems, terrorism being atop. People have lost peace of mind and every day they pass through new stress, strain and frustration.

America wrongly informed General Musharraf in 2005 that master mind of his attackers Baitullah Mehsood was present in Waziristan. He launched military action in Waziristan without any investigations which added fuel to the already fiery situation. Thereafter opposing forces spread in far flung areas. It was due to military actions that Tehreek e Taliban Pakistan was formed. They operate from the tribal belts and from within Pakistan and continuing their activities.

Terrorists had established their hide outs in FATA. Army has flushed them out but jinn of terrorism has yet not been tamed. Administrative flaws of the government have resulted into a new coercion. Intoxicated with power, the government has banned various organizations instead of adopting negotiations and bringing them into the main stream of politics. Consequently, dozens of such organizations have become a threat to our national security.

The government and the Supreme Court do realize that there is a dire need to remove the obstacles in provision of speedy justice and to reform the system. It is real test for the constitutional experts. They must render help to the parliament to formulate appropriate policy in this regard. It is obligatory for the government to carefully

formulate a comprehensive policy for provision of speedy and timely justice before the next elections.

It is not difficult to understand the difficulties, the people face in seeking justice. Helpless people are choking with anger. A columnist, Shaheen Sehbai rightly stated, "The people are ready to explode with anger. After getting annoyed, they are heading towards revolt". The protest and anger demonstrated by the people of Kasur on the incident of Zainab (an innocent child who was raped and murdered) is an indication of people's mood. The people's protest, demonstrated for last four years against corruption, perpetrated right under the rulers' nose, indicate a thunderstorm looming large. May Allah have mercy on us.

The life of a soldier is very tough. Jokes and satire make the life lighter and bearable. The jokes are usually light but at times bitter. Our routine training in SSG included 25 miles march every week with 40 pound big pack at the back. Other exercises included sudden raid on some hide outs or laying ambush for some passing convoy. Blank rounds were used in such exercises. Once we returned to the mess after an exercise. We were still laying off our equipment when we heard sound of a fire outside. We saw that Captain Shaukat Mehmood was crying holding his foot. It was learnt that he had placed his rifle with its nozzle on his foot. Trigger was pressed by mistake and ammunition pierced through his foot. Captain Humayun Malik was standing aside. He remarked, "Raja Sahib! If you wanted to commit suicide, why did you think that your brain is located in your feet?"

Raja Shaukat swung his rifle so rapidly that had Humayun not ducked in time, he would have been severely injured.

One of our companions of SSG, Colonel Syed Ahmed was posted as Station Commander Karachi. Another friend Colonel Naeem was also serving there. He suffered from heart attack and was admitted in hospital. Colonel Syed went to enquire about his health. He prayed for his early recuperation and said, "Naeem! Life is temporal. I want to discharge my duties as a good friend. Using powers within my jurisdiction, I have allotted a corner plot to you. I have brought the file with me".

Naeem was surprised on the great favor, his friend had done to him. He opened the file, It was written in the file, "Corner Plot, West Open. Gora Graveyard".

He shouted, "You rascal! You are sending me to the graveyard". He picked up a glass and threw at him. He had a narrow escape.

Colonel Syed went to Canada after retirement and got settled there. The weather there did not suit him and he fell ill. He came to Pakistan for treatment. Got cured and went back. Again he fell ill and came to Pakistan. When he came to Pakistan for the third

time, his treatment prolonged. I was in Karachi those days. I invited him for dinner along with some other SSG friends at the residence of daughter Yumna. We were taking tea after dinner when I addressed his wife, "Siddiqa Bhabhi! I want to discuss an important point with you. I know Colonel Syed for the last fifty years. He has come to Pakistan three times for his overhauling. I am afraid he may not follow a Chief Minister of KPK who got his overhauling. When his ears, eyes, teeth, knees, heart and liver got cured, he married a young girl of twenty five years of age. Keep an eye on him. He might have selected a foreign girl in Canada." Syed blushed, all laughed but his wife kept staring at him.

There are more incidents but I will refrain from narrating. If needed, services of Brigadier Hamayun Malik would be sought because he is known for his witty remarks and interesting jokes.

Irrespective of scorching heat of summer or freezing winter, our exercises were held in the mountains particularly near the hillocks of Kala Chitta which was infested with poisonous snakes. Snakes found their way into our shoes or haversacks. A few persons were bitten also. My practice was, whenever we got time to rest late at night, I used to flatten the ground, spread my blanket, recite "Ayatul Kursi" and blew around me, forming a spiritual rampart. No snake ever came near me and I slept comfortably.

Soldiers live like a family in a unit with commanding officer like the family head who takes care of unit personnel like a kind father. Bachelor officers dine in the mess and at times get fed up with mess food. They at times invade the married officers' residences. I also faced such situations many a time. Bachelor Officers came to my place and removed all eatables in the fridge. We had to get food from the mess.

Once my wife found the daughter missing. She searched for her in all rooms and came out worriedly. She was still searching for her, when told by a nearby guard, "Don't worry Baji! Captain Rauf had placed her in her haversack and went down. He will return soon". He returned after a while and laughing said that she was not felt as burden at all. My wife instead of getting annoyed, told him, "I am going to a tea party tomorrow. Your services will be required. Take care of her". He said that he was ever ready for such a pleasant job.

Once a competition for 100 miles was held. We were to run with 40 pound weight on our back and a rifle. Havildar Ghulam Meeran completed the distance within 23 hours. I completed it within 29 hours. I also helped Captain Hanif during last ten miles. Unarmed combat was part of our training. American instructors trained us in this art. Captain Syed and Captain Naeem were considered experts in it. Whenever some senior officer visited us, they demonstrated their skills. It was like free style wrestling in which nobody gets injured but the competition is very tough.

One day I was playing wrist twisting with my companion Nasir Mehmood. He tried his best to twist my wrist but did not succeed, In the meantime, one of our Marine Instructors came. He was six and a half feet high and weighed about three maunds. He tried to twist my wrist and almost hanged holding my wrist but could not. He went away babbling. How strange! Americans could neither twist my wrist in the past nor can they do it now.

Generally Americans are good friends. There were about twelve American families who lived at Cherat. There was a lot of hustle and bustle in the club. We were allowed to visit them at week-ends. There was a lot of excitement and liveliness. After a week-long strenuous exercises such activities proved refreshing and invigorating. How wonder full time it was!

CHAPTER 3

TEN POSTINGS DURING EIGHT YEARS!

نہیں زندگی سلسلہ روز و شب کا

نہیں زندگی مستی و نیم خوابی

*"Life is not just passing the day and night.
It is neither intoxication nor half awakening"*

Staff College, Quetta

I had completed ten year service at Cherat when it was time to appear for Staff College entrance examination. I had backache which prevented me from para jump. That is why I did not wear the SSG insignia during my service with them. Only one essay was to be written for Staff College entrance examination. I wrote that essay and got selected in the very first attempt. I had been promoted to the rank of major during my stay with SSG. When I went to Staff College, I was demoted to the rank of captain to come at par with my course mates.

Brigadier Bilgiramji was Commandant of the College and Agha Muhammad Akram (Author of "Sword of Allah" and other books) was our Chief Instructor. I had to work real hard. One of our instructors, Colonel Akram once advised us to mould our character in accordance with a quote by an intellectual, "God! Give me the serenity of judgment to accept things, I cannot change. The courage to change things, I can. And the wisdom to understand the difference".

When I was appointed as Chief of General Staff, I had placed two prayers on my table. One mentioned above and the other, by Allama Iqbal,

تو غنی از ہر دو عالم من فقیر

روز محشر عذر ہائے من پذیر

گر تو بنی حسابم ناگزیر

از نگاہ مصطفیٰ پہاں بگیر

*You are indifferent to the two worlds, while I am bagger (seeking your mercy).
On the day of Resurrection please accept my pleas.
If it is inevitable to verify accounts of my activities,*

please hold it in the absence of the eyes of the Prophet."

The same decorated my table when I became the Chief of the Army Staff. The first prayer appears to have been accepted by Almighty Allah as I got very qualified officers as my companions and a friendly country like China. It was with their help that we developed a strong, effective deterrence force, bringing our army in line with the requirements of modern time. Enemy is scared of us now.

Posting to 114 Brigade

At the conclusion of the Staff Course I was posted to 114 Brigade, at Lahore as GSO-III. Major Akbar was our Brigade Major. I had spent hardly a week there, when told to report to the Corps Headquarters. Corps Commander wanted to see me. I was surprised. Why Corps Commander wanted to see me. Had I committed some mistake or the post of GSO III was so important that Corps Commander wanted to welcome me. Struggling my thoughts, I appeared before the Corps Commander, Lieutenant General Wasiuddin. He greeted me,

"Welcome Beg! I want to test your abilities, you acquired during your stay with SSG "

He told me that a sprinkler system was being installed in the Golf Course to irrigate the grass. The pipes which were placed got stolen. Nobody had been caught as yet. He expressed his confidence that I was able to catch the thieves. Whatever help I needed was to be placed at my disposal.

"Sir! I shall do my best" I assured and came out of his office. I was in a fix, wondering how to catch the thief I did not get such training.

I thought of a device. Obtained two dogs from the Dog Centre and their handlers. Got two trenches dug in the Golf Course. I sat in a trench and placed the dogs and their handlers in the other. We kept waiting the whole night. It was about 2 A.M when some shadows were seen moving in the golf course. Then we heard the sound of digging. I signaled to the dogs. They darted immediately. Two thieves were caught, other three ran away who were arrested later on. The matter was reported to the Corps Headquarters next day. My efforts were appreciated and the prestige of my training with SSG stayed intact.

Our residence was a barrack of the Second World War time. Very precarious. We were reminded of the beautiful Rest House we got at Attock from where the confluence of the two rivers could be easily seen and the scenery around us was beautiful and this was a fragile barrack, surrounded by tall grass and bushes. The mosquitoes buzz around all night and the fan was so slow that it could not blow them away. There was one advantage of this place. It was very close to the Services Club. We could easily walk to the Club. Nearby was Kingham Bus Stop from where a double decker bus plied

between the Cantt area and Islam Pura (Then Krishan Nagar). We used to catch the bus from Kingham Bus Stop and within minutes reach Tolentin Market which was close to Anar Kali Bazar. Traffic jam was unknown those days. During our stay there, we were blessed with our second daughter, Yumna.

Posting to 53 Brigade as BM

We had spent a year and a few months when I was posted to 53 Brigade Comilla (East Pakistan) as Brigade Major. Brigadier Abu Bakar Usman Mitha was the Brigade Commander and another companion of SSG days, Major Jaafar Hussain was Deputy Assistant & Quarter Master. (DQ).

One cannot forget the debacle of 16th December 1971 whenever East Pakistan comes to mind. The incident of 16th December did not occur suddenly. Conspiracies were hatched since the creation of Pakistan. When Pakistan came into being, the population of East Pakistan was 53% of the total Pakistan. They were in majority which should have been accepted and given representation in the parliament and the government accordingly. But what happened was quite the contrary. Bureaucracy of the West Pakistan and some politicians kept trying to convert their majority into minority.

East Bengal won 113 seats out of 119 in 1946 elections. Hussain Shaheed Sohrwardi became the Chief Minister of East Bengal. Later, A.K. Fazlul Haq, known as "Tiger of Bengal" also served as Chief Minister. Resolution of Pakistan was also presented by him on 23rd March 1940 at Lahore. Had one of them been appointed the Prime Minister, people of East Pakistan would have been proud of their representation in the Federal government. The spirit behind formation of one unit was also the same; to relegate the East Pakistan to minority. It was decided that there would be two provinces, East Pakistan and West Pakistan (after amalgamating the four Provinces here) and both would have equal representation in the central Legislative Assembly.

Despite all these steps there were no feelings of ill will in East Pakistan in 1964-65. People were simple, friendly and cheerful. Our GSO-III was Captain Mustafeez ur Rehman from East Pakistan who became Foreign Minister when Khalida Zia was Prime Minister. He was replaced by Captain Zaheer Uddin as GSO-III who later became Bangla Desh Army Chief. I am still in contact with these friends. When I visited Bangla Desh in 1990, a family get together was held in the Officers Mess of Comilla Garrison. Old friends came from far off places to see me. They embraced me and wept. I realized that they had more sense of loss than us. Circumstances were such that they could not help accepting inevitability of separation.

The Policy adopted for defence of East Pakistan was faulty right from the beginning. It was assumed that East Pakistan would be defended from West Pakistan. West Pakistan shared borders with India only in the east while East Pakistan was surrounded by India from three sides. Despite that fact the whole army was located in West Pakistan except

one Division in East Pakistan. The area of responsibility of our brigade spread over 450 Kilometer from Sylhet to Cox's Bazar. The brigade had the strength of 4500 men. It was very difficult to defend such a vast area with such a small force. But we developed a strategy, converting the river banks into defensive positions. It proved very effective during 1965 war and the enemy could not dare to advance anywhere in our area of responsibility. Had we placed four divisions army there, an offensive strategy could be developed and situation would have been different in 1971.

Opportunity for Hajj

I had spent a few months in Comilla when there was a new turn in my life. I got an opportunity to go to Mecca for Hajj, My parents were proceeding to Mecca for performance of Hajj. Out of the seven brothers and sisters, I was selected to go to Mecca for their assistance. My brigade helped me a lot and after necessary preparations, I went on forty day leave to Saudi Arabia. My parents were staying at Mecca. I joined them and stayed with them. Our younger sister, Yasmin also accompanied us. The place we stayed in was a mud building. There were very few hotels made of bricks and cement. The lights of the Grand Mosque were visible from 20 miles. There were a few roads. All other mosques and buildings were quite old. There were still twenty days to go before Hajj so we went To Madina Munawwarah. The house we stayed in was close to the residence of Ayub Ansari (May Allah be pleased with him). There were other memorable buildings of historical importance that we visited.

A wonderful thing which happened with me, was that my old backache which prevented me from lifting any weight vanished all of a sudden. On many occasions, I lifted the luggage of my parents, sister's and my own, placed it in buses and got it down and never felt any pain. I took my mother to some height on Jabal e Rehmat in the field of Arafat and remained comfortable. Other miracle was that due to the prayers of my parents, my military life got a new turn. I kept getting on despite some grave mistakes and some incidents which could have resulted into court martial and termination of my services. I also prayed clinging to the walls of the house of Allah vehemently for "*shahadat*" (martyrdom) but perhaps the prayers of my parents overtook my prayers. My parents prayed for me a lot, I think it was due to their prayers that despite fumbling and staggering, I reached the top and became Chief of an army which is the best army of the world. I got an opportunity to get reins of the country but I returned it to those who deserved it. This is what has been ordained By Allah and this is what my father had advised me, "Give the rights to those who deserve it".

I had called the Naval Chief, Admiral Saeed Ahmed Khan, PAF Chief, Air Martial Hakeemullah, Director ISI, Lieutenant General Hameed Gul and Judge Advocate General Brigadier Muhammed Azeez Khan. After brief consultation with them, I called Chairman Senate Ghulam Ishaq Khan and asked him to take over the charge. Elections were held and Benazir Bhutto came to power. In recognition of my services, the Army personnel were awarded "Medal of Democracy".

The 1965 War, East Pakistan

The 1965 war in East Pakistan, was restricted to firing across the borders by small and big weapons. When I reached my office on the morning of 6th September, I received a telephone call from GOC, Major General Fazal e Muqueem. He asked for Brigadier Mitha. I told him that he had gone to hospital for medical checkup. He asked if I knew that the war had started. I said,

"Sir! We are ready

He asked me to get mobilized and cut off the line.

I issued the orders as per our strategy. By the sun set, whole brigade had reached their already stipulated positions from Sylhet to Cox's Bazar. Late at night when I reached home, I found my wife sitting at the door in the darkness. I asked where the children were. She replied that they had been taken away to Dacca by Mrs. Siraj. All families had left for Dacca for safety reasons. Only the family of Brigade Commander was staying back. (Mrs. Siraj was wife of a Bengali officer, Captain Sirajuddin Ahmed and friend of our families). Our Headquarters was only twelve kilometer away from the borders and the enemy's guns could easily target it. Mrs. Siraj took the initiative and took all families and children to Dacca. When I learnt that Brigadier's family was staying, I also decided to keep my family there, come what may. I sent a vehicle to Dacca in the morning and got my children back. Praise be to Allah! We remained safe.

The war ended. Same year, our salaries were increased about 80%, We got enough money as arrears. There were only two cars in Comilla Garrison; one of Brigade Commander and the other of CO CMH. When officer got huge amount of money as arrears, twelve officers booked their cars simultaneously. The number of cars in Comilla jumped from two to fourteen.

After the 1965 war, our Bengali brethren started analyzing the defence matters. There was only one division army for defence of East Pakistan which was surrounded by the enemy from three sides and remaining army was in West Pakistan which was not a correct strategy. There was only one PAF squadron and a few Naval ships. It was a big fault in our strategy and fully exploited by India in 1971. India had weakened Pakistan politically and ideologically before launching military action. There were other means also employed which are termed as hybrid war. In short, India conquered East Pakistan.

Posting to 30 Baluch

I spent one and a half year comfortably after the war. Then I was posted to 30 Baluch in March 1967. I served as 2nd in command for one and a half year. During that time, I had brought my parents to live with me. But soon they had to leave because our unit was directed to move to Chhor where temperature hardly falls below 40 to 45 centigrade.

We spent one year under the tents. During our stay there we were blessed with a son who was named as "Wajahat Mustafa". He was called Mecca wala because my parents had prayed for a son for me during Hajj and they thought that it was in response to their prayers that we were blessed with the son.

Command of an Infantry Battalion is an important milestone in the career of an officer. After serving for about twenty years one gets this opportunity and it is considered very important. Commanding officer remains in close touch with his officers and soldiers and faces the enemy with these very people.

My First Command, 36 Baluch

It was a matter of great pleasure for me when I was promoted to the rank of Lieutenant Colonel in 1969 and given the command of 36 Baluch which was posted at Quetta. I was a bit sad for not getting command of my parent unit 16 Baluch. Parent unit is the unit to which an officer is posted after passing out from PMA. Initial grooming of the officer is done there. He develops close relations with his fellow officers, junior commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers and other ranks. On posting to a new unit, you come across people who are all new to you. You have to establish relations anew. 36 Baluch was otherwise a newly raised unit. I worked very hard. Paid special attention to the training aspects and firing. Encouraged them to enthusiastically participate in games, Hard work bore fruit. Our unit was declared best in many professional competitions. Secured distinctive positions in Football, Basket Ball and Kabaddi and at the end of the year our battalion was declared the Champion Battalion of 41 Division. All officers and soldiers were happy that an "outsider" owned the unit and devotedly worked hard to get the award of Championship for the unit. I received many letters of appreciation by the unit officers serving somewhere else and the retired officers and JCOs.

I had commanded the unit for one and a half year when I was posted to 19 Division Headquarters as GSO-L Whole .unit was sad but orders were to be obeyed. The unit personnel arranged a festive farewell party. The officers arranged a dinner in Officers' mess and presented me a memorial shield which is still with me and keeps reminding me of good old days.

Second Posting to East Pakistan

I had hardly spent one year with the division at Kharian when it was ordered to move to East Pakistan. Only a few days were given for preparations. Our families were to stay back at Kharian. Armoured Regiments, artillery guns, heavy equipment and vehicles were also left behind. Equipped with rifles and light Machin guns (LMGs) we reported to Karachi and started moving to Dacca through PIA. Our journey started on 26th March and by 15th April the whole Brigade had assumed their duties in Comilla.

When I was posted as Brigade Major to 53 Brigade in 1964, the feelings of brotherhood existed among the brothers of East Pakistan. But the situation had entirely changed in 1971. The eloquent and fiery speeches of Shaikh Mujeebur Rehman and exciting slogans of Maulana Abdul Hameed Bhashani, "Jalan Jalan aagan Jalan" had flared up fire in East Pakistan. Awami League of Shaikh Mujeebur Rehman had secured 160 seats out of 162 seats, allocated to East Pakistan. Thus it emerged as the majority party. (Total seats of National Assembly were 300). Remaining two seats were won by Noorul Ameen of Pakistan Muslim League and Raja Tri Dev Rai, head of Chakma Tribe, located in the Hilly areas of Chittagong. Noorul Ameen served as Vice President of the Remaining Pakistan after separation of East Pakistan. He died in 1974 and was buried on the side of Quaid e Azam grave with full official protocol. Raja Tri Dev Rai served as Federal Minister and also as ambassador to many countries of the Southern America. He was fond of reading and writing and authored two books; one is the history and cultural traditions of his tribe while other is collection of various short stories. He died in 2012.

Miserable Conditions of Biharies

These two persons rendered valuable services for the integrity of Pakistan and were accorded great respect in recognition of their services. But it is very unfortunate that thousands of Biharies who helped Pakistan army against Mukti Bahni, are living miserably in the suburbs of Dacca. High Court of Bangla Desh had ordered in 2008 to give them full citizen rights of Bangla Desh but majority of them insisted to go to Pakistan. The governments of Pakistan, on the other hand had, adopted very cold attitude toward them. Funds were raised during the era of General Zia ul Haq in collaboration with Organization of Islamic Countries for evacuation of these Biharies. A residential colony was also established near Mian Chunnu (Punjab) and about 175,000 Biharies came to Pakistan but about 300,000 Biharies are still strained there.

Since these people are Muslims, indifferent attitude of UNO is understandable as they are under the influence of Jews but stone hearted attitude of wealthy Muslim countries is very disheartening. Similarly the only fault of Jamaat e Islami and Islami Chatro Shango was that they helped Pakistan Army against Mukti Bahni and foreign aggression. Innocent and pious people like Mutee ur Rehman Nizami were hanged after fake trials on the accusations of rape, abductions and murders. Professor Ghulam Azam was sentenced to life imprisonment. Unfortunately Pakistan did not launch any official protest on such extrajudicial murders.

Peoples Party had bagged 81 seats against a total of 138 seats from West Pakistan (62 from Punjab's 82 seats, 18 of 27 seats from Sind. These were 28% of the total seats of National Assembly but Z. A. Bhutto wanted to have his share in power and was not willing to sit on the opposition benches. President Yahya Khan announced on 13th February to convene the National Assembly session on 3rd March at Dacca. He returned to West Pakistan and went to Larkana to see Z. A. Bhutto. On return, he

announced to postpone the National Assembly session sine die. People of East Pakistan got flared up ▪

Maulana Abuul Aala Maududi, condemning this decision said, "The majority party should be allowed to present the draft of new constitution. If other parties have any reservations, they should present their proposals with sound arguments". He warned that the situation was so precarious that one step in the wrong direction would lead to break up of Pakistan.

Majority of West Pakistan leaders were in favor of attending the National Assembly session. Khan Abdul Wali Khan of National Awami Party said on 18th February, "The right place for discussing the national affairs is National Assembly"

Mufti Mehmood of Jamiat e Ulema e Islam, after meeting Shaikh Miyeebur Rehman at Dacca said, Awami League does not want to foist their conditions on West Pakistan. Attitude of Shaikh Mujeebur Rehman is accommodative".

But Z. A. Bhutto threatened on 28th February 1971 that the legs of those who went to participate in Assembly session would be broken. Later, he added, "If the power is to be transferred, majority party of East Pakistan should be given power in East Pakistan and the majority party of west Pakistan should be given power here".

Daily Azad of Lahore, a supportive organ of Peoples Party gave this news under a banner headline, "*Idhar Hum, udhar Tum*" (Let us be here and you there).

President Yahya, under the pressure of Bhutto postponed the National Assembly session. It enraged Shaikh Mujeeb ur Rehamn. He gave a call of strike and launched non obedience movement. Civil administration got paralyzed. All orders were issued from the Secretariat of Awami League. Civil Administration was forced to obey those orders. Pakistan had failed to maintain balance between the majority province and the other provinces. National security was threatened. East Pakistan, with 53% population was the biggest province and played important role in creation of Pakistan. Their popular leader A. K. Fazlul Haq had been winning elections of Bengal. Logically they should have been given leadership of Pakistan. On the contrary, conspiracies were hatched to create differences between the two arms.

The concept of defending East Pakistan from West Pakistan proved wrong after the 1965 war. It was evident that East Pakistan could not be defended with only one division, a small force of PAF and a few naval ships in case of full-fledged war. Mohtarima Fatima Jinnah was very popular in East Pakistan during the elections of 1964. But elections were badly rigged and she was defeated. It disheartened the people of East Pakistan.

Shaikh Mujeeb Arrested

It was decided to arrest Shaikh Mujeebur Rehman before making the announcement of postponing the Assembly session. It was thought that it would help controlling the likely reaction of people in East Pakistan. Colonel Zaheer Alam Khan of a commando battalion was personally briefed by the Chief of army Staff, General Abdul Hameed Khan. He has narrated the incident in his book, "*The way it was*".

First of all, he conducted the survey of Shaikh Mujeebur Rehman's residence and the adjoining roads and streets. Security system and obstacles created were surveyed. He took Major Humayun and action group with him. Security guards were posted all around. After removing the obstacles, they advanced. No resistance was encountered. Colonel Zaheer entered the house of Mujeebur Rehman. He was on the second storey. When called, Shaikh Mujeeb came out. Col Zaheer asked him to accompany him. He asked if he could say farewell to his family, He was allowed. He went inside and came out after a few minutes. He was escorted to the waiting vehicles. Before sitting in a vehicle, he said,

"I have forgotten my Cigar. May I bring it?"

"Sure"

He went inside, brought his cigar and quietly sat in the vehicle. He appeared to be calm and peaceful.

Our two military leaders opposed the postponement. Admiral Ahsan resigned on 2nd March while General Yaqoob Ali Khan resigned on 3rd March. Demonstrations started in East Pakistan. Units of East Bengal Regiments in military cantonments also joined the demonstrations. When General Tikka Khan took over the Eastern Command, situation improved bit but the situation of Chittagong was out of control. It was the time when GHQ ordered 9 Division to move from Kharian to East Pakistan. The division assumed their responsibilities from Sylhet to Cox's Bazar. 9 Division was sent company wise. Situation in Chittagong was worse. Major Zia ur Rehman, second in command of 8 East Bengal Regiment revolted and murdered his commanding officer Rasheed Janjua in his office. Two other officers of West Pakistan were also murdered. Thereafter, Major Zia ur Rehman took command of all East Bengal Regiments, Regimental Centers and East Pakistan Rifles. Taking control of the vast area of Chittagong and surrounding areas, he took control of Chittagong Comilla Road. He took over Radio Chittagong and declared himself as Commander In Chief of Bangla Desh. He also took over Chittagong Airport and invited all revolting elements to join hands with him in the "Independence Movement".

Orders were received from Dacca to crush this revolt. 53 Brigade from Comilla was ordered to move to Chittagong. They thought that they were employed on Internal

Security Duties. 34 FF Regiment moved under the Command of Lieutenant Colonel Shah Pur Khan. It was ambushed Enroute, CO and many soldiers were martyred. A Commando Battalion kept inching forward from the direction of Chittagong under the command of Lieutenant Colonel Suleman. But they were also ambushed and 19 men including Colonel Suleman were martyred. Twenty were injured. These ambushes were conducted on the orders of Major Zia ur Rhamn when he was in full control of Chittagong. When we reached Comilla, we heard the news of martyrdom of Colonel Suleman, Colonel Shah Pur and many other men.

It was such an adverse situation when 9 Division started coming to East Pakistan. Advanced Party of the Division moved to Dacca under my command. Colonel Naeem also accompanied me. I had stayed in Comilla for five years and I knew the area of my responsibility well. The border was 450 kilometer long from Sylhet to Cox's Bazar. Only Comilla garrison and Airport were under our control which were being looked after by 20 Baluch and a commando platoon. 53 Brigade was ordered to move to bring Chittagong under control. Companies of 9 division moved by C-130 from Dacca to Comilla. When two companies arrived, they were tasked to bring the surrounding areas under control. I myself briefed these companies because I knew the area well. Comilla Headquarters consisted of deserted buildings only. We had no maps, no other documents. Logistic support was nominal. Ammunition was short but by the grace of Allah, companies carried out the tasks, assigned to them successfully. It was very difficult time but the officers and men discharged their duties with devotion and resolution.

Laksham Operation

12 FF Regiment under the command of Colonel Khushdil Khan Afridi had reached Comilla by 12th April 1971. After necessary preparations, they were tasked two missions. The first was to take control of Brahman Barhia which was 20 kilometers North of Comilla and other was Laksham which had been taken over by Mukti Bahni. They had also Border Security force elements and Indian army soldiers with them. Our units had only rifles and LMGs with them. No heavy weapons. 9 Division had only one Field Artillery Unit under their command which was being headed by Colonel Tariq. They had only eight guns. Colonel Tariq placed four guns with Colonel Afridi who was proceeding to Brahman Barhia and he himself accompanied Major Yousaf with four guns who was proceeding to Laksham.

Both had cleared most of the area by noon. Resistance at Laksham was very stiff. At 1 P.M. an SOS message was received from Laksham Force that the enemy had received more enforcement and they were trying to surround them by flanking moves. They needed reinforcement immediately. We had 39 Baluch Regiment only which was protecting the Comilla Garrison under the command of Colonel Naeem. GOC ordered to dispatch two companies of 39 Baluch to Laksham. Two companies got prepared to move under the command of Major Taimur Ali. But four companies of 12 FF and 39

Baluch needed the Command of a lieutenant Colonel. I volunteered. Taking two companies with me, we double marched to Laksham, broke the siege and joined Major Yousaf. It was 3 P.M. Only three hours of day light were left to complete the operation. It is difficult to operate in the built up area in the populated colonies. I called the "O Group" and gave them a simple plan,

"A fire Base to be established in the contact area in front of the enemy.

One task Force each from 39 Baluch and 12 FF was sent for out flanking move.

Keep a passage open for the enemy to escape".

Within an hour, our force had surrounded Laksham. Enemy feared that their line of communication would be cut. They started fleeing away. Our men resorted to target shooting. By 10 P.M. we had complete control of Laksham Town. After midnight I was ordered to fall back and hand over the defence of Laksham Pur to two companies of 12 FF. I started walking back. Enroute, I reached gun positions of Colonel Tariq. I had hardly arrived there when enemy started firing Machine guns from a clump of trees, from the distance of about six seven hundred yards. Colonel Tariq ordered his field guns to directly fire on the enemy. The fired into the clump of trees. Bushes caught fire and enemy fled away. It was for the first time that I saw the field guns being used for direct fire.

After clearing Laksham, our men counted 153 dead bodies of the enemy. Our two men got martyred and seventeen got injured. While counting the dead bodies, a flag of Mukti Bahni was also found which was handed over to me by Major Yousaf and Major Taimure. When I returned to West Pakistan this flag was with me. I had placed it safely. Later it was misplaced in shifting of luggage during various postings. Recently it was found again. I think it belongs to 12 FF or 38 Baluch. I intend to hand it over to Army Museum so that the memorable deeds of these two units be remembered.

An interesting incident happened during that action. It was very hot when I had joined Major Yousaf Force after breaking the siege of the enemy. The paddy fields were inundated with water. Very strange sounds were heard when the bullets travelled over the watered fields. Sides of the road were dry where our command post was established. In the evening, I found a young man coming towards me indifferent to the flying bullets. Havildar Major shouted at him.

"Get down. Why you want to kill yourself".

He did get down but kept coming towards me. He was carrying something in his hand. These were fresh coconuts. Before I could speak he said,

"Saab! For so much time you are with us. Must be thirsty. I have brought two Dhaba (Coconut water) for you. You are our guest. Please drink it."



This Mukti Bahini Flag was captured on 14 April 1971, after heavy fighting for the control of Laksham Town, about 12 Kilometers south of Comilla Garrison by a combined four companies force of 12 FF Regiment and 39 Baloch Regiment, commanded by Lt. Col. Mirza Aslam Beg, GSO - 1, 9 Division. Enemy suffered 53 dead and many wounded.

I took one and gave the other to Major Yousaf I got up and embraced him. I observed so much love and sincerity in his eyes that cannot be explained. This respect and sincerity of people is very valuable for the army. I took him along and marched towards Laksham which had been cleared.

Bengali Families Released

It was three weeks after I came to Comilla when I learnt that there were some Bengali Families imprisoned in the College building. I went to see them. When I entered the gate I found a man making ablution. I recognized him. He was our Regimental Medical Officer (RMO), Dr. Colonel Kamal Hussain in Cherat. We embraced each other. He wept. I asked him how he was and Angoor Bhabhi and children. (Angoor was name of his wife).

"We are alright. We are imprisoned here for the last one month". He replied. He told that there were 27 Bengali families there. I consoled him and assured him that I would talk to someone, find some solution and come to them the next day. He tried to stop me for a cup of tea but I could not face the families, most of whom I knew. On return, I talked to GOC and requested that they should be freed. He asked me what their fault was. I told him that they did not know themselves. There were some ladies whose

husbands had been killed. Others had escaped fearing persecution. He allowed to let them go and directed me to arrange transport for them. Next day after the morning prayers I took two buses and sent them to Comilla from where they could go to their homes.

Miscreants were operative in the eastern borders of Comilla. Colonel Naeem with two companies was sent to clear the area from miscreants. He went. After some time, his message was received that the bridge ahead was broken and there was no other way to go ahead. I told him to improvise (Make alternate arrangements) and secure the area. He prepared swimming aids, crossed the river and flushed the miscreants. He returned by midnight. They were plastered with mud and sweat. Seeing their condition I could not control myself and laughed. I told colonel Naeem that he was stinking. I asked him not to sit on chair and tell me what the condition of his feet was which were made for jeep accelerators. It was a reference to Cherat days. He laughed and we talked about old days at Cherat. Despite all odds, our division had cleared the area of our responsibility and peace prevailed by the end of May, 1971. Pakistan Flags fluttered over the roof tops. Similar news were received from other formations also.

HQ 9 Div Shifted to Jessure

It was the time when General Ameer Abdullah Niazi made some changes in the command. Headquarters 9 Division was sent to Jessure. It was a strange decision. 9 Division Headquarters had all operational intelligence and its men knew the area very well. They were replaced by a headquarters which were new to the area.

We took some time to understand the situation of the new place. By the middle of July we were well settled there and fully functional. 14th, 23 rd and 36th Divisions had also restored peace in their areas.

Our army operated under adverse conditions but did not lose heart and set good examples of bravery and devotion. There were officers and men who sacrificed their lives but we do not remember them. In the incident of Chittagong, a commando battalion advanced under Colonel Suleman and were ambushed. They fought for many hours before laying down their lives. Major Shah Pur also got martyred along with seventeen men. His dead body was not found. Similarly, Major Kamal of SSG, who was brother of ex Naval Chief Tariq Kamal was posted to an East Bengal Regiment. He was murdered by his own men. His dead body was also not found. Thousands of our men and officers were martyred in East Pakistan fighting bravely. Even the enemy officers recognized their bravery.

Enemy's Officers Acknowledged Bravery of our Men

Our Division was in Jessure. 15th Frontier Force Regiment was deployed on the borders of Khulna. Captain Arjumand Yarkund was commanding a company; one enemy brigade attacked this company on 23 rd November. They kept fighting till 3rd

December. When they had exhausted their ammunition, they decided to withdraw. Captain Arjumand with remaining ammunition was left behind with his company to act as rear guard. Their four men were martyred. Captain Arjumand also got injured. When they also exhausted their ammunition, they kept quiet. Major Thakur of the enemy battalion finding all quiet on their positions cautiously advanced towards them. He wrote in his diary,

"I found an injured man was laying on his machine gun with empty belt of ammunition. His right hand fingers still on trigger. When I approached him he asked for water in a very low voice. I fetched water for him but by that time he had expired. I searched his pockets and found some documents. He was Captain Arjumand".

Another incident has been narrated by Chief of Staff of the Eastern Command of India, General Jacob. He wrote,

"Pakistani soldiers fought for every inch. Their feet were rotten due to prolonged march in inundated fields and marshes. They were deadly tired due to many restless days and sleepless nights but no soldier deserted his position. No one fled away. They kept fighting till the last".

Briefing at HQ Eastern Command

The peace was restored within four months. This was the time when our GOC asked us to prepare an analytical report on law and order situation. We prepared the report and went to Headquarters Eastern Command to present it to General Niazi. Crux of our report was that the army had fulfilled their responsibilities. Now is the time that civil administration should take over. Civil Institutions should start functioning and political process be initiated.

This was the reality which was further confirmed by the renowned Indian-American journalist Sharmila Bose, in her book: "Dead Reckoning — the Memories of 1971 Bangladesh War". She wrote that by April, May, the Pakistan Army had regained total control of East Pakistan, creating conditions to initiate the political process.

General Niazi did not like it. It is' the human psychology that when in power, one gets intoxicated. He cannot think of parting with the power. General Niazi was also intoxicated with power. He was all in all. How could he like the proposal to hand over the powers to civilians? He passed certain remarks which were not liked by our GOC. He retaliated and hot words were exchanged between General Niazi and General Shaukat Raza. General Niazi got annoyed and the conference ended. Within three days our GOC was changed. I also came under the wrath but stayed at my place.

New GOC came. He had seen the fate of previous GOC. So he was very careful. The first order, he passed was that the Daily SITREP that I used to prepare will be shown to

him before sending to GHQ and HQ Eastern Command. "SITREP" is abbreviation of Daily situation report which is sent by every unit and Formation Headquarters to higher Headquarters. We started putting the draft to him. He would make amendments in it in such a way that even the worst situation would look good. This continued for a few days till I could not tolerate it any further. I did not expect my GOC that he would convert the truth into lies and paint rosy pictures. One day I went to his office and said,

"Sir! I want to say something"

"Yes. What is it?"

"I want to request that Daily SITREPS that we send to GHQ and Eastern Command should be based on facts. These should not be amended in a way that higher Headquarters was not able to assess the real situation. We should send true analysis of the reports that we receive from our under command units and formations He turned pale and shouted, "What nonsense! Get out".

I came out and told my GSO-2 that in future he would write the reports because GOC did not like my English. I expected some punishment for annoying the GOC. He had the powers to court martial me or could recommend my compulsory retirement.

Posting to War Course

I was engrossed in my thoughts when third day, I received the orders to report to Transit Camp, Rawalpindi. I stayed at the Camp as OSD (Officer on special duty). I was waiting for some disciplinary action against me. Instead of any disciplinary action, I was sent on War Course. War Course posting was considered "Dump Posting" those days. War Course started. It had continued for hardly three months when it was terminated because the clouds of war were looming large.

Posting to 53 Baluch

I was ordered to report to Abbottabad and assume command of 53 Baluch which was being raised. I was directed to take the unit to East Pakistan once the raising was complete. It was a sort of punishment for telling the truth to GOC. I reached Abbottabad and assumed the command of 53 Baluch which consisted of 600 newly recruited soldiers with hardly six month training and 300 old reservists. I sent a team to Havelian Depot to draw rifles and LMGs. These were issued, packed in crates. We started off by train on 2nd December. We had not crossed Rawalpindi Station when the war was declared on 3 December. We were ordered to report to Harbans Pura Lahore.

We headed towards Harbans Pura. Enroute, more reservists joined us. They were so enthusiastic that instead of going to Abbottabad, they preferred to go to the front. Our strength rose to 1200. But we were short of war equipment. We had the equipment for Langar (Soldiers kitchen) and 600 blankets. No heavy weapons, no signal equipment.

We had man power of six rifle companies, a jeep and a truck of the Second World War vintage. We reached our destination by the night of 3rd December.

Same night we were ordered to report to 103 Brigade which was located ahead of Badomalhi near Narang Mandi. The dawn had not broken when we became part of 103 Brigade and took positions in the bunkers which were deserted by 5th East Bengal Regiment. That unit had revolted and gone across the border. We had 17 Punjab under Lieutenant Colonel Muhammed Safdar on our right and 3rd Baluch under Lieutenant Colonel Raja Shaukat Mehmood on our left. Both were more than hundred year old units. I prayed, "Ya Allah! Keep our prestige and honor intact. Bless us with success and don't let us down in front of the enemy",

On the Front without Ammunition

It appeared that our prayers were accepted by Almighty Allah. We spent the night under duress. We did not have any ammunition. We had rifles and LMGs, packed in the crates. There was no hope to get any logistic support from the Formation Headquarters. It would have been blunder to keep sitting quiet. I decided to do something.

Generous Lahorites

In the morning, I sent my 2nd in command Major Akmal Mehmood and Subedar Major Fazal Hussain Mirza to Lahore to gather the necessary items like quilts, mattresses, blankets, spades, kitchen equipment, walki talkis, telephone wire and telephone sets etc. They went and returned in the evening with two civilian trucks fully loaded with the equipment, we needed. The generous Lahories had provided these items free of cost. Our basic needs were met, but without ammunition, the rifles and LMGs were of no use. We had sent a party to Havelian Depot to collect the ammunition but it would have taken minimum a week before they returned. I called my Subedar Major and told him, "I had spotted an Ammunition Magazine of some unit in our rear while coming here. Go to them and bring some ammunition if possible."

He did return with a truck load of ammunition which was sufficient for our first line ammunition (Minimum scale of ammunition, authorized per weapon). We did not have any heavy weapons; no Mortars, no RR (Recoilless Rifles used against tanks). We had man power of six rifle companies, but most of them had not used the rifles or LMGs we had. So I planned a crash programme of Battle Inoculation for their training. Three companies were deployed ahead with some ammunition and three companies were kept in the rear. The forward companies were told to select their targets during the day light and after sun set, start firing on the selected targets when signaled. They were ready and very enthusiastic. When the bugle was blown after sun set, they opened fire. The enemy retaliated with mortar and gun fire. There was a lot of commotion. Brigade and Division Headquarters got worried. There were a lot of queries. We replied that we had been attacked by the enemy and we are retaliating. It continued for about half an

hour and proved good Battle Inoculation. After three days, the companies changed their positions. Opened fire as directed. Again the same shemozzle. I received a call from Corps Commander, General Sher Bahadur,

"Beg! What are you doing?"

I told him, "My men had never fired the weapons we have, so I am conducting battle inoculation."

"OK. Good, take care."

I forgot to tell an interesting incident. When we arrived at Badomalhi which was near Narang Mandi, we found the whole area was cultivated. Wheat crop was ready to reap. There was a Rest House there which we wanted to convert into our Administrative area, but the rooms were filled with fertilizer and other agricultural equipment. There were about a dozen tractors and bull dozers also. I learnt that the area was property of some military officers who had cultivated wheat there. In charge was an honorary captain. I ordered them to vacate the Rest House. After about two hours, I received a call from GOC,

"Beg! Why are you teasing them? Let them stay."

I told him that it was border area. We were to take defensive measures. There was no room for them, they must vacate."

He kept quiet and next day our Administrative Area was established there.

53 Baluch converted to 20 Sindh

53 Baluch has now become 20 Sindh Regiment. It has a distinction that despite all odds, the men and officers stood their ground and never faltered. I have a lot of respect for 20 Sindh. I consider it as my Parent unit. When the war was over, we received Mortars, RRs and Signal equipment and we became fully armed, extra personnel were adjusted. This was the state of affairs; reflection of incompetence of our military leadership. Allah was kind to us that we could save our prestige.

20 Sindh has adopted the honorary name of "Four Star Battalion", (Meaning they had a four star general from that battalion). Recently the commanding officer Lieutenant Colonel Waseem Akhtar presented me a Unit Shield which is an honor for me.

I would like to narrate another incident which is sad and an eye opener also. This incident occurred a few days after the war. Our Brigade Headquarters spotted some activities of the enemy near the border. We were ordered to conduct reconnaissance of

the area. I tasked Major Tariq of Delta Company to do the job. He reported that there were mines laid by 5th East Bengal Regiment and there was no way to go ahead.

When the mines are laid, a record is maintained. Lanes are kept for own men to go across and come back. Major Tariq could not locate these passages. I went forward and tried to find the passages between the mines. I did. I went through these passage with Major Tariq following me. Patrolling troops of Major Tariq went across and returned after completing the mission.



Insignia of 20 Sindh Regiment. The four stars indicates that an officer of the unit rose to the rank of four star General

After a few days, Major Tariq was assigned a similar task. He went through the mines, completed his task but while returning, he tried to take a short cut. His foot landed on a mine which blew. He got injured and lost his leg. He lives nearby. Whenever I see him, I am reminded of the incident and feel sorry that he was injured while obeying my orders.

DS War Course

Our unit was still on the borders when I received my posting as DS (Directing Staff) of War Course. I had not completed my War Course. It was terminated before I could complete even the first term of four months. I was again put under a trial. I worked

hard, studied for twelve hours a day and got ready to discharge my duties. I was promoted full colonel during the course. After one year I was promoted Brigadier and assumed the Command of 101 Brigade which was stationed at Sialkot.

60 Brigade, Baluchistan

I had hardly spent a year with 101 Brigade at Sialkot when I was posted to 60 Brigade in Baluchistan. Its Rear Headquarters was at Rahim Yar Khan. We got accommodation in the Old Labour Colony. The Brigade was operating in the tribal areas of Marri and Bugties. Baluchistan had never been politically stable. One of the reasons is explained below:

There were about 565 states at the time of the partition which were not part of any province but under the direct rule of British Raj. According to the partition plan, they were given the option to join any of the two countries, keeping in view the aspirations of their subject or stay independent. Accordingly, States of Makran, Lasbella and Kharan decided to join Pakistan while Head of Kalat, Meer Ahmed Yar declared to keep his State independent. Later, with persuasion by the government of Pakistan, he declared to join Pakistan on 27th March 1948. It was not liked by his brother Prince Abdul Karim who started an armed struggle to restore the previous status of independent Kalat. When military action was launched against that movement, I was given the responsibility to protect the coastal area and Makran which I did with my SSG Company. The details had already been narrated.

Background of Baluchistan Insurgency

When "One Unit 55 was formed, Nawab Nauroz Khan opposed it and started an armed movement for Independent Baluchistan in collaboration with Mengal, Marri and Bugti tribes. The situation got flared up when Bhutto abolished the governments of N.W.F.P, (Present KPK) and Baluchistan and imposed Martial Law there. Consequently many armed groups appeared like Baluchistan Peoples Liberation Front by Meer Hazar Khan, Baluchistan Liberation Army and Baluchistan Liberation United Front.

Another problem was of Sui Gas which is obtained from Baluchistan but used in the remaining provinces. Part of its royalty was paid to Nawab Akbar Bugti and some to the government of Baluchistan. The armed organizations demanded that it should be paid to other tribal Chiefs also. They also demanded that share of royalty for the government of Baluchistan should be increased so that the income generated from Sui Gas of this province might be spent on the welfare of the people of this province. When their demands were not heeded to, they started uprooting railway lines and gas pipes. They also attacked military convoys and Sui gas installations. It was the responsibility of the political government to negotiate with the political leaders of the province and pacify the revolting elements. Instead, Army was assigned the job to snub the destructive activities and restore peace. It was under this background that 60 Brigade was sent to Baluchistan.

My family lived like nomads in Kharian since the time I went to East Pakistan in 1971. They lived in Rahim Yar Khan in a requisitioned house for two years. My children were in schools and colleges. Their education was interrupted but they compensated the loss by their hard work and completed their education.

Bhutto Visits 60 Brigade

By March, 1975, our brigade had restored the law and order situation. We had established our camp near the residence of Nawab Akbar Bugti. We received a message from Prime Minister Z. A. Bhutto that he wanted to visit the area. He also desired that a political meeting be arranged which he would address. We were not politicians, competent to arrange such a meeting but it was an order to be obeyed. We bought many sheep and arranged food for the people and invited them to attend the meeting. It worked. About four thousand people gathered for the meeting. Prime Minister came. After briefing at the Brigade Headquarters, he met the officers and Jawans and then we took him to the meeting place. He addressed. Slogans were raised. Prime Minister was pleasantly surprised. He then desired to go to the Nawab Residence. He wanted to offer his condolence for the son of Nawab who had expired some time back. Our Divisional Commander tried to prevent the Prime Minister from this saying that there were about 250 armed Bugti guards at his residence. Prime Minister said, "Don't worry, they treat their guests honorably".

I took the prime Minister in my jeep to the Nawab residence. He was not there. His son was present. After offering condolence when I was taking him to helipad for departure, I said to him:

"Sir! As you have seen, we have restored the peace in the area now is the time that Civil administration should start functioning, Courts be restored and political process be initiated"

He promised to do so and said that we would receive the orders in that regard soon.

He flew to Quetta. Conditions changed and he did not get opportunity to issue orders as promised. 60 Brigade came to Sibbi from Dera Bugti. We spent the whole summer in tents. Hot wind gales blow during summer and sand storm continues for weeks. Even eating becomes difficult, We spent this time patiently.

It was a unique record in the Army that I was posted out ten times during a span of eight years:

- 1967 From East Pakistan to 30 Baluch
- 1969 From 30 Baluch to 36 Baluch.
- 1970 From 36 Baluch to 9 division Kharian

1971 From Kharian to 9 Division, Comilla
1971 From 9 division to War Course
1971 From War course to 20 Sindh
1972 From 20 Sindh as DS War Course
1973 From War course to 101 Brigade
1974 From 101 Brigade to 60 Brigade
1975 From 60 Brigade as CI, War Course

Ten postings during eight years. Perhaps it was my punishment for being straightforward. It was not difficult for me but my family and children suffered. Education of my children was interrupted. My luggage which kept lying in some garage was damaged. My books and photographs were destroyed by rains or by termite. Perhaps this is what was destined for me. I told myself "Forget the past. Keep an eye on future. Join the struggle to keep the land of your dreams prosperous and bright".



Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto with the officers of 60 Brigade at Dera Bugti. (1975)

Chief Instructor War Course

I got the opportunity to live comfortably with my family after eight years when I was posted as CI (Chief Instructor) of War Course. General Rahim was Commandant of National Defence College. He was surprised to find out from my record that I had not attended any foreign course. During the interview, he asked me if it was correct.

"Yes sir! I am a Pakistani. No element of foreign training in my career."

War course students were taken to a tour abroad those days. I headed a group which was to visit China, North and South Korea. This proved to be very pleasant as I had remained under stress and strain from 1971 to 1976. These were the days when people

were protesting against Bhutto. There were strong rumors that the Army would take over. The armed forces were assuring him of their loyalties. Chief of Army Staff was General Zia ul Haq. When he was Corps Commander at Multan, Bhutto came to Multan on a visit. He was staying at the residence of Nawab Sadiq Hussain Qureshi. He was studying in the library when he received a message that General Zia wanted to meet him. He was surprised because he had already met him. However, he was called. General Zia ul Haq assured him of his loyalties and said that he would fulfill all the responsibilities assigned to him. Bhutto was impressed. He was plunged into the deep thoughts while taking tea. After a few months, General Zia was made Chief of the Army Staff. (Bhutto mentioned this incident in his last statement in the Supreme Court).



Commander 60 Brigade, Brigadier Aslam Beg with Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto

Bhutto made General Zia Chief of the Army Staff and Army Chief made Bhutto Colonel in Chief of the Armored Corps. A festive function was held in Kharian. Bhutto was

presented a jeweled sword. While presenting the welcome address, General Zia said, "We are proud of presenting this sword to a person who himself is Zulfikar Ali". (Zulfikar was the name of the sword of Hazrat Ali. May Allah be pleased with him).

The protest against Bhutto got intensified. Air Marshal Asghar Khan who was with the protesting parties, wrote a letter to General Zia ul Haq stating that the conditions were quite worse for the country and the Army should take over. This letter was sent by General Zia to all Formation Commanders. I also got a copy and it is still with me. After a few days, a joint statement was issued by the three services chiefs and Chairman JCSC assuring the political government that the armed services were with the government.

Hardly a week had passed after the issuance of this statement when General Zia abolished the Bhutto government and took over all reins in his hands. Thus started a long military rule.

Higher Military Education

I discharged my duties at National Defence College for three years. This tenure proved very beneficial for me. I acquired higher professional education and transferred it down the ladder. It helped bringing substantial change in the army. Now very qualified officers are posted on all important appointments. Armed Forces War Course has become a career course. When I was posted as Chief of General Staff I had a team of these qualified officers. I benefitted from the experience and qualification of these officers and did not face any difficulty in planning the growth and development of the army. I had bitter memories of 1971 when I was expelled from 9 Division and sent to Transit Camp as OSD. I thought that my career had finished but something else was destined for me by Almighty Allah.

I acquired higher military education during my tenure at National Defence College as DS and CL During my five year stay, I assessed the capabilities and weaknesses of the army, particularly of 1965 War which we could win but failed. 1971 war was the worst example of bad planning. One incident, I have narrated while commanding 20 Sindh. We lost one arm.

14 Division Command

I was promoted Major General in 1978 and assigned the Command of 14 Division which was stationed at Okara. With this command I became part of high Military Hierarchy and remained associated with all military matters of the army from 1978 to 1988. 14 Division was part of 2 Corps at Multan. General Zia ruled the country. Case of Ex-Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was in the last stage. Supreme Court awarded death sentence to Bhutto in 1979.

General Zia asked the Corps Commanders to assess the likely reaction of the men in uniform if Bhutto was hanged. Our Corps Commander called a meeting of senior

officers and asked many questions. All except me said that the reaction would be very mild and that could be controlled easily. I kept listening. When all had expressed their opinions, I sought permission to speak. I said,

"Hanging Bhutto will be a very wrong decision. It will have very grave consequences. It will create political aberrations which will be difficult to sort out.

It will be better that Bhutto should be sent to exile.

Yasir Arafat of Palestine, Shah Faisal of Saudi Arabia, Colonel Qaddafi of Libya and rulers of UAE are willing to accept him. Bhutto is a good statesman and leader of a popular party. We may need him in future. I cannot predict the reaction of the officers and men. Recently it was observed that three brigadiers and their under command units refused to open fire on protesters. I think that reaction will be very strong. I cannot guarantee that this could be controlled".

Corps Commander got annoyed and declared the meeting closed. Later he called his Chief of Staff Brigadier (Later Lieutenant General) Hameed Gul and asked him to arrange a telephone call to COAS. He did not want to see such officer in his Formation.

Brigadier Hameed Gul suggested that he would prepare the minutes of the meeting and send to the COAS. Let him decide what he wants to do. It is not appropriate to give our instant reaction.

Corps Commander agreed. Report was sent to General Zia. He did not show any reaction immediately. I had expressed difference of opinion on hanging of Bhutto and I was waiting the what action would be taken by General Zia.

My difference of opinion proved right when I read an article by a diplomat S.M. Qureshi, who wrote, "Two years after hanging Bhutto, I was sent to meet Yasir Arafat to patch to see him. He told me that General Zia had promised while sitting in Masjid e Haram in the presence of Shah Khalid that he would not hang Bhutto. He did not keep his word".

We are unfortunate to see this day when decisions about us are taken somewhere else. Our rulers have different gods. Had Bhutto not been hanged, we would not have seen this political turmoil, prevailing since 1990. General Musharraf would not have come to power. Benazir would not have been murdered. Zardari would not have become the president and this political labyrinth would not have been our fate.

We were busy in preparations to celebrate raising day of 14 Division. General Zia had confirmed to participate in the celebrations but at the eleventh hour we learnt that he

was not coming. Bhutto was hanged after two days. I cancelled all celebrations. Only Bara Khana was arranged which was held in very gloomy atmosphere.

I was waiting how General Zia would treat me. Six months passed and my surprise knew no bounds when I was posted to GHQ as Chief of General Staff. It was a surprise for me as well as many others. Some people may differ with me but the fact is that General Zia had vision like Napoleon's, who kept his critics around him who could openly criticize his decisions. General Zia also wanted to keep me close to benefit from my candid, sincere and fair opinions as will be seen in the next paragraphs. True, truthfulness always pays its dividends.

CHAPTER 4

JOINING THE SENIOR MILITARY HIERARCHY

CGS-GHQ

Bhutto was hanged on the morning of 4 April 1979. No substantial reaction was observed. Shops were closed in the Province of Sindh, particularly in Larkana but the business of life continued as usual. I had opposed hanging of Bhutto on which, Corps Commander got annoyed. Since then I was expecting my posting. I also feared that I might be retired compulsorily. After the lapse of a few months, posting came which was quite unexpected.

I was posted as Chief of General Staff (CGS) which is an appointment of the most senior Principal Staff Officer (PSO) at GHQ. I was sure that I had spoken the truth and was awarded by Allah. I stayed on this post for five years. It was the most satisfying and important tenure of my life. I had full liberty from the COAS to modernize the army according to the latest requirements, replace the old weapons with the modern weapons and formulate the defence policy anew. I shall explain it later.

There are many PSOs in GHQ. They provide assistance to the COAS in discharging his duties. Adjutant General (AG) is responsible for provision of man power, their welfare and discipline. Military Secretary (MS) is responsible for career planning and postings of officers. Quarter Master General (QMG) takes care of providing basic essential needs, accommodation, construction of official buildings and administrative matters. Inspector General Training and Evaluation (IGT & E) looks after the training and educational aspects of the army. All educational and training institutions fall under him. Chief of General Staff is the most senior PSO who is responsible for operational matters. Military Intelligence Directorate also comes under him. He acts as coordinator for the COAS and ensures implementation of his orders. Every week a meeting of all directors is held and he checks the progress of implementation.

Cabinet Meeting on Iran Iraq War

It was after a few days when I was in the chair of CGS when a Cabinet Meeting was held for consultation on Iran-Iraq War. I was also invited to attend this meeting. It aimed at determining the role of Pakistan in the war. Serving and retired diplomats were also present. The war had started two days earlier and a policy was to be formulated. The discussion prolonged for about three hours. The majority was of the opinion that Iran would be defeated and Iraq would capture vast area of Iran. After the ceasefire, the troops of UNO would be posted to maintain peace. Most likely Pakistan would be asked to provide troops for the job. When all had expressed their opinion, I requested to say something. President allowed me to speak. I said,

"There is a saying of a Chinese Intellectual not to fight against a revolutionary until you are not sure that your ideology is better and supreme than his. Saddam Baathist ideology is inferior to the ideology of Islam advocated by Iran. The war will not end within days or weeks, rather it will continue for many years. Thousand's of men will be killed. History of Iran is witness to this fact that whenever Iran was attacked, all got united against the invading power. The King's army is imprisoned in the barracks presently. They will come out soon, reach the borders and face the enemy. Revolutionary Guards of Iran will support the army, strengthen the revolution within the country and maintain peace. All conspiracies will fail.

Iraqi army is equipped with better arms and armament but their supreme leadership is weak. They are not like German General Staff who crossed the French defence line in the Second World War and within weeks reached the French city Dunkirk.

This war will remain limited to their borders but there will be a lot of killing. Iraq wants to defeat Iran within weeks but it is not possible. When the war will prolong, Iraq's basic aim will not be achieved and an aimless war will not favor Iraq. On the contrary, Iran is fighting a purposeful war *i.e.*, to defeat the aggressor. Iran will succeed. My suggestion is to formulate the policy, keeping both views in mind. A long term policy in which Iran will be victorious and a short term policy in which Iraq will appear to be succeeding during initial days or weeks".

General Zia listened to my arguments attentively, gave a broad smile and said that Beg's arguments looked sound. We should formulate the policy keeping both possibilities in mind. It was done accordingly.

Iran-Iraq war had continued for two years, when I received a list of spare parts of military weapons and other armaments, which Iran needed badly. I compiled that list and submitted to General Zia. He promised to look into it. After some time, Iranian President, Ali Akbar Hashmi Rafsanjani visited Pakistan. Aim of the visit was to check progress on that matter. We did make promises but these were not kept. One of the president's companion expressed their needs in a verse,

دوست آں باشد کہ گیر دست دوست

در پریشاں حالی و درماندگی

(Friend is the one who gets hold of his friend's hand during the time of turmoil and tumult.)

The meeting with the president was in progress when it was time for Maghrib Prayers (Offered after the sunset) President Zia requested President Hashmi Rafsanjani to lead the prayers. He did and offered the prayers exactly as we pray.

This meeting was given wide coverage by the media. Impression was given that we were about to transfer Atomic technology to Iran. Some pseudo intellectuals and journalists, including Hussain Haqqani spread the rumors that Iran was willing to pay ten billion dollars to Pakistan for atomic technology and it was being done in collaboration with General Aslam Beg. These were all fake news.

Iran-Iraq war continued for eight years. Thousands of people died. A resolution was moved in the Security Council for ceasefire and both the countries were requested to settle their disputes through peaceful negotiations. Iranian representative insisted that instead of treating both the parties alike, it was necessary to establish who the aggressor was. Once it was established that Iraq was the aggressor, she should be condemned. The meeting was adjourned without passing the resolution.

Heavy responsibilities rested on the Muslim countries in this regard. They needed to get united against the enemies who were destroying them one by one. They had already destroyed Libya, Yemen, Sudan and Somalia. When Iran-Iraq war started, American Secretary of State for Foreign Affairs had said, "I wish that both countries destroy each other fighting".

A meeting of Muslim countries heads was held in the city of Taif (Saudi Arabia). A nine member Committee was formed with General Zia as its head which was tasked to approach the leadership of both the countries and arrange ceasefire. General Zia went to Iran during the war and landed at Mehrabad Airport. Secretary General of OIC, Habib Shatti also arrived. They met President of Iran Abul Hasan Bani Sadar, Imam Roohullah Khumaini and other leaders.

Iranian leader Roohullah Khumaini recited a verse of Sura Al Hiyarat which says, *"If two parties among the Believers fight with each other, make peace between them. But if one of them transgresses against the other, then fight against the one that transgresses until that complies with the Command of God. But if it complies then make peace between them with justice and be fair for God loves those who are fair (and just)"* (Sura 49, Verse 9)

He argued that Iraq had resorted to transgression against them and she was to be condemned. After meeting the Iranian leaders, General Zia ul Haq went to Baghdad via Kuwait and met President Saddam Hussain but all efforts were fruitless and the war continued for eight years.

At last, Iran after crossing Shatt ul Arab gathered its forces in the area of Faa and started advancing towards Basra. Iraq attacked with Chemical Weapons and hundreds of people were killed. These weapons were provided to Iraq by the Western countries.

Iran did not have any defence against Chemical weapons. Firing ceased and the war ended. Conspiracies were hatched against Pakistan to prevent Pakistan participating in the war. Sectarian riots were sponsored and armed Organizations were allowed to function like Sipah e Sahaba, Lashkar e Jhangvi, Sipah e Muhammed. After the war ended, these organizations were banned and we are facing terrorism since then.

USA had employed all means to bring Iran to its knees. Economic sanctions were imposed to destroy their economy but Iran has conducted itself with resolution and wisdom and has been progressing. Its influence has spread over Syria, Bahrain, Lebanon, Yemen, and Afghanistan. Americans and its allies are worried about it. In response, USA has formed an alliance in Warsaw in collaboration with Israel, India and Saudi Arabia and adopted a strategy against Iran and it had been put into practice.

Modernizing Programme of Pakistani Army

Question: Programme of modernizing Pakistani Army was wonderful. How did it become possible? Answer: I was fortunate to have a system which helped me. Administrative responsibilities of the army rested with Vice Chief of Army Staff and I concentrated on modernizing programme. I was assigned a brief and very explicit Mission, "Reorganize the army in such a way that it should attain capabilities of effectively dealing with internal and external threats beyond 2000".

We started working to achieve that mission. We had full support from Vice Chief of Army Staff, General Sawar Khan and later from General Khalid Mehmood Arif. Their patronage guaranteed our success. We formed an "Army Modernization Committee" with Vice Chief of General Staff, Major General Muhammed Afzal as its head in 1980. They were instructed to consult all senior serving and retired officers and the heads of the Schools of Instruction before formulating a policy. They prepared their proposals after tireless efforts of one and a half year. Their proposals were presented in a conference of PSOs. After detailed discussions, weaknesses were removed and proposals finalized. These were then submitted to General Zia ul Haq who granted approval. The methodology we adopted, was of a great use. When we implemented it, we had the advice of all participating officers. Fourteen different concepts were developed during modernization programme which were " tested during Zarb e Momin Exercises and found effective and practicable.

Implementation on new proposal started in 1981. Various structural reforms were carried out in the army according to the modernization programme. One of the steps taken was establishment of Army Air Defence Command. Field Artillery and Air Defence Artillery were separated and every Strike Force got a dedicated Air Defence Division in addition to normal Artillery Division. These Air Defence Divisions have been armed with the latest missiles and armaments. Organizing the Air Defence Support System was a complicated process which was completed under the command of Major General Agha Masood ul Hassan. New dimensions were added to the

capabilities of the army. Now our war strategy which was previously based on defensive strategy has been changed to aggressive strategy and this is the capability which is a base of strong and reliable deterrence.

Question: Imparting higher education to officers, started after 1971 war, was an important aspect of officers, training. How did it help in the modernization programme?

Answer: My five year experience of War Course at National Defence College was very important and of great help in strengthening and organizing the army according to the modern concepts of war. My field commanders and staff officers who were war course qualified proved very useful and helpful to achieve our mission. We worked for eighteen months on the modernization of army programme and prepared a comprehensive plan. My Formation Commanders, heads of the Schools of Instruction and Staff Officers made various plans and developed various concepts which all proved practicable.

Our methodology was that we gradually prepared our modernization programme in various phases and recommendations were submitted to the President for his approval. So far it was easy. Difficulty arose when we needed modern weapons and equipment to implement that programme. I visited USA with my team but they were interested in selling their old weapons and equipment. They were not willing to give us the modern technology. Same was the attitude of European countries. At last we decided to approach China. China proved to be a reliable friend and provided us all what was needed. They provided us modern weapons and also the technology to use them. They also trained our officers and men. With that cooperation a new Strategic pivot came into being. CPEC is also the result of that cooperation.

Chairman of POF Wah, Lieutenant General Sabeeh Qamar uzzaman took the responsibility of adopting the new technology in production of arms and ammunition. The work speedily progressed without any official hindrances. We had full support from our Ministry of Defence. No difficulty was encountered in payment for war equipment.

Defence Collaboration with China

Defence collaboration with China increased our defence capabilities. Defence collaboration with China is not only exemplary but also unique. It is due to this collaboration that our armed forces, particularly the army has revived its status which was lost after the 1971 war. We have also attained 90% self-reliance in producing arms and armaments. Our war capability has tremendously improved and now we are in a position that if the war is foisted upon us, we can not only defend ourselves for a long time but can foil the enemy plans by resorting to effective offensive strategy. Praise be

to Allah, our forces are the most modern forces and are considered to be among the best armies of the world.

Generosity of our Chinese friends is exemplary. I shall like to narrate an incident. We visited China for the first time in the beginning of 1982. In order to find the required arms and armaments we had a list of required equipment with us and we were to do the "shopping" within 600 million dollars. We had three meetings with our Chinese leaders and then were told to come back after four weeks to finalize the deal. We went after four weeks and were received with open arms. We were taken to a Conference Room where very aged senior citizens were sitting. I thought that we had been brought to a wrong place. But we were told that they were heads of great defense production firms and would tell us what they had to offer and when they would be able to deliver the required equipment.

The meeting started. The list we had given them the previous month came under discussion. After one hour discussion the deal was finalized and they showed their willingness to provide all equipment without any advance. Before the meeting concluded, our host asked me if we needed something else. I replied, "We do need more armaments but we are to stay within our means. Only 600 million dollars are at our disposal".

"It is ok but we shall like to see your list of required items."

I took out my list. Discussion took place on each and every item. Our Chinese friends accepted our demand cheerfully but when the prices were calculated, it came to 1.7 billion dollars. I said,

"We are not in a position to pay that heavy amount."

"You can pay within next twenty five years with nominal services charges as per your convenience", we were told.

Our pleasure knew no bounds and we returned to Pakistan quite happy and satisfied. We narrated the story to CO AS and other colleagues. It was a memorable day.

Self-Reliance

Since then we started heading towards self-reliance. With technology shift to Pakistan army, expansion of arms production, development of arms and missile system and growth of engineering at national level, a new era started and within a span of less than a decade, we achieved self-reliance. A team of our expert scientists under the able guidance of Abdul Qadeer Khan was always at hand to help whenever we encountered any difficulty. They completed each project with utmost devotion and sincerity.

We conducted experiments on "Al Khalid" tank in 1988. Its capabilities outweighed American best tank "M1A1" in five experimental phases. Similarly we achieved 90% self-reliance in the production of high tech weapons, military equipment and ammunition. It was a dream which turned into a reality with the help of our Chinese military leadership and unconditional support of defence production industry of China. No other country could render so much help because most of them were interested in selling their obsolete equipment to us and fleece us of our valuable money.

Question: How is the attitude of Chinese people towards the people of Pakistan?

Answer: The people of China are very sincere and open minded. They had never interfered in our internal affairs. They are the friends of our people and never took interest in forming a particular government or to abolish any government. They do not have any preference for any civil or military government. Their utmost preference is the welfare of the people of Pakistan. It is due to this kind of relationship that people of both the countries have deep respect for one another. Such respect is not available to any other country. I have no hesitation in saying that it was due to defence collaboration with China that we could produce state of the art tank, "Al Khalid", multidimensional aircraft like "JF-17 Thunder" and the most modern frigate "F-22". Work on the project of manufacturing an atomic sub marine is already in progress. Similarly "China Pakistan Economic Corridor" will lead Pakistan to new vistas of progress, prosperity and peace. It, in fact, will bring economic revolution in the whole region.

Collaboration of Two Countries, Our Strategic Pivot

Defence collaboration of the two countries has led to establishing a strategic pivot which is like a stony rock against enemy evil designs. It is also a guarantee of our national security, development and economic growth. We have attained a capability which has helped us to plan our war plans according to our strategic thinking. We are now in a position to adopt offensive defence and pre-emption strikes. It is a capability which is an effective deterrence as well as guarantee of victory.

We have also started working on computer technology. Late Dr. Akram Chaudary of Chakri Village was a great help in this regard. He had a vast business in Silicon Valley of USA. We made an agreement with him and he provided us computer technology. I visited Iran and obtained technology of small arms which was not available to us. Work on eleven projects is in progress.

Higher Study Programme for Officers

We also made a comprehensive plan for higher studies for our officers. It was necessary for development of our various projects. We sent officers to USA and other countries for higher studies and by end of 1990, eleven officers had completed their PhDs and about 170 officers their MSc degrees. This continued. Our young officers are very talented.

They have been graduating with distinction in foreign courses. I myself used to present them prizes every six months. With their performance and contribution, our modernization programme has become knowledge based programme. It will remain effective till 2025. Of course our scientists and officers will continue working on further development and incorporate the latest technology and Insha Allah Pakistan Army will remain invincible.

Gen Zia New Political Concept 1985

General Zia had ruled the country for nine years till 1985, when he decided to revive the political system. He called me and General Hameed Gul and asked us to analyze the political situation and make recommendations how and when to revive the political system. We analyzed the situation and submitted report within a fortnight to General Zia ul Haq. He called us and had a detailed discussion. We read out our recommendations. Crux of our report was:

"Time has come to hold transparent and fair elections and transfer the power to remember you with good words."

"You want my throat to be strangled?" he remarked.

I tried to make some submissions but was not allowed. General Zia held the elections on non-party bases which was boycotted by Peoples Party. Muhammed Khan Junejo from Sindh was nominated the Prime Minister who formed the government. In the meantime, I was posted from GHQ to Peshawar as Commander 11 Corps. Due to Russian aggression on Afghanistan, that Corps had tremendous responsibilities.

Indian Brass Tack Exercises

Indian Chief of Army Staff, General Krishna Swami Sunder Ji started "Brass Tack" exercise in 1986. It was being conducted in the area of responsibility of their Western Command which was along our Eastern borders. Thousands of their troops gathered in Rajasthan Sector. Hundreds of tanks and armored vehicles reached the borders. A few naval Ships were also seen patrolling near Korangi Kreek. According to Indian military leaders, they had two objectives of those exercises:

- To assess the capabilities of their mechanized formations.
- To assess the capabilities of the land forces while operating in collaboration with air force and navy.

Website of Global Security of Security Information had termed it as the biggest concentration of troops after the Second World War. They wrote that no military exercise of NATO (North Atlantic Treaty Organization) had ever gathered so many troops as were seen in Brass Tack exercise. NATO leadership thought that Indian

military leaders were conducting the exercises to test new strategy of their war plans but some senior military commanders tried to give new dimensions to those exercises. Indian Army Chief said that he wanted to assess the practicability of new organizational reforms and new concepts. Our intelligence agencies and Ministry of Foreign Affairs were also alert. The Ministry called Indian ambassador S. K. Singh and Minister of State Zain Noorani conveyed him a message from General Ziaul Haq that if national security of Pakistan was threatened, India would suffer irreparable and devastating loss.

These were the circumstances when General Zia called a meeting at GHQ for consultations. Unanimous opinion of our, Intelligence officers was that the situation was very precarious. India had evil designs and Pakistan should immediately take defensive measures. I differed with this opinion and said,

"There is no wisdom in concentrating so much of force at one place. It amounts to placing all eggs in one basket. If they have any military objectives, we should send our strike force in the corridor of the River Ravi and Chenab. It will cut their corridor to Kashmir and we shall still have enough forces to defend ourselves."

Majority was of the opinion that India had made full preparation to attack us, so we must send our forces to borders according to our operational planning. It was agreed to and first of all 5 Corps was deployed. Armored troops and tanks were placed under that Corps. The Southern Air Command was alerted. Pakistan Naval ships and Sub marines came out of their anchorage and reached the Arabian Sea. Indian reaction was that they stopped their exercises and secured the Ravi-Chenab Corridor by sending their two divisions there. It became evident from the Indian reaction that they did not want aggression against Pakistan. If that was their objective they would have sent their forces towards our border. Our wrong steps, however, exposed our war plans.

A few years after my retirement, I went to Norway to attend a conference. General Sundar Jee was also invited there. We had an interesting talk. People were surprised how Chiefs of two hostile countries were engaged in mutual talks. He explained that their Brass Tack Exercises did not aim at any war. They wanted to test the practicability of new organizational reforms. After staying stagnant, those exercises were necessary.

Russians Invasion of Afghanistan

Russians invaded Afghanistan in 1980. It was their strategic compulsion because despite having vast geographical territories, they do not have any port which should remain open throughout the year. All their ports remain closed for months due to snowfall. Their biggest port is Vladivostok in the East where the temperature falls below freezing point in winters and ice breaking machines are used to keep it open. On the contrary, New York Port of America in the East is same distance away from the equator as is Vladivostok but Nature has favored America with an ocean current of hot

water which is three hundred miles wide and flows in the East of New York. It keeps the temperature of New York much above freezing point and the port remains open throughout the year.

Therefore, Russia had always desired to have access to warm waters. The western powers and Britain were aware of Russian desires. The railway line laid by the British from Peshawar to Landi Kotal during their occupation of the sub-continent did not aim to provide travelling facilities to the residents of the area. They wanted to preempt the likely Russian advance and to transport their troops and armament speedily to the North.

Question: Russians had a desire to have access to the warm waters but America too did something which prompted Russians to invade Afghanistan. Is it correct?

Answer: Conspiracies and "divide and rule" has always been the policy of the big powers. A famous intellectual and advisor to USA on security affairs, Brazenki has written in his book, *The Grand Chess Board*,

"Any power which controls Eurasia will control the whole world. It is essential that there should be no adversary of America in Eurasia who could challenge the supremacy of America".

USA acted on that plan and planned such political changes in Afghanistan which were against the Russian interests. Thus the Russians invaded Afghanistan to protect their interests. The most unfortunate thing was that Pakistan collaborated with America against Russians. Americans used Mujahideens and they fought against Russians. General Zia decided to collaborate with America against Russians. Real power fighting against Russians were those volunteers who came from more than seventy countries and devotedly fought against the Russians.

After ten year war, Russians realized that they could not win that war. That war had devastated their economy and their army became an unbearable burden for them. When Mikhail Gorbachove became Secretary General of Communist Party, he decided to withdraw Russian forces from Afghanistan. They sought some respectable way. In the meantime, a conference was held at Geneva on 14th April 1988 which was attended by the representatives from USA, Russia, Afghanistan and Pakistan. An accord was signed in that conference according to which Russia was to withdraw its forces from Afghanistan and a stable government was to be established there. With Russian efforts, President of Afghanistan Babrak Kamil was removed and Secretary General of Afghanistan Communist Party, Najeebullah was appointed the President. They thought that he would be more effective and would be able to maintain peace during withdrawal of Russian forces. Their withdrawal started on 15th May 1988 and completed on 15th February 1989. It was quite unexpected.

Russians decided to withdraw after an important turning point in Afghan war in 1987. Russians had incorporated their Heli borne Spitznaz Commando Brigade in war. They came flying low and targeted Mujahideen. Mujahideen were helpless against those gunship helicopters. I was commanding 11 Corps that time. We were not directly involved in the war but keeping an eye on the war events was our responsibility. General Christ of American Centcom came to Pakistan those days. He also visited our Corps Headquarters. I briefed him and told that Mujahideen were under great pressure since inception of Russian Commandoes. If it continued, Mujahideen will face a lot of difficulties.

He was surprised that nobody had told him about that situation. He asked many questions. When he returned to Islamabad, he alerted the concerned agencies. It also reached Pentagon. Consequently General Wickham came to Pakistan. He wanted to visit our Corps Headquarters to obtain firsthand information. Before his arrival, General Raja Muhammed Iqbal came to me and gave me some papers which contained a briefing. I read it and told him that I did not consider that briefing correct and I would brief the visiting general the way I considered right. He told me that the briefing was sent by General Zia himself. I told him to tell General Zia that I would give my own briefing to the visiting general. It was cancelled.

Result of all these efforts was that USA provided Stinger Missiles to Mujahideen which could target the Russian gunship helicopters. With these Stinger Missiles the tables were turned against Russians. They accepted their defeat and decided to withdraw from Afghanistan. Thus I had a role in the defeat of Russia. Russians are friends of Afghan Taliban these days. But USA is busy in conspiracies against Taliban. She is helpless against Taliban resistance and has been forced to sit on negotiation table with them. It is a tragedy for a world power like USA.

Question: USA and India have entered into a strategic partnership to isolate China and exert pressure on Pakistan. This partnership may result in supremacy of India in the region like the one Israel enjoys in Middle East. India has started receiving high-tech weapons through Israel. What should be the Strategy of Pakistan in this situation?

Answer: This is very important time for Pakistan. We need to act wisely. It is essential to understand that Afghans themselves have to decide their own fate. World powers, neighboring countries and enemy appear to be helpless against them. It has been proved by their determination and great success that availability of plenty of weapons itself is not a guarantee for success. The real success depends upon moral ascendancy of the people who do not compromise on principles and know how to make their existence symbol of grace and dignity. Taliban have depended on the Divine Help of Allah and world powers are helpless against them. USA had employed all means but could not force them to deviate from their stand. Taliban demanded an assurance that

they would get out from their land, only then the negotiations could be started. Despite all conspiracies and negative propaganda, Taliban continued their attacks on Allied forces in Afghanistan which proved disastrous for them.

If we study the rise and fall of nations or the World wars, we come to know that the Successes of Afghanistan against two world powers *i.e.* Russia and USA are exemplary. The Army of Ottoman Empire, tried to break the siege of Vienna in 1683 but failed badly. Since then their downfall started and resulted in disintegration of the empire. There is a similarity in Kabul and Vienna. Russia was defeated by Afghanistan and their disintegration started thereafter. Now we are a witness to the defeat of USA in eighteen year war in Afghanistan. They are now begging for peace. Afghans demand them to get out of their land. You have deceived us in 1990. Being victorious, it was our right to determine our fate.

Allah has fulfilled His promise, If you remain steadfast your enemy despite being superior in power, will turn around and flee away. Enemy has been defeated; only their conspiracies exist.

These are the heights of their faith and conviction, which provide glow to their ideology of life like the sunrays which provide warmth to the people. There are lessons for Pakistani people in it.

Role of General Ziaul Haq was very important during Afghan Jihad and after the withdrawal of Russia. He was still friend of Mujahideen which was not liked by USA because they had taken U-turn after the withdrawal of Russia. Victorious Mujahideen were termed as terrorists. Instead of transferring power to them it was planned to bring the Northern Alliance into power. It resulted into internal conflicts. In fact USA did not want to see establishment of an Islamic state. It could strengthen Pakistan, Iran and central Asian countries. That is why they are still continuing to conspire against Taliban.

Taliban; A new Force

Question: Taliban have emerged as a force out of internal war of Afghanistan, Who are they really?

Answer: Taliban is the name of collective defensive force of Afghan nation. They have defeated two super powers of the world. It is imperative to understand their thinking and actions. It is not possible to understand the concept of security of Afghanistan and its surrounding areas without comprehending the thinking and priorities of Taliban. There are misconceptions about them. It is therefore necessary to explain their background, who they are, from where have they emerged and how they have dominated Afghanistan politics.

Taliban means students. They have their origin in the history of Khorasan (Faris-Persia) which was part of Baghdad Caliphate. Its frontiers expanded up to Afghanistan. Taliban existed in the history of Afghanistan for many centuries. They were given the title of "Muallmeen and Taliban" and were held in high esteem in the society. They were of great help during any difficulty. They fought against foreign aggression and rendered social work whenever needed. Some were the people who fought on the forefronts against Soviet aggression under the command of their teachers. They are the product of the seminaries that determine the ideological, social and national values of Afghanistan. It was in ninth century when people of Khorasan embraced Islam, religious schools were established. They were like present day universities. These seminaries produced intellectuals, mathematicians, physicians and military experts. Maulana Roomi, Firdausi, Jami, Ibn e Senna, Imam Bukhari, Tirmidhi, Mehmood Ghaznavi, Ahmed Shah Abdali and famous religious scholars like Ali Hajveri, Khawaja Moeen uddin Chishti graduated from similar schools.

They set a precedent of religious and temporal education. It can be termed as "Daawah and Jihad" which means acquisition of knowledge and motivation to struggle against injustice and social evils. It is interesting to note that famous books of Ahadees (Sayings of the Prophet, Peace be upon him) were written by the great scholars and intellectuals who graduated from such schools like Imam Bukhari, Abu Daud, Imam Ibne Maja, Imam Muslim and Imam Tirmidhi. These were not only the institutions for education but also centers of Military Training where the spirit of Jihad was inculcated among the students. Young generation was taught importance of believing in oneness of God which is the basis of every Muslim's belief.

It was two hundred years before the establishment of Pakistan when Ahmed Shah Abdali founded the State of Afghanistan in 1747. Uke Iran, Afghanistan remained associated with these religious schools that used to motivate for Jihad against foreign aggression, injustice and struggling against social evils. Some schools provided the moving spirit for Islamic Revolution of Iran in 1978. Great scholar, Ayatollah Khomeini and his companions from the same schools provided leadership for the Revolution.

Taliban of Afghanistan participated in various battles under the banners of Mehmood Ghaznavi, Shahab Uddin Ghauri and Ahmed Shah Abdali. They started "Roshni Tehreek" or Enlightening Movement (1525-75) under the command of Shah Mehmood and played an important role in ending the Safvi Kingdom in 1710-15. Some were the people who prevented Indian troops under British rule from advancing towards Afghanistan. Mullah Shaur Bazar became famous for resisting the British and Afghan King Shehenshah Amanullah.

Volunteers from more than seventy countries participated in Afghan Jihad. Pakistan and USA used these volunteers against Soviet Russia. When the religious schools were closed during Russian occupation, most of the students migrated to Pakistan. They got

admissions in Pakistan. When this fact was known that Russians cannot be expelled from Afghanistan easily, Saudi Arabia provided financial help and Pakistan collaborated with USA and a chain of schools were established along the Afghan border. Some schools proved nurseries for Jihad. It is totally wrong to describe these schools as product of People's Party, Jamiat e Ulema e Islam or ISI.

After the defeat and withdrawal of Russia, Afghan Mujahideen were prevented from forming their own government. Government of the National Alliance was formed in which Mujahideen had no share. It resulted in internal war and Mujahideen were termed as terrorists. It was out of this internal rift that young leadership appeared who were called Taliban. A small group of 45 men under the leadership of Mullah Umar, Principal of a religious school in the suburbs of Qandhar, with the help of local population and all walks of life captured Qandhar in December 1994.

Taliban were received with open arms by the people of Afghanistan during 1994-1995 and they were encouraged to advance further. All fighting parties had joined hands with them along with their arms. They faced resistance in the areas which were under the control of Ahmed Shah Masood or Rashid Dostam. Taliban defeated them one by one and by the end of 2001 most of Afghanistan was under their control. It is a point to note that Taliban Movement was in fact a Jihad against social evils in the country.

Later, Taliban joined hands with Mujahideen under their leaders who were also their teachers like Professor Burhanuddin Rabbani, Abdur Rab Siaz, Sibghatullah Mujaddadi, Khalili, Younas Khalis, Nabi Muhammadi, Engineer Gulbadin Hikmat Yar and Ahmed Shah Masood. Majority of those who had come to Pakistan during Russian occupation went back to their seminaries in Afghanistan after Russian withdrawal. Those who studied in the schools along the Afghan border continued their studies there.

Question: Peace could not be restored in Afghanistan even after Russian withdrawal. Some of the reasons you have explained. What is the role of America in the present turmoil of Afghanistan and what should be the policy of the government of Pakistan?

Answer: USA wants to suppress the countries who could form an Islamic Alliance. Mujahideen could establish an Islamic State in Afghanistan which could help forming an Islamic Alliance consisting of Afghanistan, Pakistan and Iran. Later, Central Asian States, Turkey, Malaysia and other Muslim countries could also join this alliance. It would have given the strategic depth to Muslim Ummah.

USA wanted to "suppress the evil" in the bud. First of all, it tried to prevent Mujahideen from coming into power. It also started "Perception Management of Pakistan" in 2008 which is still continuing and it is poisoning the minds of our youth. Security Institution of Pakistan, ISI, had collaborated with FIA to thwart Russia. It had tremendous capability. It was necessary to "cleanse" it. All officers and other men who were

associated with Afghan Mujahideen were expelled from ISI. Though Iraq and Iran remained engaged in war for eight years but they emerged as big military powers. It was not in American interest. A conspiracy was hatched against Iraq. They were accused of having Atomic weapons. It was attacked with full force and destroyed.

Cruel actions against Iran started in 1979 which intensified later on. Arab countries were led to believe that Iran was a great threat for their security. It is due to this fear that they are willing to cooperate with their traditional rival, Israel. Israel has now been assigned to prepare a war strategy to destroy Iran. USA and its alliance would render all help in this regard. It was during terrorist actions against Iran when it launched an attack with missiles and drones on the Saudi oil installations from Yemen. It played havoc with their oil installations. USA and Saudi Arabia had to stop their activities and thus pressure against Iran was obviated. This Iranian strategy is called Fundamental Blow in military terminology. Its timely use, attains the required objectives. There is a lesson in it for Pakistan.

Another conspiracy against the Islamic World is sectarian conflict between Shias and Sunnis. Efforts have been made to create hatred in Sunni Muslims against Iran. War between Iran and Iraq was planned. Syria was destroyed and now it has been planned to send fifteen thousand American troops to Saudi Arabia to play hell with the Muslims of the Middle East. Before coming out of Afghanistan, USA has assigned Israel the job of restricting Iranian influence. USA wants to see Israel as the super-Regional Power which could safeguard the American interests.

Taliban were deprived of education from 1979 to 1990. There was no peace in Afghanistan during that period. Though some of them migrated to Pakistan and some got admission in the schools established along Afghan border, majority of them remained deprived of education. So they can be termed as "product of Jihad" who achieved tremendous victories after forming a united front. "Al Quaidah" was also product of Afghan Jihad. Usama Bin Laden was their leader who had fought heroically against Russia. He had to leave Afghanistan under American pressure. He came back to Afghanistan in 1995. In recognition of his services during Jihad, Taliban gave him asylum. He revived his contacts with World Islamic Front and remained active outside Afghanistan. His camp in Jalalabad and his medicine manufacturing companies in Sudan were destroyed by American missiles in 1998. Sanctions were imposed on Taliban Government. Al Quaidah suffered heavily and their activities were restricted.

CHAPTER 5

THE MOST IMPORTANT DECISION OF THE ARMED FORCES

Promotion to VCOAS

Our Vice Chief of Army Staff, General Khalid Mehmood Arif completed his tenure as VCOAS in 1987. General Ziaul Haq decided to appoint General Zahid Ali Akbar as VCOAS. As per tradition, names of four Lieutenant Generals were to be sent to the then Prime Minister Muhammed Khan Junejo. When he saw the dossiers of four generals, he met General Zia and asked,

"Aslam Beg is the senior most. His command, staff and instructional experience is more than the others. What is wrong with him that he cannot be promoted?"

General Zia was convinced and thus I got promoted to the post of VCOAS. It was in fact Divine Intervention. After one and a half year, I came back to the same house where I lived as CGS for five years. It consisted of four bed rooms and a study room. My guard consisted of ten men who were commanded by a JCO. I used a 1600 CC car as instructed by Prime Minister Muhammed Khan Junejo and did not touch the Mercedes Car which has been used by Army Chiefs since the time of Ayub Khan.

Gen Zia's Compulsions of Power

In 1988, General Zia again thought of a new political system. He again called me and General Hameed Gul and asked us to delineate a plan prioritizing a new political system which should commensurate with the latest requirements of time.

After tireless efforts, we prepared a report and submitted to him. We were called to discuss the report. I read out the summary of the report which said,

"Allah is very kind to you. He had given you an opportunity in 1985 to make a historical decision but your priorities were different at that time. It is a divine blessing that you are in a position to take a historical decision. Hold the elections and transfer the power to elected representatives. History will remember you with the name of a benevolent dictator."

He replied, "You are right but seat of power has its own compulsions. It is difficult to make such decision."

The matter ended there.

Trial of Al-Khalid Tank

When the year of 1988 began, Afghan war was coming to its end. Iran-Iraq war had ended. Pakistan was thronged with Jihadees from all over the world. Our preparations for inducting new weapons and armament were in full swing. Our Modernization Programme had been completed. Proto Type of our important Main Battle Tank, "Al Khalid" was in the final phase of completion which was being prepared in collaboration with China. For comparison trials, M1A1 Abraham Tank of America was being brought to Pakistan. Our senior officers including General Zia were not sure that we could manufacture a tank which could fulfill the requirements of modern warfare. Lobby for M1A1 tank was very strong as it was the best tank at that time according to state of the art technology.

India also tried to manufacture a modern tank but all their efforts have ended in a fiasco so far. We assessed reasons of their failure and found out that they had been trying to manufacture the main hull and all systems fitted in a tank by themselves. The external body of the tank frame should be so solid and strong that small arm fire should be ineffective against it. Its track, on which a tank moves, should be so strong and elastic that the tank should be able to negotiate obstacles and ditches. It should not bog down in sand, mud or marshes. Its engine is of utmost importance. While driving a fifty to sixty ton tank, if it gets overheated, the tank would stop. It has an electric system and a fire control system. Before manufacturing Al Khalid Tank, hulls and tracks were already being manufactured for our T-59 tanks. Rest of the systems we obtained from Germany and Europe. We got engines from Germany from their tank Panzer II and Fire Control Systems from Europe.

All this technology is available in open world market. But real deed was to manufacture a tank, incorporating all technology which was successfully done by our mechanical engineers and Chinese experts. In short, our strategy proved successful. Three prototypes of Al Khalid tank were manufactured and reached Multan along with American tank. From there they were transported to Tamewali Field Firing Range where comparison trial of the two tanks were to be held. GHQ prepared two lists of VIPs and other officers. One group was of General Zia and the other of General Akhtar Abdur Rehman, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. The first trial was on 17th August while the second group was to witness the trial three days later. A day earlier, General Akhtar Abdur Rehman met me at Golf Course and complained that he was not included in the first group. I told him that due to security reasons all VIPs could not travel in the same plane. He kept quiet.

General Ziaul Haq reached Bahawalpure with his entourage by C-130 on 17th August at about 11A.M. I had already reached there by my own aircraft to receive him. I found that General Akhtar Abdur Rehman, his Military Secretary, American ambassador and other officers were with him. It appeared that GHQ list was amended.

Lieutenant General Shafiq ur Rehman and I received the guests at the airport. They got freshened up at the airport lounge and headed towards Tamewali Range in two helicopters. Head of the trial team, Major General Mehmood Durrani was present there with his team. Trial started and continued for an hour or so. Al Khalid cleared all tests while American Tank could clear only a few tests. All were surprised on these results but trials were conducted in front of the watching eyes and there was no doubt about the results.

Return journey started at about 1.30 P.M. Lunch was arranged in the Corps Headquarters. Zuhar prayers were offered and then the President met some personalities of the area. At about 4.30 P.M. all passengers left for Bahawalpur Airport. I accompanied General Zia and escorted him up to the aircraft. All occupied their seats. While entering into the aircraft, he asked me,

"Are you coming also?"

Then spotting my aircraft in front, he said, *"You have come by your aircraft, there it is".*

"Yes! I shall come by my own aircraft. Allah Hafiz."

Accident of Pakistan-One

After General Zia aircraft took off, I also set off. Hardly ten minutes had passed when my pilot, Colonel Minhaj told worriedly,

"Sir! Islamabad Control is out of contact "with Pakistan One, (Code name of General Zia's aircraft).! am also trying to contact it but there is no response."

"May Allah have mercy", What could happen!

We all started praying. The Pilot told that a cloud of smoke was rising. Our aircraft reached over the spot. A helicopter which was bound for Multan was landing there. Its pilot was contacted who told that C-130 had crashed. Its wreckage was ablaze. No survival was seen.

I was to make the most important decision of my life during those precarious moments. Had I returned to Bahawalpur airport and then gone to the accident place, the night would have fallen and I could do nothing. On contacting the people down below, we were told that the wreckage was burning and everything had turned into ashes. I told my pilot to go straight to Rawalpindi.

GHQ was contacted. Gloomy calm prevailed there. I ordered, "Place the Formations on red alert and wait for further orders".

Following officers accompanied me in my aircraft:

- Brigadier Ejaz Amjad, my Private Secretary
- Colonel Minhaj, the pilot.
- Captain Umer Farooq Durrani, my ADC
- Captain Abdul Khaliq Chishti, my PRO

The officers around me were watching me and I was plunged in deep thoughts. I was to decide whether to take over the power or to hand it over to those who deserved it. I was reminded of the advice of my father, "Hand over the "rights" to those who deserve it".

An Important Decision by the Armed Forces

I had made up my mind accordingly. I had advised General Zia in 1985 and 1988 to hold the elections and hand over the power to the elected people. Now when I was in the same conditions, how could I decide contrary to my advices? So I decided to hand over the power to those who deserved it. My mind was at peace after making this decision. The clouds of fear and uncertainty cast away. Engrossed in my thoughts, we reached Qasim Air Base, Dharmyal. Commander 10 Corps, Lieutenant General had come to the base to receive me. We went straight to GHQ. All officers were sad, morose and gloomy. The atmosphere was tense with fear, uncertainty and ambiguity. I had already sent messages to Chief of Naval Staff, Admiral Saeed Ahmed Khan Chief of Air Staff, Air Marshal Hakeem ullah Khan, Director General ISI, Lieutenant General Hameed Gul and Judge Advocate General Brigadier Aziz Ahmed Khan to reach GHQ. All arrived within half an hour. I briefed them about the situation and sought their advice. All advised what I was thinking of. It was a unanimous decision that Chairman Senate, Ghulam Ishaq Khan, should be called and asked to take over the responsibilities. A message was sent to him. He was taken aback when I told him, "Almighty Allah has bestowed heavy responsibility on you at this difficult time. According to the constitution, the responsibility rests with you under these circumstances. We request you to take necessary measures to hold the elections within ninety days and hand over the power to the elected representatives. You will have our full cooperation in this regard. Our prayers are with you".

His face expressions of uncertainty, hope and fear cannot be explained. It was about 8 P.M. when he left. He addressed the nation at about 10 P.M. on National network and announced the decision of holding the elections within ninety days. It was an unparalleled decision in the history.

Within three hours after the death of General Zia, the constitution had been revived, process of transfer of power had started which was to be completed within ninety days. It was the decision of the armed forces of Pakistan.

Investigations about the Accident of C-130

Question: Crashing of General Zia's aircraft was a great loss of the army. Did you try to find out the details of the accident? It was a national tragedy. Its investigations were necessary, for instance:

Who brought the mango crates? How these crates were loaded in the aircraft without checking? Who was responsible for this? Was any action taken against the person responsible for it?

A parliamentary Commission was also formed in this connection. You also appeared before this commission. What stand did you take? What were the findings of that Commission?

Post mortem of the dead bodies was not performed. It could give some clue about the possible reasons of the accident. Were the dead bodies buried without post mortem on your orders?

Answer: On arrival at Rawalpindi, I contacted Corps Commander Lieutenant General Muhammed Shafiq. He told me that recognition of dead bodies was very difficult. Some remnants of General Zia were found, which were being gathered so that coffin box could be prepared. A team of CMH doctors was present on the spot who were collecting the remnants of the deceased for postmortem.

Next day I again talked to General Shafiq and enquired about the results of post mortem.. He told that post mortem had been carried out. Report from CMH was still awaited. Their detailed report was received after a few days. No chemical elements were found on dead bodies. After a few weeks, a report was received from USA also. It also negated presence of any chemical elements. They had, however, returned half of the dead bodies' parts stating that those were not of Americans.

The very next day, I had directed DG Military Intelligence to conduct an enquiry diligently and make recommendations, I also requested the President to order a joint enquiry and also direct DG ISI to conduct investigations independently. Pakistan Air Force had already ordered enquiry and their team had reached the accident spot and were gathering evidences.

All the reports were received by the government within three weeks. It was up to the government to take next steps.

C-130 plane, Called "Pakistan - One" is a special aircraft for the use of the President. All the responsibility rests with PAF. Nobody else can go near it. All the luggage loaded in it, is checked by their staff. However, the manifesto (List of the passengers) is prepared at the President house. As I stated earlier, General Akhtar Abdur Rehman had

complained why his name was not included in the list with the President. I had explained the reasons but later he talked to Military Secretary of the President and got his name included.

Within four weeks, PAF enquiry and all other enquiries were completed. All enquiries unanimously agreed that no chemical elements were found on the dead bodies. When the aircraft started jerking, somebody called out, "What is happening?" Pilot did not reply. Black Box also confirmed it. Probably some crew member had called out which was heard by Monitoring Desk. Pilot did not send any SOS signal. Due to these things, it is feared that some conspiracy was at work.

When Benazir Bhutto became the Prime Minister, I requested her to hold a criminal inquiry so that the facts about the accident could come to light. She did and formed Bandyal Commission. Crux of the commission's report was that it was an act of good riddance which meant that it was the fate of a dictator who hanged her father.

When Nawaz Sharif became Prime Minister, I made a similar request. He also formed a judicial commission under the head of Justice Shafiur Rehman. I also appeared before that commission. That commission also declared that the incident was an accident. According to manufacturing company of C-130 and USA, the accident took place due to some technical fault in the engine.

This is what has come to limelight so far. It appeared to be a Divine Interference.

My First Address after becoming COAS

Next day after I took over as COAS, I addressed all garrison officers at GHQ hall. Apart from other things, I talked about the Strategic changes in the region and presented the concept of Strategic Depth, It was a detailed talk which was recorded by ISPR. I would like to elaborate a few points:

"It is a matter of satisfaction that we are not alone at this time of distress. Our nation is with us. Our people have always stood like men of steel and they know how to live the life with dignity and grace. New changes are taking place around us. It is imperative to understand these changes. The struggle for independence by Afghan freedom fighters is nearing its logical conclusion. An independent Muslim state will be established there. Past are the days of super powers expansionist designs. Efforts for reviving democracy in our country are at hand. Our neighbor Iran has thwarted the Iraqi aggression. Islamic forces in all the three countries have been strengthened. A new morning of hope is dawning which is very important for us. It is time for Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan to unitedly advance towards a new destination with determination. An alliance of the three Muslim countries will provide Strategic Depth. This alliance will strengthen our security and no enemy will be able to cast an evil eye on us. It was not taken well by our "masters" and their associates started giving wrong meanings to it. Now after forty

years, having come out of the whirlwind, we have come to a stage where the concept of strategic depth is going to take shape. USA had decided in 1988 that Afghan Mujahideen will not be allowed to form their government. Had they formed the government, Jihadi Afghanistan, revolutionary Iran and Islamic Republic of Pakistan would have become a pivot of power and a formidable fort for the Muslims. Obviously, it was not liked by USA. They thought it was against their interests. So they started conspiracies and under the pretext of 9/11, Afghanistan was invaded.

After the successful trial of Al Khalid tank, USA imposed restrictions on Germany and they were not allowed to sell their spare parts of their Panzer II tank. Due to these restrictions, production of Al Khalid tank remained suspended for three years. We talked to Ukraine in this connection but they wanted us to buy their three hundred tanks. What was the need to develop our own tank if we were to buy their tanks? This is what happens in the world affairs. Every country keeps its own interests supreme and negotiates accordingly. Our efforts continued and we were blessed with success by Almighty Allah. With the blessings of Allah, Al Khalid tank is the state of the art tank and a valuable weapon system of Pakistan Army even after lapse of three decades. It is a glittering example of the expertise of Pakistani and Chinese engineers.

CHAPTER 6

UNPARALLELED STEPS TAKEN AFTER ASSUMING THE ARMS COMMAND

It took eight years of the decade of 1980 to complete the modernization of army programme. Thereafter it was felt necessary to assess the utility of the new projects and practicability of new concepts. For this purpose war games started in GHQ to exactly assess how far our growth process and war priorities coordinated with each other. These war games continued for a year. Then it was decided to hold Zarb e Momin exercise. It was for the first time in Pakistan that such a big exercise was held in which more than 95% manpower of the army participated.

Policy of Glasnost

Realizing the new realities, role of mass communication was recognized and policy of "Glasnost" was adopted. It aimed at providing all information that mass media wanted to know about the armed forces and keep the people abreast with defence affairs. A special task was assigned to ISPR. Seminars were held in various cities on defence matters which were attended by intellectuals, journalists, ex ambassadors and retired military officers. They expressed their opinions on various defence aspects. These seminars helped creating awareness among the people about defence affairs and improving civil-military relations.

Seven Seminars on 1948 War

It was also decided to hold seminars on the three wars, fought by Pakistan. These were to be addressed by the officers who actually participated in these wars. Seven seminars were held on 1948 war in Rawalpindi, Karachi, Lahore, Peshawar, Muzaffarabad, Bhimber and Skardu. The writer of this book, conducted the proceedings. New aspects about 1948 war came to limelight which were not known before. For instance, it is generally said that after getting the news that Indian Army was about to land at Srinagar, Quaid e Azam had ordered the then British Commander In Chief of Pakistan Army, General Douglas Gracey, to send a brigade to Jammu and Srinagar but General Gracey refused to obey the orders.

Major General Wijahat Hussain who was ADC to Quaid e Azam in 1948, narrated a different story in a seminar held at Muzaffarabad which appears to be correct with reference to the context. He said that those who knew Quaid e Azam would confirm it that had General Gracey disobeyed the orders of the Quaid, he would have dismissed him immediately. Since it did not happen and the fact that General Gracey stayed in Pakistan till 1951 shows that the events have not been seen in their true perspective.

Quaid e Azam had not agreed to even Viceroy Lord Mount Batten who desired to be the Governor General of both India and Pakistan. Pundit Jawaharlal Nehru had accepted his proposal but Quaid e Azam had rejected it.

Mount Batten was annoyed on it. He threatened Quaid e Azam,

"Do you know the consequences?"

Quaid e Azam had replied, *"Assets of a few million dollars!"*

He meant the division of assets at the time of partition. How could it be expected that a man of such steel nerves would tolerate disobedience of his orders by a subordinate Commander In Chief?

The accusations of disobeying the Quaid's orders first appeared in a book, *"Mission with Mount Batten"*, published from London. General Wijahat said that when he brought it to the notice of General Gracey, he laughed and denied the allegation saying that he did receive such orders from Quaid e Azam but the situation prevailing at that time was very difficult. The British officers were to be withdrawn in case of war between India and Pakistan. Pakistan Army required seven thousand five hundred officers while only two thousand officers were available, out of whom five hundred were British. Most of the units and the officers, allocated to Pakistan were still stranded in India and in case of war, they could not reach Pakistan. The migration of refugees would have been badly affected and the main thing was that we were not in a position to confront India.

General Gracey told Quaid e Azam that he would have done something to get Srinagar, had he been told earlier but he was kept in the dark.

General Wijahat said that Quaid e Azam was not provided correct information about the brigades, he ordered to be sent to Jammu and Srinagar. All the three battalions of Sialkot brigade were spread all over Punjab stretching from Sialkot to Mianwali. So was the case with Rawalpindi Brigade. Its units were scattered in Mardan, Sargodha and Lyallpur (Now Faisalabad) involved in internal security duties. Not a single battalion as a whole was present at Rawalpindi or Sialkot. When Quaid e Azam was briefed about all this, he kept quiet.

The Liberation War of the Northern Areas

The seminar at Skardu also proved to be the most interesting and most informative event. Various aspects of the independence struggle were brought to light. When the people of the Northern Areas found that they were again being deprived of their inalienable basic rights, they revolted against the Dogra Rule and started a determined movement for liberation. Subedar Major of Gilgit Scouts with the help of his

companions arrested Commanding Officer of Gilgit Scouts, Major Brown and his Second in Command, Captain Mathy. They were imprisoned in the barracks.

SM Babar also arrested Ghansara Singh who was appointed Governor of the Northern Areas by Maharaja of Kashmir. Then a fake message was sent to Col Abdul Majeed, Commanding Officer of 6th Jammu and Kashmir Rifles, at Bunji on behalf of the Governor. He was asked to immediately report to Gilgit where the situation was deteriorating day by day.

Mounted on a horse, when he reached Gilgit, he was received by SM Babar. While walking along his horse, Babar apprised him about the latest situation. He told him that the Governor, CO and 2 IC of Gilgit Scouts had been arrested and people were determined to launch liberation war. Col Abdul Majeed was requested to lead the liberation war.

He got annoyed and told S. M. Babar that he was talking like kids. India was a great power and it would be foolish to fight against it. Hearing this, SM Babar put him also in the barracks.

On the other hand, Muslim officers in Bunji frightened the Hindu and Sikh soldiers stating that a big force of Muslim Mujahideen was coming to Bunji. They fled away. The Muslim soldiers captured all arms and ammunition and joined Mujahideen. Major Muhammed Aslam (Brother of Air Marshal Asghar Khan) was appointed Officer Commanding of Gilgit Scouts and his brother Major Anwar was posted as Deputy Assistant Adjutant and Quarter Master (DQ). Major Muhammed Aslam planned and organized the Liberation War so well that an area of twenty eight thousand square miles was liberated despite the absence of proper logistic and military support of the regular army. It is a unique record in the history of modern warfare. According to General Douglas Gracey, the 1948 Northern Areas operations were the ideal examples of the best use of the principles of war after Napoleon Bonaparte's great battles.

Master mind of the liberation war, Brigadier (Retired) Muhammed Aslam, his brother Major Anwar and majority of those officers who joined the Mujahideen after revolting in 6th Jammu and Kashmir Rifles, were present in the seminar. Included among them were Group Captain (Retired) Shah Khan, Major Muhammed Khan Jarral, various junior commissioned officers, non-commissioned officers and civilians who set glittering examples of bravery during the liberation war. Muhammed Khan Jarral was the commander of the force that ambushed the Indian Contingent which came under Brigadier Faqir Singh to relieve the surrounded garrison of Skardu. He narrated the events in detail:

"I was given two platoons with a mission to stop the advance of Brigadier Faqir Singh's force. I conducted reconnaissance and decided to lay ambush at a place known as

Thogpari between Goal and Skardu. Here the river takes a sharp turn and the path along the bank also becomes very narrow. The advancing column had to squeeze itself to pass through that defile. I detailed Havildar Nazir Ahmed with a machine gun to establish the stopping point. Nobody was to be allowed to go beyond that point. The Indian Column entered into the ambush on 17th March 1948. First they had their meal and then perhaps under the impression that the worst part of their journey was over, casually started loitering towards Skardu. The moment the leading elements reached the stopping point, Havildar Nazir Ahmed opened fire with his machine gun which was also a signal for the rest of the party across the river to open up. The Dogra Column did not get time to react. The whole proceedings hardly took two minutes. Most of the soldiers were killed. Only a few who were in the rear, managed to escape including Brigadier Faqir Singh. Mujahideen collected one lac rounds, mortars, machine guns and large quantity of food, the column was bringing for the besieged garrison".

The Indians made another effort to relieve the garrison by sending another force via a different route. They were more cautious and careful but so was Lieutenant M. K. Jarral. He managed to ambush the second force also and inflicting many human casualties, forced them to retreat.

Crossing the Burzal Pass in February

Group Captain Shah Khan (Retired) was a Lieutenant in Pakistan Army in 1948. He led a force across Burzal Pass, sent by Major Aslam to destroy the Zulu Brigade, sent by Indians to relieve the Skardu garrison. The Indians had assembled at and around Kargil, Dras, Zojila and Sonamarg waiting for snow to melt. They were to advance through Taraghal Pass towards Skardu. Major Aslam organized a force of 600 men and named it "Eskimo Force". They were to travel through Astore, Chillum, across Burzal and storm the enemy by surprise. Commander of "Eskimo Force", then Lieutenant, Group Captain, Shah Khan narrated his experience: We had 600 young men of 18 to 20 years of age in our force. They had no battle experience or training of war. Major Aslam had arranged 150 porters for us who carried 130 ammunition boxes, 6 mortar shell boxes, a mortar and a machine gun. Everybody was to carry three day food, and 150 rounds. They did not have proper clothing or shoes. If somebody had shoes, he did not have socks. If somebody had shirt, he had no sweater. For meals, we had prepared loafs, with the flour dough mixed with apricots, called "Phutti" in the local language. These were distributed among jawans. The empty tattered flour bags and the rugs were distributed among the men who wrapped the same around their feet. Another problem was protection from the sun. No goggles were available. Mulberry tree leaves were improvised to serve the purpose. Leaves were pierced in the centre and elastic branches were used as bows. With these "preparations", the "Eskimo Force" was sent to cross Burzil Pass (13,700 feet high) towards Kargil.

Improvised "goggles" were not of much help. When the sun rose, its rays reflected so much dazzling shine that the men squinted and their vision blurred. They walked keeping their hands on the shoulders of the person ahead.

Major Aslam had told us that the snow would be hard in the mornings and during the nights and the going would be easy. What he did not tell us was the miserable conditions we faced when the sun rose. The snow melted in the sun and the men sank in the snow up to their waist. The shine was so dazzling that that it became impossible to see around. There were no tree, bush or boulder which could provide any protection. Snow, snow and snow everywhere. Safety lay in continued walking and we did walk continuously for three days.

People at Gultari received us with open arms and offered us whatever they had *i.e.* flour, ghee, sugar etc. A man had saved a canister of flour for Mujahideen. He died of hunger but did not touch the flour. This was the state of sacrifices of the people of Gilgit and Baltistan whom we kept deprived of their basic rights for sixty years and did not give them representation at any platform.

Most of the men had their eyes swollen. There was no arrangements for proper medical care. A local treatment made up of poultice of tea leaves was applied to the closed eyes which responded miraculously to this local treatment. Within a night most of the people recuperated.

We rested for three days and then proceeded further towards Kargil and Dras. People at the helm of affairs of Indian Zulu Brigade could not imagine that some force would cross Burzil in the severe weather condition of February. They were taken by surprise and Eskimo Force destroyed the entire Brigade".

Subedar Nasib Ali was operating quite far off at Zaskar. On change of command of Gilgit Scouts, the new commander ordered the troops at Kargil and Ladakh to withdraw. As a result, the force operating at Zaskar got isolated and was surrounded by the enemy. Subedar Nasib Ali was among those who got surrounded. He related the story while the audience listened to him spell bound. He said, "We were still surrounded In Padam when the ceasefire was accepted by both countries. We had no intimation about it. The Hindus, exploiting the situation, wrote to us that the area up to Gilgit had been included in India and there was no use of fighting any more. We were asked to surrender with the promise that we would be dispatched to Delhi safely. We replied that even if the whole world formed part of India, Padam would continue to be a part of Pakistan.

Fearing that our own government might not resume us to be dead, we sent Subedar Ghulam Ali with two men to inform Pakistan Army about our plight. After nine months, late Major Ghulam Murtaza arrived to evacuate us to free land of sweet

Pakistan. Later on, the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Liaqat Ali Khan honored us by receiving us in audience at Gilgit".

There are many incidents like these which have not been recorded anywhere. The proceedings of the ISPR seminars were published in the "Defence and Media Journals", edited by the writer of this book under the patronage of the then Director ISPR, Brigadier S. M. Iqbal and DG ISPR, Major General Riazullah. Common people do not have access to these journals. There is a need to publish these proceedings in Urdu for the enlightenment of the people of Gilgit and Baltistan and Pakistan. We are also of the opinion that this should be included in the syllabus of the educational institutions of Gilgit and Baltistan.

After the liberation of a vast area, Gilgit and Baltistan were declared independent and a revolutionary council headed by Shah Raees Khan, the then Raja of Gilgit, was formed. A telegram was sent via Peshawar to Quaid e Azam requesting him to send a representative of the government of Pakistan to take over the administration. Now the appropriate reply should have been to tell them that since they had liberated the area, they as the representatives of Pakistan, should run the administration also. But it did not happen. A bureaucrat with the name of Sardar Alam Khan arrived as Political Agent. The story thereafter is the story of pains and sorrows. The people of the areas did not get any representation at any platform. It was during the government of Peoples Party that they were allowed to elect their representatives at local level and allowed to run their affairs at their own.

Exercise Zarb e Momin

Coming back to Exercise Zarb e Momin. We had reorganized the army in such a way that it could perform its defence duties up to millennium 2000 and onward in a better way and could achieve the following targets:

- Defensive Strategy could be incorporated with Offensive Defence Strategy.
- The nation should know the defence capabilities of the army which had become doubtful after the 1971 war.
- A clear message should go across the borders that Pakistan Army had achieved better capabilities to defend the borders.



Speakers of the Seminar at Sakardu on Liberation War of the Northern Areas

100 Young Journalists joined the Exercise

It was decided to incorporate media to keep the general public apprised of the exercise. Various newspapers and news agencies were requested to detail their representatives to participate in the exercise. About one hundred young journalists volunteered. Initially arrangements were made for them to visit various formation headquarters and units so that they could understand the organization of the army and its functioning. Then, they were attached to various units of Blue Land and Fox Land Forces. They were provided uniforms, shoes and Field Kits. Since the exercise was being held in severe winter, they were also provided Military jackets which they wore with pride and took these as souvenirs with them. My son, Mirza Wijahat Mustafa Beg also took part in the exercise and stayed for three weeks in the field. Though the young journalists volunteered enthusiastically to participate in the exercise, a lot of questions were also, raised in the press:

- The army remains engaged in the exercises but such pomp and show was never witnessed in the past. Why?
- What are the back ground objectives of such exercise?
- Why the army needs glasnost?
- Why to make so heavy expenditures?
- And so many other questions.

Press Briefing on Zarb e Momin

A press briefing was arranged on 13th September, 1989 in the GHQ Auditorium to answer such queries. About three hundred editors of national newspapers and leading magazines, prominent columnists and senior reporters were present.

First, they were taken on by the senior Officers. Inspector General Training and Evaluation, Lieutenant General Arif Bangash gave a lengthy briefing on the exercise. Inspector General Military training, Major General Naseer Akhtar, briefed the audience about officers' training. Director General Combat Development, Major General A.M. Tariq explained the procedures of procurement of weapons for the army, while Director General Budget, Major General Uzair Muhammed Khan briefed about the budgetary aspects of the army. The briefing was quite lengthy and some journalists were seen yawning. Almost everybody snapped to attention when COAS arrived.

Addressing the audience, I said,

"Mr. Mir Khalilur Rehman, President All Pakistan Newspapers Society!

Honorable Ladies and Gentlemen!

Assalam o Alaikum.

I pray to Almighty Allah to open up my heart, make my job easy and untie the knots of my tongue so that they can understand what I say.

It is a matter of great pleasure for me to be among the prominent writers and journalists of the country. Some of my seniors are also present here which gives me confidence and encouragement. I on behalf of myself and on behalf of my colleagues thank you all for taking the trouble to come here. I hope that our efforts will come up to your expectations. A similar briefing was arranged a couple of months earlier also. The idea was to fill up the gap between the armed forces and the nation. We hope to do it with your support and

guidance. Complete harmony and understanding between the armed forces and the nation is of utmost importance.

Before I invite questions, I request you to refrain from political questions.

Our mission is very clear: to keep the country safe from internal conflicts and external threats. I will like you to keep the incidents of 17th August in mind. A great tragedy occurred that day in which our president, COAS and many senior officers died. The decision we made at that time was based on good intentions and sincerity which was appreciated within the country and abroad. It enhanced the prestige of the armed forces. We are doing our best to abide by our decision and achieve our objectives to safeguard the country from internal conflicts and external threats."

Question: What is the theme of this exercise? Is it in response to some likely threat from the enemy?

Answer: Zarb e Momin is meant to carry out tests and trials and evaluation of our capability as a force, particularly in the changed security environment. By the Grace of Allah we are not faced today with a serious situation of two war fronts. Although the matters have not yet settled down in Afghanistan, the military threat has considerably reduced. Most of what we had on the Western front is available.

Alhamdo Lillah, today I have a very large Reserve in my hands which I must use to my advantage. For a smaller country with lesser resources a policy and strategy of defence would mean defeat and that is the policy we have been following in the past. And now a big change has come in our thinking; a policy of offensive defence. We have this enhanced capability today because of the changed environment, therefore, I had to consider as to how best we could put that strategy into practice. That is one major aim of the exercise.

In addition to that, we have acquired new arms and equipment during last seven eight years. It is essential to test these according to our new strategic plans. We have made many structural changes in the army. These will also be tested during the exercise. My most valuable assets are my senior officers who are quite different from the commanders in the past. They are more qualified and better trained with professional approach. They have completed higher education according to a coordinated planning. Now our all priorities and planning are knowledge based.

Our senior officers are trained in the National Defence College. After graduating from there they become experts in their profession. They become capable of developing the war plans and their implementation. They can control big formations and army. I am proud of their capabilities and that is why I am confident that this exercise will be very successful.

Question: Please define your strategy and concept that you want to test during the exercise. There may be many administrative problems to hold such a big exercise. How will you overcome these? From which other fronts you expect threats of aggression?

Answer: Our primary aim is to adopt offensive defence. This has necessitated many organizational changes. We have raised new units and formations. We have developed fourteen new concepts. We have conducted war games and now all this will be tested during the exercise. To meet our administrative and defence requirements we have alerted our troops on the fronts. Our entire Logistic Support System is participating in the exercise. It will be for the first time that capabilities of all arms and services will be assessed. Capabilities of even our Corps Commanders will be put to test.

Question: This is the first bigger exercise after "Tezgam" which was held twenty nine years earlier. How is this exercise different from that?

Answer: There is no comparison between "Tezgam" and Zarb e Momin. "Tezgam" was participated by a division plus only while five Corps and entire Logistic Support System of Pakistan Army are participating In Zarb e Momin. Its concept and dimensions are entirely different from "Tezgam".

Question: What role will be played by PAF in the exercise? Why Navy has been excluded while the naval threats from India have been increased many times?

Answer: Air Force is an aggressive force. We have assigned them a limited role because of scarcity of resources. Due to similar reasons Navy has also been excluded but it is compensated by war games. Tri Services war games are conducted regularly.

In the field of high technology, we do have a threat of electronic warfare. We have made satisfactory progress in this field. It is the era of high technology and electronic wars. Radars are used. Guidance system is attached with missiles. Electronic communication system is used. It is possible to suspend the communication system, jam the radars and destroy the guidance system of missiles. We are to develop counter actions for these threats, destroy the enemy capabilities to neutralize our communication. Whatever preparations we have made will be sufficient to find solutions to these problems.

Question: How far this exercise is different from the Indian exercise, "Brass Tack"?

Answer: I have not kept it secret like they did some two years back. They never told us as to what the dimensions of the exercise were; where the exercise was being held; and what were the exercise objectives?

Our exercise is above board. We are going to hold this exercise far away from the borders, at a minimum distance of two hundred kilometers away from the border, including Kashmir. We have kept them informed all the time. Only this morning our DGMO has talked to their DGMO and told him about the exercise in some detail. I think there should be no doubts and apprehensions in their minds about this exercise.

Question: How do you compare the expenditures of Brass Tack with this exercise?

Answer: You will be surprised to know the details of our expenditures on this exercise. Indians claim that they spent 300 crore rupees on their exercises. Our expenditures are not even one tenth of these expenditures. The government has given us only 16 crore rupees. Out of these, I have set aside 10 crore rupees for maintenance, the up-keep of the equipment, weapons and transport, before and after the exercise. Factually, what it comes to, is just six crore rupees that I have for the conduct of the exercise. In six crore also included is the compensation money of about 70 lakh that will be paid to the farmers whose crops may be damaged. This also includes the daily allowances of our men and officers. Surprisingly, the Daily Allowance our men get, is two rupees a day. I and my officers will be getting just ten rupees a day. It also takes care of the petrol, oil and lubricants etc.

Question: Will you comment on Jihad e Afghanistan?

Answer: I wish I had enough time to talk to you in detail about Afghan Jihad because I have studied and analyzed this war very closely. I had the opportunity to watch this war closely as Chief of General Staff and as Commander 11 Corps at Peshawar. It is surprising that my analysis and comments used to be different from the government stand. I feel pride in stating that most of the time my analyses proved correct. I would like to narrate a few events that occurred in the beginning of the last year, when Russia made an unexpected decision to withdraw from Afghanistan.

I have made some humble contribution in the Russian defeat and their withdrawal. It so happened that Russians incorporated their heli-borne commando brigades in 1986 in the Afghan war. They came in gunship helicopters and shot Mujahideen at will without any resistance because their gunship helicopters with armored plates could not be engaged with small arms or machine guns. They were being killed mercilessly. General Christ of USA Central Command visited us and I briefed him. He was surprised and at a loss to understand why nobody had told him about the situation. He went back and Commander of - USA army General Wikham came to Pakistan next week. He also took stock of the situation. When he went back, they decided to give Stinger Missiles to Mujahideen. It is a shoulder operated missile and can easily target the gunship helicopters. After the receipt of these missiles, Afghan Mujahideen downed seven helicopters within a few weeks. Thus Russian latest strategy also failed. They accepted defeat and sought Mujahideen's permission to leave Afghanistan.

Here lies the difference between USA and Russia. The USA has also been defeated but they do not want to get out from there and are still busy in hatching conspiracies. A dangerous situation prevails in Afghanistan after the Russian withdrawal. The USA has taken control in their hands, isolating Pakistan. They want to establish a government of their own choice there, keeping the Mujahideen away. They want Mujahideen to fight with each other. These are very dangerous designs. May Allah have mercy on us.

Question: Many people in Pakistan think that the war at Siachin is an aimless war where the final victory will be of weather. What is the latest situation there?

Answer: Before telling you the latest situation at Siachin, I would like to explain the background of this dispute. I was Chief of General Staff in 1982 when this problem came up. We considered all aspects of the problems and then made a few decisions. Despite those decisions we failed to achieve the desired targets. We learnt in 1982 that Indians had been visiting Siachin. They had sent an adventure party to Indracoli via Siachin. The Corps Commander was asked in January to send troops to assess the situation. Our troops could not cross Salto Range due to bad weather and lack of necessary equipment.

Next year, in 1983, GHQ decided to send an SSG team. An SSG company was mobilized. They crossed Siala and entered Siachin. While advancing towards the East, when they reached the junction of the glacier, they saw some military camps. They sought instructions. They were told to advance and expel them from the area. When they went forward, the enemy troops fled away. The documents and other equipment recovered, showed that they were from Ladakh Scouts. They withdrew without any resistance. Our troops stayed there till December. When the weather started deteriorating, they were asked to come back. They returned via Bella Fond la.

Based on the available information, we made a plan and suggested to the government to send the army to that area. Our decision to send the army was based on wrong analysis. It was not possible for the troops to stay there in severe cold of December to January. It was further confirmed by the fact that the Indian Army had also vacated the mountainous range above fifteen thousand feet across the LOC. These were the same vacated heights which were occupied in Kargil operation on the instructions of General Musharraf. Our army was left there without any objectives. It was an aimless operation which brought us bad name.

It was the same wrong decision on which we based our planning and placed it before the DCC (Defence Cabinet Committee). It was thoroughly discussed at GHQ and preparations were made for operation. India had an edge over us. They had Lama Helicopters with the help of which they could land their troops on the high peaks of the mountains.

They were a few days ahead of us. We did not have road structure ahead of Khaplu. Only walking tracks were available to us. We were, therefore, a few days behind. Indian troops with the help of helicopters reached the tops before us and occupied the heights.

It is the war of logistics and support. We are now better than them. We are in a better position because we have made roads during last five years up to the gun positions and forward most posts. Heavy trucks and jeeps can easily ply on these roads. We need not use any helicopters. These are used for evacuation of casualties or in emergencies. Indians are spending 100 crore rupees daily while our annual expenditures are about 30 to 40 crore rupees.

Question: India is in a better position in Siachin with more resources and with their positions on heights. Do we have the capability of throwing them out from those areas?

Answer: Surely we can throw them out but it will require more resources and cause loss of many lives. I want Indians to stay there for so called benefits and keep spending their money which is many times more than what we are spending. They do not have any war benefits. They have a political advantage that they have deprived us from benefiting from our seventy kilometers common border with China. It will be stupidity if they resort to any further adventure. They will be trapped deeply if they decide to put in more troops.

Question: India carried out atomic explosion in 1974 and they have the option of atomic war open. Have you kept the possibility of atomic war in mind during exercise Zarb e Momin? Does Pakistan possess this capability?

Answer: Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto has said enough on this subject. It is a fact and people believe that we do have atomic power. It works as deterrence. Possibility of atomic war has not been kept in mind during this exercise. The guarantee for our national security is not our atomic capability, it is our traditional army who will fight the war and win insha Allah.

Question: India has superiority over Pakistan in developing missiles. What is our capability and what steps you suggest to maintain a balance?

Answer: The advantages that India has in the field of missiles, are obvious. They conducted the experiment of "Pirthivi," missile last year in February. Its range is 250 kilometers. We did not have anything to counter it. Fortunately we are engaged in a programme of preparing missiles which is completely indigenous. We have achieved some success. In fact we were ready to conduct an experiment of firing a missile the day Rajeev Gandhi came to Pakistan. It failed due to some technical reasons.

At last you heard the good news that we have attained this capability. I assure you that it is entirely our indigenous production. We have two types of missiles. One has a range up to 80 kilometers and the other up to 300 kilometers. The third one which is under production will be able to reach the distance up to 600 kilometers. India has also experimented to launch "Agni" missile which has a range of 2500 kilometers. It is no threat to us because it will fall on targets outside Pakistan. We still need to work hard to match with India. Whatever capability we have is enough deterrence.

Question: You have talked of offence and taking initiative to prevent the aggression. What do you mean?

Answer: The option to prevent the aggression should always remain open. Launching of offence and pre-emptive strike before the enemy starts the war, is a political decision. But once the war starts, the matters go in the hands of military high command. What I want to say is that we have full capability of offensive operations before the enemy's aggression.

Question: How have you trained and groomed a team of highly professional officers within one year?

Answer: If I have given this impression then it is not correct. An officer is not trained in a year. It needs many decades. The system of higher education in the army started in 1971 when National Defence College was shifted to Rawalpindi. Our officers of the ranks of colonels and brigadiers are war course qualified and appointed on important posts. This is what guaranteed the success of our modernization programme. I alone along with my few companions could not succeed in achieving the desired targets. I am lucky enough to be on the post of Commander and to have a team of highly qualified and professional officers. We have developed a knowledge based strategy and started "Modernization Programme 2000 and Beyond" which was implemented in the decade of eighties.

Question: How would you assess the capability of the army against a superior enemy? Does it have the potential to deter war?

Answer: My aim is not to fight a war, not to invite a war and not to lead to war. My aim is to avoid war and I am trying to create a deterrence which must be strong and meaningful, one which is clearly understood by our enemies; and deterrence has many dimensions.

Even the very fact that today you respect the army, because of our decisions and conduct, and our enemy knows that if the country goes to war the armed forces will have the full support of the entire nation is by itself an effective deterrence. Secondly, it is our job to prepare to the best of our ability for a war which may be imposed on us,

and in doing so we are acting according to the will of Allah. He commands us to prepare ourselves to the utmost of our ability. (Sura An Nisa Verse 71) Thus the very state of preparedness acts as a deterrence. The very fact that the enemy knows that we are prepared and we are not unmindful of our obligations and missions assigned to us, conveys the message that if the enemy dare cast an evil eye on Pakistan, Pakistani Armed Forces will not only give a befitting reply but a crushing defeat, which will be very hard on the enemy. This state of preparedness by itself acts as an effective deterrence.

Question: Will you please explain the new concept of an Alliance between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran?

Answer: All the three countries have common borders. They have harmonious thinking and have common objectives to establish supremacy of religion. How these objectives can be achieved, is a different issue. The strategy and struggle to achieve these objectives can be different but the objectives are the same. Afghanistan has fought war for eight years. They have rendered great sacrifices. As a result, Russia has withdrawn and Afghanistan has emerged more powerful.

Many countries of the world have tried to destroy it but the fact is that no revolution has ever been suppressed with the use of power. History is witness to it. A revolution can be suppressed only by a better and more powerful philosophy. If a revolution is not controlled by a powerful philosophy, it destroys itself. Islamic Revolution of Iran is a unique example in the history of Islam. There were many revolutions in the world. There was a revolution for democracy in France, Communist and Socialist revolution by Carl Marx and Lenin but Iranian Revolution is entirely different from these two. It is successfully fighting against all conspiracies.

A change in Pakistan is also in the offing. The objective is the same. It is the commonality of the objectives that will unite the three countries. Sooner or later, they will achieve their objectives Insha Allah. I had presented the same concept which was named as "Strategic Depth"; the depth of security of the allied countries. This concept will need time to take shape. Human struggle to achieve desired objectives continues for a long time. For instance, Afghanistan is struggling for the last many years to achieve the desired objectives but they have to pass through many more phases. The limitations of time and space are different for such revolutions. But the emerging facts are indicating a dawn of hope and formation of such an alliance.

Question: Don't you think that such an alliance will be seen with concern by Russia and USA?

Answer: I know the existence of such concerns. But such an alliance will cause balance and stability in the region. It will facilitate the dialogue with the countries, having

similar objectives and the super powers. It will guarantee peace on Russian borders. As far as the American interests are concerned, they have limited options in the region. They do realize that they are losing control over Afghanistan. But such an alliance will be better ever for USA as it will be easy for them to deal with the countries having similar objectives.

This group will have an important status in the world's balance of power and will also act effectively to neutralize the supremacy of India in the region. Since the base of such an alliance will be Islamic Ideology, and it will be an Islamic Alliance, it may cause concern for Russia and USA and they may get united against such an alliance, as mentioned by Ex-president of USA, Richard Nixon in his book, "Seize the Moment". But there is nothing to worry about because if we get united in the name of Allah, we shall have His Help and Support Insha Allah.

Question: You have said earlier that only a few officers were engaged in Martial Law duties. But since the army was involved in Martial Law as an institution how far its professional ability has been affected?

Answer: The long duration of Martial law has a little affected the professional ability of the army. Only COAS and about 150 officers are engaged in Martial law duties. They did not have time to concentrate on professional matters as I had. It did not affect the lower echelons. The fact is that the army is integral part of the nation. Our hearts beat as do yours. We do realize the things as you do. That is why if long duration of Martial Law affects the general people, it does so the armed forces and they get involved in politics.

I agree with you that the army needs to assess why they need to take over and run the state administration from time to time. Why Martial Law was imposed? Why we become impatient and did not allow the democratic process to get stabilized? It happens only when there is communication gap between the armed forces and the nation. We have isolated ourselves from politics for a long time. The unfortunate thing is that military leadership alone is not responsible for military intervention. There are five elements which contribute to change of the government:

USA, Army, judiciary, Civil Administration and opportunist political parties. It is such an unholy alliance of interests which will take time to be corrected.

Question: The Indians have moved their cantonments forward, which reduces mobilization considerably. How does it affect army's move and deployment?. My second question is about the Pakistan Air Force; being much smaller in size do you think it will be able to provide the much needed close support?

Answer: Regarding the first question; I shall make it clear that Indians will take about 14 days for mobilization in spite of the fact that they have brought their cantonments so close to the borders. Our timing was twelve days and we have tried to reduce it further and we can now mobilize our forces in about 8 days, which is about half the time the Indians will take. That is the advantage we have and that is what I referred to in an answer to a question on preemption. Preemption is the step that we take before the war starts.

Regarding the second question, I would say that they will take time to come to the support of the ground forces, after having fought the counter air operations and the battle of survival. Because of the force ratio of 3 to 1, they will be facing heavy odds. Perhaps for the first four to five days the Pakistan Air Force will not be able to give us the whole hearted support we require. In spite of these limitations, Pakistan Air force is capable of providing air superiority over a selected area of operation where main land battles may be fought. That is the capability of our Air Force, forming part of our operational planning.

Question: How the performance of the fighting aircrafts is assessed when they do not fire any rocket or drop the bomb during an exercise with troops?

Answer: Firing or bombing is the last stage. It is the drill that matters.

The test is how quickly a plane arrives at the required spot since the time the request is made for air support. It is a lengthy procedure. When an infantry battalion commander faces stiff resistance which cannot be overcome with the available resources, he passes on the air support request to his Brigade Headquarters. Through the Division Headquarters, it reaches the Corps Headquarters, where the similar requests from various directions are received. Taking stock of the overall situation, priorities are fixed and order is placed with the nearby base through Air Force representative.

At the base, the pilot is briefed about the general area where he is to report. It is the GLO (Ground Liaison Officer) or the Forward Air Control Team which guides and directs the pilot to reach precisely where he is required. During the exercise the real test is, in how much minimum time the plane comes and dips over the target, indicated to it.

Question: You have retained the ranks of Junior Commissioned Officers which is a British tradition. Do you think this rank is beneficial and of some use?

Answer: Your question is correct. The rank of JCO is a British tradition. We have been following the system. If you count the number of Soldiers and officers who got martyred in Saichin, 1965 and the 1971 wars, and assess the performance of JCOs, the situation is not as we desire. This system is being reformed now. We have established

Junior Leadership Academy at Abbottabad last year. It will groom the JCOs and I hope this flaw will be rectified.

Question: What is the system of higher education in the army? Is there any system which ensures infusing the spirit of Jihad and Shahadat in officers? Are you doing something to improve this system so that exercises like Zarb e Momin can be more effective against internal and external threats?

Answer: There are many aspects of our Education System. The most important is professional education. Then there are subjects which aim at improving the military competence. There was only one PhD a few years back. He too retired after serving in WAPDA. Now we have ten PhDs. Fifteen other officers are engaged in their PhD programmes within the country or abroad. I hope to have twenty PhDs by the end of this year. We arranged MSc in technical subjects for about 150 officers. 75 other officers are under training. All these officers will work on different projects of the army after completion of their education. You can understand how much importance we give to higher education.

Second part of your question is about religious education. We arrange this education along with other training in various phases. Important thing is that whatever we do, it should be done with sincerity and honesty. We train our soldiers and officers in such a way that they understand the basic requirements of the religion. They are trained to know what our prayers and fasting demand from us. We should become true Muslims. It is emphasized everywhere, in our military academy, training centers, units, formation headquarters and other military installations. A comprehensive syllabus has been designed for this purpose which will be implemented soon.

Question: Generally a question is asked, why people from Sindh do not join the armed forces, or they are not accommodated. What do you say about it?

Answer: It is a very important aspect of our national integrity. We have always been trying to recruit the youth from all parts of our country. The same was the objective by establishing Sindh Regimental Centre at Hyderabad. People want to join the army only as officers. We do not need officers only, we do need the soldiers, JCOs and NCOs too. I was taking stock of the recruitment situation a few days earlier. We have established Recruitment Centers at various places. About 1500 people have joined Sindh Regiment and other regiments. Same is the situation in Baluchistan. Establishment of Sindh Regimental Centre has proved to be a great success.

Question: You keep meeting politicians off and on and issue statements which are of political nature or concerning the foreign affairs. Why do you feel its need?

Answer: To keep ourselves abreast with the state affairs is our responsibility. Keeping isolated will be ignorance. We do not have desire of power. The duty of the army is to defend the country against internal and external threats. It is the part of the same mission that we appear to be intervening in state affairs. Our objective is to save the situation from deterioration. This intervention is meant to ensure that situation should not go out of control.

At the end, General Mirza Aslam Beg thanked the participants on behalf of himself and on behalf of all other officers for taking the trouble to come all the way for briefing. He said, "I have tried to answer all questions with open heart. I want you to understand that our intentions are correct. Our hearts beat with your heart beats. We shall keep the system on right track Insha Allah. Your and our destination is the same. May Allah be our Guide, Helper and Supporter. Allah Hafiz;".

Reaction of the National Press

The national Press extensively commented upon the Press briefing in its editorials and other views columns. A number of articles by seasoned writers also appeared in the Press on various aspects of the briefing. A summary was published in a journal of ISPR "The Defence and Media 1990" edited by this scribe.

Various editorials described the briefing "a breath of fresh air", "refreshing openness", "reassuring", "significant in its candor and "inviting all types of questions". According to a journalist, "The way he conducted the briefing, answering questions with clarity and without being ruffled at all from some blunt queries, was instructive in how to conduct a meeting with journalists. General Beg remained on target "all through the 155 minutes session with the media" (*The Nation* 17 Sep 1989)

M. H. Riaz writing in the *Pak. & Gulf Economist* (magazine, 23 Sep 1989) took the line "To some, General Beg's democratic assertions may appear a bit patronizing. Indeed if they do, it is much better than if he had maintained silence and remained a riddle wrapped in a mystery inside an enigma".

Akbar Naqvi (*The Muslim*, 24 Sep 1989) said, "The top soldier believes that the true strategic depth of the country is in the people's heart. He came with right words, when they needed to be assured about the Armed Forces' commitment to democracy"

Dr. Shah Khan (*The Muslim*, 15 Sep 1989) went almost rhetorical. He said, "It was a virtuoso performance by General Aslam Beg, who in one grand sweep destroyed all the cobwebs, the weeds and everything else that hid the real character of the Army, and in the process demolished many myths that had been faithfully sustained till now. With candor that does not come easily to the men in uniform, the General went on veritable spree of admitting to a host of errors in the past professional and political fields". He

advised "to ensure that this endeavor is fruitful, he should go a step further and announce an irrevocable break with politics".

The exercise started in November 1989. Lieutenant General Hameed Gul was the Chief Controller. Lieutenant General Zulfiqar Akhtar Naz was the Commander of Blue Land Forces while Lieutenant General Rehmdil Bhatti was one of his Corps Commanders. Fox Land Forces were being commanded by Lieutenant General Alam Jan Mehsood. 227 units of battalion level participated in the exercise. In addition, 57 Brigade HQs, 11 Division HQs and 4 Corps HQs were established. 300,000 soldiers took part. The number of participating tanks was 755, armored vehicles 487 and guns 754. 188 aircraft of PAF participated. The military delegations from 23 countries witnessed the exercise as observers.

The COAS, General Aslam Beg, again talked to the media persons at Sargodha during the exercise. He said, "Our exercise has a unique distinction in the sense that such a big exercise has never been held in any other country with so clear objectives and so openly. Russia and China are going to conduct their joint exercises which will be the biggest war games of the world. These are being participated by 300,000 soldiers, 36,000 military vehicles, 1000 war planes, 80 naval ships and hundreds of atomic missiles. These war games and earlier exercise Zapad 2017 and Vostok 2014 are the manifestation of President Putin's "logic of Conflict".

He says that basic objectives of these exercises are to ensure Russian security. His conviction is that peace has never been stabilized in the world politics. It has been named as a mistake, endurance of which is almost incorrigible. It is only preparation of war which ensures peace. These are the meanings of his "Logic of Conflict" and that is how they want to revive their status of the world's super power. Their objective is to provide protection to Europe from terrorism for the fourth time. Putin claims that:

First time, they saved Europe from Mangols.

The second time from Napoleon

The third time, from Hitler

And now they are in action to guard against DAISH"

The exercise continued for three weeks. Every officer and soldier participated with full enthusiasm and performed so well that American TASS team had to admit in their report that the performance of the Pakistan Army was par excellence. It was a blessing of Almighty Allah that not a single accident occurred during such a big exercise.

Thrilling and Unique Experience of the Journalists

As mentioned earlier, the journalists and writers were taken to the exercise to see for themselves how various operations were being conducted. The experience was unique and thrilling. They suffered too. Mr. Zahid Malik of The Markaz, Islamabad, accompanied the commanding officer of an infantry unit on a reconnaissance mission. They lost the way and landed in the "enemy's territory". They could not seek help from the civil population. They stayed without food for two days. When an orderly managed to find a boiled egg, it was presented to Mr. Zahid Malik being a guest. They had their meal on the third day which consisted of *omlette* and *chapaties*. Mr. Zahid later wrote, "It tasted better than the food, I ever had in any five star hotel"

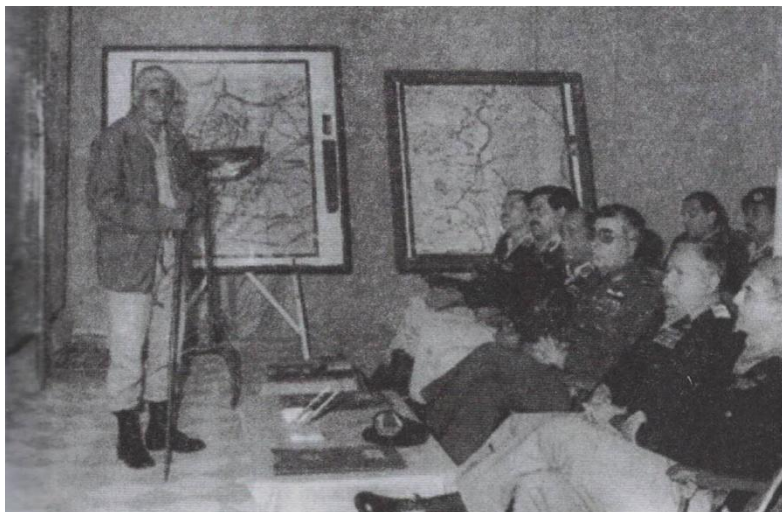
Mr. Mukhtar Hassan of *Weekly Zindagi* was travelling in a jeep with an officer. After a day long journey, when they reached a bridge which could lead them to their destination, the guard on duty told them that the bridge was declared "destroyed" by the umpire and they could not cross it. He was irritated. It was this time when this writer met him. He complained about the guard who did not allow him to cross the bridge. He was in earnest desire to take a cup of tea from a shabby and dusty tea stall, visible across the bridge. I asked him, "Why didn't you talk to some JCO?" He said, 'I did talk to a JCO who was passing by but he replied that he had been declared "Shaheed" and could not talk or participate in any action.' Our guest had to wait for five hours till another bridge was launched by Blue Land Forces from where their troops could go across. Mr. Mukhtar Hassan, of course, had the honor of crossing it first and had his desired cup of tea.

A military driver was taking his truck to some destination. It was bogged down in the sand. He requested the nearby villagers to help. They readily agreed but when they approached the truck, they found that there were many soldiers sitting inside. They asked the driver why didn't he ask those soldiers to help. He replied, "They are all martyrs and he was taking them to a mortuary of a hospital". The soldiers inside the truck were laughing on the miserable condition of the driver and villagers looked at the soldiers with astonishment.

Then there was a Central Media Team, comprising senior journalists from various newspapers. They travelled the whole day in a truck in different directions and returned to the base in the evening to file their stories. Officer in charge of this team (The writer of this book) once got a clue that Blue land Forces were going to launch a bridge laying operation on Rangpur canal. Getting exact information was very difficult. Umpires kept mum while commanders of both the forces were "suspicious" of the journalists, who roamed about freely on both the sides. The officer briefed the journalists that they should pose themselves as soldiers from Blue Land Forces at the bridge laying site. They travelled for long in the biting cold of December night. The only warmth they got was from tea, they had from a road side hotel.

After midnight when they reached the canal, there was no sign of bridge laying operation. With lights off, they travelled along the canal till they were challenged and halted by some troops. "Who are you?" somebody asked. "Blue landers" the journalists replied as they were briefed.

What the officer and journalists did not know was that Blue Land forces could not make up to the canal. Their division which had crossed the River Chenab a night before was "attacked" by Fox Land Force and it was declared successful. Fox Land troops genuinely felt elated on taking so many "soldiers" prisoners and capturing a Unimog truck. An officer asked the journalists to line up in front of the truck. Confused and perplexed, they stood in a row behind their officer in charge. The Fox land officer started checking the security cards in the dim light of the truck. He declared the Identity card of the Officer in Charge as "fake" because it did not carry the number of his national identity card. When a "genuine" officer was declared "fake" what would have been the fate of the journalists who were surrounded by "hostile" troops. It took quite some time when the Fox Land officer got convinced of the genuineness of journalists' documents. The experience was thrilling.



Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee Admiral Iftikhar Ahmed Sirohi, flanked by PAF and Naval Chiefs during a briefing.



The retired Generals of Pak Army during a briefing on Exercise Zarb e Momin. (from Left to Right) Gen Sawar Khan, Gen K. M. Arif Gen Muhammed Iqbal Khan, Gen Muhammed Sharif



Gen Aslam Beg meeting the junior commissioned officers during the exercise.



Journalists who participated in the Ex Zarb e Momin (In Uniform) interviewing the foreign military observers of the exercise.



Prime minister Benazir Bhutto watching the counter offensive by a foxland brigade



Important political leaders of Pakistan with the top military leadership during a briefing.



Journalists listening to briefing about Laser Range Finder



With the Code Word, "Alhamdo Lillah" the biggest ever exercise of Pak Army came to its end. Addressing a Darbar on the occasion at Bhakkar, General Aslam Beg Said, "Never before in the history of Pakistan such a huge and impressive gathering of troops was ever seen."

CHAPTER 7

RELATIONS WITH THE POLITICAL LEADERS

The First Tenure of Benazir Bhutto

I had the opportunity to work with Benazir Bhutto during her first tenure. It was a pleasant experience. I had relationship of respect and honor with her like her father who revived the honor of Pakistan with his wisdom and vision within a short span of time after the defeat of 1971. He gave a new dimension to OIC. In collaboration with Shah Faisal, he presented the concept of central leadership for the Muslims. These initiatives were not liked by USA. That is why both the leaders were removed from the scene.

I had requested General Zia not to act upon the orders of Supreme Court but he had different priorities. He hanged Bhutto. After his death, when we decided to hand over the power to civilians and hold elections, we were warned that there would be a lot of chaos and confusion due to presence of Jihadees in the country. Praise be to Allah, elections were held. Peoples Party secured majority and Benazir Bhutto was elected the Prime Minister. Though it was not my mandate, yet I invited Benazir Bhutto, at my residence, before she took oath and told her many things about the country affairs. Apart from other things, I requested her:

- "If you have complaint against the army, tell me, I would take care.
- You are stone-hearted toward General Zia, be kind to his family.
- When the time comes for election of the president, keep Ghulam Ishaq Khan in mind. He has remained associated with atomic programme since 1975".

She agreed and took my advice seriously.

A few weeks after she assumed the office, she sent her Military Secretary, General Imtiaz, to me with a message to point out senior military officers who were close to General Zia, so that they could be adjusted at appropriate places. I was surprised on that message. I told him, "General Sahib! You know that the army does not function as the political parties do. Every ruling party brings forward the people of their choice and the people of previous party are scattered here and there. The Army does not function like that.

Every officer, irrespective of his rank, is appointed according to his qualifications and capabilities. His loyalties are not with any particular person but he is known by his work. You know I have the same team of officers with me who were with General Zia. I have not replaced any. A team of professionals is ever ready to assume any assigned responsibilities. It was the same team of officers who helped in Modernization Programme of the army, implemented it and held Zarb e Momin exercise and struck terror in the heart of the enemy. If Mohtarima wants a name, I can give one name of the officer who was very close to General Zia and was trusted by him, it is "General Aslam Beg"

Perhaps, she thought of replacing me as I learnt that one Corps Commander was aspiring to replace me by appointing me Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee. There were a few people, close to the Prime Minister, who had grudge against me, also joined in the conspiracy. When I learnt about it, I called a Formation Commanders Conference and mentioned about it. I warned that anybody who was found involved in that conspiracy should refrain from such activities otherwise he would be dealt with sternly and disciplinary action could be initiated against him. The person who was aspiring to become the chief was also present in the conference. Obviously, he must have told the Prime Minister. When she learnt about it, she admitted in a letter, addressed to me that she wanted to appoint me Chairman JCSC and somebody else was to be made COAS. After consulting her colleagues, she gave up the idea. It was her greatness.

When the election process of 1988 was in full swing, I received an information that the court was going to revive the Junejo government and our promise of holding the election could be jeopardized. I tried to convey my concern to the court. Nothing happened. Elections were held as scheduled and Peoples Party emerged as majority party. Four years after this incident, a case was filed against me accusing me of contempt of court. The court gave the decision in my favor.

A Meeting with MQM Leader

A few months after the establishment of Peoples Party Government in 1988, I received a message that the leader of MQM wanted to see me.

He came in the morning. After exchange of preliminaries, we sat on the dining table. My wife Asma also joined us. While taking food, Altaf Hussain asked my wife, "Which dish have you prepared? Lady Wives prepare various dishes for me wherever I go?"

"I don't prepare any dish for the general sahib. How you dare think that I shall prepare any dish for you". Came the abrupt reply.

His hand froze wherever it was. He drank some water and sought permission to leave. He never met me again.

Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto took some very important decisions during her short tenure. I told her in a meeting in 1989 that some workers of Awami National Party had gone to Afghanistan during the reign of her father. Similarly a few thousand people of Marri and Bugti tribes had also sought asylum in Afghanistan due to military action in their areas. They were being used against us by the enemy. I recommended that they should be granted amnesty and called back. She did. They all returned and lived like peaceful citizens. Presently, about 200,000 tribal people are in Afghanistan under political asylum and being used against us. They join DAISH and participate in terrorist activities in Pakistan. Can the present government grant them amnesty and call them back?. It is possible. It is a matter of courage.

Mohtarima Benazir adopted a very sound policy about our atomic programme. It was a policy based on the concept of "Minimum Credible Deterrence". Salient features of this policy were:

- Our atomic capability was aimed against India. Using it against any other country was not our objective.
- Storage of atomic weapons was a useless exercise.
- Our limited capability was sufficient for our defence.
- Concept of Preemptive strike is important part of our policy. It will ensure prevention of attack from the enemy. If it still does not refrain from aggression, counter measures are inevitable.
- Atomic weapons are meant to maintain balance of power. Our atomic explosion on 28th May 1998 has assured our enemy about our capabilities. They will have to think hundred times before picking up fight with us.
- Atomic capability is not a substitute of the traditional weapons. Both have utility of their own. One is meant to fight a war and the other to prevent the war. Atomic weapons are not meant to fight a war. They are the best equalizer to maintain atomic deterrence.
- Accumulation of small and heavy weapons had never been our policy. Utilization of the nuclear power for the welfare of our people had been our distinction.
- Experiment of carrying nuclear weapons by F-16 aircraft has been proved successful and a credible Nuclear Deterrence has been maintained.

I used to frequently visit Siachin. In winter I used to go to the highest post which was 22,000 feet high. Having reached there, I used to return the helicopter and stayed some time with the soldiers there. The panoramic view of the snow covered peaks and valleys created feelings as if I was very close to Allah. Once I mentioned this to Mohtarima Benazir Bhutto. She also desired to visit Siachin. I thought it fit not to take her to the heights of 22,000 but chose Siala which was 17,000 feet high. With her permission the visit was arranged. On the appointed day, we reached Skardu. She wore the snow dress in the officers, mess which was imported from abroad. After dress up when she came out, she was looking very graceful. We boarded a helicopter to go to Siala. She was given a can of oxygen to be used in case she felt any difficulty in breathing. When we reached Siala, we found that the snow was two feet deep. We were received by the soldiers there. I wanted her to go inside an igloo so that she could remain safe from the snow winds but she preferred sitting outside on a stool to have better look of the surrounding area. She was presented chips, nan and lintels which she liked very much. The tea had its own taste. She informally talked to the soldiers. After twenty minutes stay we returned to Skardu. She was the first Prime Minister who went to such a high post and did not use oxygen. No other prime minister has gone beyond Giari Base Camp which is at the height of 14,000 feet high.

Benazir was intelligent like her father. She quickly grasped the situation and did not take much time in taking decisions. She took bold and daring decisions. If somebody differed with her with sound arguments, she would not hesitate to agree. During the exercise Zarb e Momin we took her to Field Headquarters of the army and other formation HQs. It appeared that she was satisfied with army's preparations and modernization programme. She desired to have a detailed briefing on military affairs so that the war directives could be reshaped if needed. Due to her engagements, the proposed meeting did not materialize.

Differences between the President & the PM

In the beginning of 1990, I learnt through a non-paper sent to me by the president that there were some differences between the President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and the Prime Minister. The latter was accused of mishandling some affairs which related to the state policy. I placed it before the Corps Commanders, Conference. The unanimous decision was conveyed to the President which said, "The President should be careful. Give time to the Prime Minister to correct herself. Advise her where needed and help her in discharge of her duties".

No dialogue was held between the two; Differences kept growing, and exercising his rights as President under section 58-2 (b) of the constitution, her government was dismissed and announcement was made to hold fresh elections within 90 days. General Zia had also exercised his rights under section 58-2 (b) and dismissed Junejo government.

It was Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto who had set the precedent to use ISI in elections. Following suit, President Ishaq Khan also assigned ISI to provide logistic support to Election Commission for holding the elections. President House and Election Cell of ISI were active in implementing the presidential orders. The President had removed the Benazir government. How would he allow her to come to power again? Elections were held and Muslim League secured the majority. Nawaz Sharif was elected Prime Minister. This is the see-saw game which continued since 1975 under section 58-2 (b).

Praising and Criticizing Benazir!

Question: You praise Benazir Bhutto and then criticize her that she wanted to take revenge from you. Why this dichotomy? Answer: I worked with Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto for two years and seven months. It was after eleven years of dictatorship that democratic process was revived. The political situation was very unstable. The attitude of the opposition parties who remained in power with General Zia for eleven years, was not democratic. She assumed the office during such circumstances. Despite having less experience, she made some wise decisions which manifest her broad vision, courage and comprehension, Not to acknowledge her wisdom will be shallowness.

Some of her wise decisions and her rare visit to Siachin, I have already mentioned. Some other decisions were:

India was frequently violating LOC in 1990 and used heavy weapons to inflict casualties. I sought her permission for surgical strikes which was granted. Our GOC 12 Division, Major General Muhammed Safdar, Sitara e Juraat, took befitting action and silenced the enemy guns. The enemy's persecution was put to rest.

During the civil war of Bosnia when Serbs were killing the Muslims mercilessly, Roaming Ambassador of the Muslims, my name-sake, Mirza Aslam Beg, visited us to seek help. With the permission of the Prime Minister, they were given Anti-tank missiles "Green Arrows" and some pods to fire them. Thereafter, Serbs surrounded a populated area of the Muslims and started firing with eight tanks. Within five minutes, their six tanks were destroyed. The rest fled away. The tables were turned. War ended and the Muslims were allowed by USA and other European allies to have a country of their own with the name of Kosovo.

Benazir once claimed, T am struggling to rehabilitate the democratic, human and constitutional rights of the people. All the miseries, my family, my party, my kids, my ailing mother, my husband and relatives in law have suffered, were to establish a developed and prosperous Pakistan; a country where the demands of justice could not be set aside due to political reasons; to establish a multi thinking society which was based on brotherhood, harmony, tolerance and sympathies".

I acknowledge these decisions with open mindedness. But she took revenge from me because she thought that I collaborated in assassination of her father. She did not know that I was the only general who opposed hanging of Bhutto. I was removed from the command for this reason. She thought that President Ghulam Ishaq Khan dismissed her government under my pressure. It was a wrong impression. The facts are what I have stated earlier.

There was another reason of her annoyance with me. There was a strong lobby in the country which was against me because as the army chief I took a stand on some matters which was against their interests. I was therefore entrapped in a case which is still a matter of worries for me. Proverbial is the revenge of the weaker sex. If Benazir took revenge from me, it was the demand of her nature. I don't regret it. Almighty Allah has done justice to me. The conspiracy case which was initiated by Peoples Party and remained in progress for 25 years has ended in my favor. FIA has clearly told the Court to dismiss the case because no solid evidences were found to support the accusations. The truth has prevailed and the falsehood defeated. Praise be to Allah.

Contacts with Mujahideens

During the exercise Zarb e Momin, the Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto tasked us to negotiate with Afghan Mujahideen and make recommendations as to what should be our priorities to establish peace in Afghanistan. Afghan Cell of the Ministry of Foreign affairs, ISI and other concerned departments were directed to cooperate with us.

We prepared a plan. Leaders of Afghan Mujahideen were invited to a meeting. Professor Miyaddadi, Ustad Siaz Engineer Gulbadin Hikmat Yar, Maulvi Younus Khalis, Nabi Muhammadi and Ahmed Shah Masood participated. The meetings continued for about six weeks. I was busy in the exercise. I had to fall back to participate in the meetings. Praise be to Allah we completed the assigned task and prepared our recommendations and presented to the Prime Minister who could not implement these because of dismissal of her government.

In the beginning of 1990, USA, India and Israel decided to invade our atomic installations. When this information was surely confirmed, Mohtarima took bold decisions.

She sent Minister for Foreign Affairs, Sahibzada Yaqoob Ali Khan to Delhi with the message:

- Refrain from your designs otherwise your installations would be destroyed.
- Land Forces and Navy was placed on red alert.

- PAF was directed to arm their aircraft with atomic missiles and send them to Mari Pur airbase and wait for further orders.

When these activities were observed by American satellites, they were shocked. American ambassador Robert Gates rushed to Pakistan and met the President who told him about the government's firm intentions. The storm fizzled out. Conspiracy failed.



General Aslam Beg with Lt Gen Hamid Gul in negotiation with Afghan leaders.

Tenure of Nawaz Sharif

Question: You were in service when Nawaz Sharif became Prime Minister. Tell me something about him also.

Answer: Unfortunately the Gulf War was in progress at that time. I differed with the policy of the government. He was annoyed and remained so till my retirement. So was the case with USA and Saudi Arabia. The Gulf War, and changing scene of Afghanistan were important events during the tenure of Nawaz Sharif. Iran remained dominant in the Gulf War against the expectations of USA. They in fact wanted destruction of both the countries as stated by Henry Kissinger. USA had imposed all types of sanctions against Iran but the Revolutionary Council of Iran faced it squarely. Then it was decided to destroy the military power of Iraq by involving Saddam Hussain in an aimless war. He was assured that Kuwait was part of Iraq. Iraq should try to annex it. USA will help her. Saudi Arabia was against this strategy.

Differences with the Government on Gulf War

The differences kept growing and USA decided to intervene. It sent its troops to Saudi Arabia so that Saddam Hussain could not harm them. Objectives were different. It was portrayed that Iraq was going to invade Saudi Arabia. It was suggested that 15000 troops of Pakistan, already in Saudi Arabia should be given under the Saudi Command for its protection. Heavy financial help was promised. Our government appeared to be willing. I considered it incorrect and against our national interests. I apprised the Prime Minister of my concern but he did not agree with me. I thought that keeping quiet will be harmful. I told my concerns to media;

"Our army is not a mercenary army. Danger is not to Saudi Arabia. Saddam is in danger. Under the pretext of conquering Kuwait, USA wants to destroy the Iraqi army bringing them in the field".

Nawaz Sharif got annoyed with me. With his permission, I went to Saudi Arabia to meet my troops. When I reached Riyadh, Saddam saluted me by firing seven missiles. Only three missiles could be destroyed by American Patriot Missiles. I then understood the utility of unguided missiles like Scud Missiles. These Scud missiles were the main cause of victory of Hezbollah against Israel.

I was received with open arms by the Royal Family. From Riyadh, I went to Tabuk. After meeting my troops, I went to see General Showartzkof, Commander of the Operation Desert Storm. His underground HQ was a huge complex, which was constructed by our engineers. I had a detailed and useful talk with him. He said sorrowfully, "It appears that Pentagon have shifted our goalposts".

When I asked for explanation, he said, "You will see soon".

What he meant was that Iraqi army will be destroyed while returning from Kuwait. This was a decision which was not in the knowledge of General Showartzkof till last moment. He just guessed.

From there we went to Madina Munawwara, visited the Prophet's Mosque, went to Mecca, performed Umra and returned. Nawaz Sharif remained annoyed with me after the war. His colleagues thought that Pakistan was deprived of the huge financial help due to me. Thereafter, USA and Saudi Arabia severed their ties with me. The well-wishers of Nawaz Sharif had created an impression that I could impose Martial Law any time. The government was under a fear. Realizing this situation, I placed before them the recommendations of a report, prepared by General Sharif in 1973 which said, "If all the three services were placed under a unified command, it will help improving Civil Military Relations and the Commander of the Land Forces will not be capable for any adventurism". They did not ponder over it. They thought that I myself wanted to become Chief of Defence Staff. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto was subjected to tyranny by not

creating this post. Nawaz Sharif also suffered due to it. Under these circumstances time came for my retirement and I retired honorably on 16th August 1991.

Cases against Me

It was after my retirement when a contempt of court case was filed against me in the Supreme Court of Pakistan in 1994. The Court dismissed the case declaring me free of all charges.

The second case started when Lt Gen (Retd) Naseerullah Babar (then Interior Minister of PPP Government) informed the National Assembly in 1996 that the ISI had collected RS. 140 Million from Habib Bank which were distributed among various politicians and journalists to gain desirable results against PPP.

Based on the statement of Gen Naseerullah Babar, Air Marshal Asghar Khan wrote a letter to then Chief Justice of Pakistan, Sajjad Ali Shah. The same is reproduced below:

"BY TCS. PERSONAL

16th June, 1996

Dear Mr. Justice Sajjad Ali Shah,

I should like to draw your attention to the disclosure by the Minister for Interior in the National Assembly on 11th June, 1996 that General (R) Mirza Aslam Beg, a former Chief of the Army Staff, had drawn Rs. 15 Crores from the Mehran Bank and had distributed this amount to various people prior to the 1990 elections. He disclosed that this had been done through Lt. Gen. R) Assad Durrani, the Director General of the Inter-Services Intelligence Directorate, at that time. General Durrani's statement was read out in the National Assembly. I am enclosing a cutting from the Daily 'JANG', Rawalpindi of 12th June, 1996 -which gives the details (Encl. 1). The action of General (R) Mirza Aslam Beg and of Lt. Gen. (R) Assad Durrani amounts to gross misconduct and I am writing to ask that you may be pleased to initiate legal proceedings against both these persons who have brought the Armed Forces of Pakistan into disrepute and have been guilty of undermining the discipline of the Armed Forces. I am also sending a copy of this letter to the Chief of the Army Staff for his information.

*Sincerely
Sd/-
(M. Asghar Khan)"*

The Chief Justice of Pakistan converted the letter into suo moto petition. Notices were issued to various persons to appear before the court and clarify their positions. Lt Gen Asad Durrani in his affidavit filed on July 24, 1994 mentioned following names who were stated to have received the amounts:

Former Chief Minister of NWFP (Now KPK), Nawaz Sharif	RS. 10 Million Rs. 3.5 Million
Lt Gen Retd. Razaqat (for media)	Rs. 5.6 Million
Jammat e Islami	Rs. 5 Million
Syeda Abida Hussain	Rs. 1 Million
Altaf Hussain Qureshi (Urdu Digest)	Rs. 0.5 Million
Mustafa Sadiq (Journalist)	Rs. 0.5 Million
Jam Sadiq, Former Chief Minister Sindh	Rs. 5 Million
Liaqat Jatoi	Rs. 5 Million
Muhammed Khan Junejo	Rs. 2.5 Million
Pir Pagara	Rs. 2 Million
Maulana Salahuddin (Weekly Takbeer)	Rs. 0.3 Million
Humayun Marri (Son in law of Akbar Bugti)	Rs. 1.5 Million
Mir Zafarullah Jamali	Rs. 4 Million
Kakar	Rs. 1 Million
K. Baluch	Rs. 0.5 Million
Jam Yousaf	Rs. 0.75 Million
Bazenjo	Rs. 0.5 Million
Nadeem Mengal	Rs. 1 Million

Gen Asad Durrani added a few more names in his letter, written to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. This letter is being included in the text.

There was no written proof of these transaction. All the persons who were stated to have received the amounts publically denied to have received any money. They also gave similar statements before the court denying receipt of any money.

Before proceeding further, readers must understand a few facts. It was Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, the then President of Pakistan who issued a notification (Notification N-75) directing ISI to provide "logistic support", in the National Elections. A special cell was created in A cell for this purpose. In 1976, when Bhutto announced to hold early elections, the cell in ISI got activated and played its role in the elections. Bhutto won the elections with thumping majority. PNA rejected the results and launched a massive campaign against Bhutto. General Ziaul Haq intervened and imposed Martial Law. Later Bhutto was hanged. Thereafter whosoever came to the power, he had these two instruments in his hands; Notification no. N-75 and 58-2(b). An Election Cell was also created in the President House which functioned during the elections. These were extensively used by President Ghulam Ishaq Khan and General Ziaul Haq.

I was involved in a conspiracy by some close associates of Benazir Bhutto. As I have mentioned earlier, there was a plan to remove me from the command of the Army and replace me by another Corps Commander. Master mind behind this conspiracy were Naseerullah Babar and Rehman Malik, the then Director General FIA. The later decided

to take Gen Asad Durrani into confidence who was already against me because he was removed by General Abdul Waheed Kakar and he thought that it was done on my advice. Gen Asad Durrani was appointed ambassador of Pakistan in Germany by PPP Government. Rehman Malik visited him on 6th June 1994 and pursued him to act upon a game plan prepared by him. Accordingly Gen Asad Durrani wrote a letter to Prime Minister Benazir Bhutto. It was a hand written letter, reproduced below:

For Eyes Only

7 June 94

My Dear Prime Minister,

A few points, I could not include in my confessional statement, handed over to the director FIA. These could be embarrassing or sensitive:

The recipients included Khar 2 Million, Hafeez Pirzada 3, Sarwar Cheema 0.5 and Mairaj Khalid 0.2 Million. The last two were not on the wrong side. It was merely some one's "soft corner" that benefited them.

a. The remaining 80 Million were either deposited in the ISI 'K' fund (60 M) or given to Director External Intelligence for special operations. (Perhaps the saving grace of this disgraceful exercise, but it is delicate information.)

b. The operation not only had the "blessings" of the President and the whole hearted participation of the caretaker politician, but was also in the knowledge of the Army High Command. The last mentioned will be the defence of many of us including Gen Beg (who took his colleagues in confidence) but that is the name that we have to protect.

c. The point that I have "war gamed" in my mind very often is: what is the object of this exercise?

d. If it is to target the opposition, "it might be their legitimate right to take donations, especially if they come through 'sacred channels.'" Some embarrassment is possible, but a few millions are peanut nowadays.

e. If the idea is to put Gen Beg on the mat, "he was merely providing logistic support to donations made by a community" under "instructions " from the Government and with the "consent" of the "military high command. " In any case, I understand he is implicated in some other deals in the same case.

f. GIK would pretend ignorance, as indeed he never involved himself directly.

g. Of course one has to meet the genuine ends of law. In that case let us take care of the sensitivities like special operations and possibly that of the Army. It was for these reasons that I desperately wanted to see you before leaving. I also wanted to talk about

my farewell meeting with the COAS (Gen Abdul Waheed). In the meantime you must have met often enough and worked out what is in the best interest of the country.

I keep praying that all these material and man-made calamities are only to strengthen us in our resolve and not in any way reflective of our collective sins.

With best regards and respects.

*Yours Sincerely
Signed/x-x-x-x-x
(Asad)*

For Eyes Only

After a few weeks, Rehman Malik again went to Germany with a long list of politicians who were stated to have received the money. General Asad was asked to sign the list and assured, "It has the approval of the Chief Executive and that the matter would be handled confidentially". Gen Asad signed the document. Rehman Malik on his return, showed the paper to Benazir Bhutto and with her permission it was handed over to Naseerullah Babar who announced the list in the National Assembly on 11th June 1996. Gen Asad Durrani was extremely disappointed. In his affidavit, submitted to the Supreme Court on 31st July 1997, he confessed, "The statement was got signed by me by Rehman Malik under special circumstances and I was given the assurance that the matter would be dealt with confidentially. I do not know under what circumstances, the then Interior Minister made the statement in the National assembly. I was unaware about his intentions that were known to him. The affidavit was got signed by me on the understanding that it would be used only for specific purposes".

Thus Gen Asad Durrani was also deceived. Thereafter, silence prevailed for about two years because President Farooq Leghari, who was made president by PPP, exercising his rights under Section 58-2 (b), dismissed Benazir Government. In the subsequent elections, Nawaz Sharif became the Prime Minister.

BB and his close associates then focused on the conspiracy against me. General Naseerullah Babar took a copy of the affidavit, submitted by Gen Asad Durrani in the Supreme Court, to General Abdul Waheed Kakar, asking him to take action against me but he refused.

Case in Supreme Court

Let's go back to the case in the Supreme Court. Converting the letter of Air Marshal (R) Asghar Khan into suo moto petition, Justice Sajjad Ali Shah had hardly conducted one hearing when he fell prey to a conspiracy and was removed from his post. Justice Saeeduz Zaman Siddiqui became the Chief Justice. The hearing was resumed in 1997. I

requested the court to place Notification N-75 on record. Attorney General did present the notification which was placed on record. There was no activity for quite some time. My Defence Counsel Mr. Akram Shaikh tried hard to resume the hearing but failed. It was in 2012 when the hearing started with Justice Iftikhar Muhammed Chaudhari as Chief Justice. He gathered many evidences recording the statements of ISI officers and all others who were associated with the case. I was not allowed to cross examine the witnesses. Gen Asad Durrani had become approver. I was not allowed to present any witness. I could submit only two affidavits. Gen Asad Durrani stated that all the actions by ISI Cell were initiated on my orders.

The fact is that Gen Asad Durrani had requested me to place 202 Survey Section under his command for "operational requirements" which I did. Later Survey Section was directed to open six accounts in the banks of Karachi. The amount in question was transferred in those accounts. I had no knowledge of all those activities. I also do not know how, when and to whom the amount was distributed.

My contention was:

- I was never associated with any proceedings, carried out under the ISI notification of 1975.
- I, as army chief, never issued any orders regarding distribution of money.
- I did not take any step which was against the constitutional role of the army.
- Such order could neither benefit me nor was in the interest of my institution.

The most surprising thing was that when Chief Justice Iftikhar Muhammad Ch. Resumed the hearing in March 2012, the Presidential Notification N-75 was missing from the proceedings of the court and despite our insistence could not be produced. The court passed an order to initiate a case of treason for violating the constitution against me and others.

FIA was directed to investigate the case and present the facts to enable the court to give a final decision.

Army Chief was ordered to initiate court martial proceedings against me.

My review petition was rejected and subsequently FIA and GHQ conducted investigation. Both institutions accepted my contention and submitted their report to the Supreme Court accordingly.

Moreover, Director FIA in his statement before the court, recorded on 16 May 2018, said, "There is no legal status of the hand written epistle. There is neither any witness of these transactions nor any written or oral proof. So it is all fake.

This case has dragged on for about quarter of a century. I keep thinking what my fault was. I have been subjected to great stress and strain for such a long time. Perhaps my fault was that I did not take the reins of power into my hands after the 1988 accident. The miscreants expected that I would assume the power and bargain for the security of the country and traitors would become my staunch supporters. If this was my fault then I am thankful to Almighty Allah that he saved me from a great curse and defeated all those who had been conspiring against me. I do not repent my decisions that I took in the greater interests of the country. Rather I am proud of raising my voice against the wrong decisions despite earning the wrath of the rulers and big powers.

Churchill once said that if a man did not have the moral courage, all his merits become meaningless. I am thankful to Almighty Allah that he blessed me with the moral courage to raise my voice against any conspiracy which was against the national interests. I protested against it without any fear and took steps within my means. Nobody could harm me. Almighty Allah had blessed me with that power of awareness which is seldom found. No doubt all praises are for Allah.

It is worth mentioning here that during the protest against Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Air Marshal (Retired) Asghar Khan wrote a letter to General Ziaul Haq in which the army was urged to revolt against the government. It was totally ignored. It was surprising that the case against me was filed by same Asghar Khan. The Letter written by Air Marshal (Retired) Asghar Khan is reproduced here for ready reference.

TO THE OFFICERS OF THE DEFENCE SERVICES OF PAKISTAN

I am addressing this message to the Chiefs of Staff and the Officers of the Defence Services of Pakistan. It is your duty to defend the territorial integrity of Pakistan and to obey all lawful commands of superior officers placed over you. To differentiate between 'lawful' and an 'unlawful' command is the duty of every officer. Every one of you must ask yourself whether what the army is doing today is 'lawful' activity and if your conscience tells you that it is not and you still carry it out, you would appear to lack moral fiber and would be guilty of a grave crime against your country and your people.

You should by now have realized that military action in East Pakistan was a conspiracy in which the present Prime Minister played a Machiavellian role. You know the circumstances in which military action in Baluchistan was engineered and how completely unnecessary this action has been. You are also probably aware of the utterly unnecessary military action taken last year in DIR in the North West Frontier Province. If you have any interest in national affairs, you must also be aware that during the election campaign the nation expressed its powerful disapproval of the present regime. Following the people's rejection of the Government, you should have been surprised at the election results in which the 'Pakistan National Alliance' which could muster such overwhelming popular support, could only get 8 out of 116 seats in the Punjab. You must surely know that many people were not even allowed to file their nomination

papers. Was it not too much of a coincidence that no papers could be filed against the Prime Minister and all the Chief Ministers of the four provinces? That those who dared to try, ended up in spending a few nights in Police custody? One of them has still not been traced.

Those of you who were even remotely connected with duties in connection with 7th March election would also know of the blatant manner in which rigging took place; of the hundreds of thousands of ballot papers of PNA candidates that had been taken out of ballot boxes, -were found in the streets and fields of Pakistan following the election on 7th March. You would also have seen the deserted polling stations on 10th March, the day of the Provincial polls, following the call for boycott of Provincial elections by the PNA. Nevertheless Government media announced that an unprecedented number of votes had also been polled at the provincial election and the percentage was said to be more than sixty. Then surely you must have followed the movement which called for Bhutto's resignation and re-elections in the country.

The coming out of women in thousands on the streets in every city and town with babies in their arms was a scene that no one will forget. These were the women who Bhutto claimed had voted for him. The movement proved within a few days that he and his government had been completely rejected by the people. The death of hundreds of our youth and the beating of our mothers and sisters was a scene that may well have stirred you to shame and sorrow. Have you ever thought why the people put themselves to so much trouble?

Why must mothers come out to face bullets with babies in their arms? Why do parents allow their children to face police lathis and bullets? Surely it is only because they feel that they have been -wronged – that they have been cheated. That their basic right to 'HIRE and FIRE' their rulers has been denied to them. They understood, when we told them the truth that the Constitution which you as officers of the Defence Services are sworn to defend had been violated. Article 218(3) of the Constitution of the 'Islamic Republic of Pakistan' says: "It shall be the duty of the Election Commission constituted in relation to an election to organize and conduct the election and to make such arrangements as are necessary to ensure that the election is conducted honestly, justly, fairly and in accordance with law, and that corrupt practices are guarded against".

This, my friends, was not a just and fair election. Bhutto has violated the Constitution and is guilty of a grave crime against the people. It is not your duty to support his illegal regime nor can you be called upon to kill your people so that he can continue a little longer in office. Let it not be said that the Pakistan armed forces are a degenerate Police Force fit only for killing unarmed civilians. How else can you explain the shooting of a spirited lad whose only fault was to show the 'V' sign to the army in Lahore the other day. The spirit of adventure of defiance rather than servility needs to be encouraged in our youth and this unfortunate incident is a blot on the name of the army which would be difficult to wipe out. Similarly, shooting by the army in Karachi on an unarmed crowd is

unpardonable. Didn't you realize that the poor and hungry people of Pakistan, throughout the 30 troubled years of our history, had shown only love and affection for our armed forces? That they wept when you laid down arms in East Pakistan; that they have always prayed for your glory and have literally starved themselves and their children so that you are well fed, and our Generals and Senior Officers can live a life that even their British and American counter-parts would not dream of. It pains me to say that, that love is now gone. Pray do not let it turn to hate. For should that happen, a tragedy would have occurred in the history of this nation which we in our life-time may not be able to undo.

As men of honor, it is your responsibility to do your duty, and the call of duty in these trying circumstances is not the blind obedience of unlawful commands. There comes a time in the lives of nations when each man has to ask himself whether he is doing the right thing. For you that time has come. Answer this call honestly and save Pakistan. God be with you.

Signed/xxxxx
M. ASGHAR KHAN
(Air-Marshal-Rtd)

He was removed from the command of PAF before the 1965 war. I once asked Gohar Ayub, the son of General Ayub Khan, "The minimum punishment for such a crime was Court Martial, why your father did not do it". He replied, "My father had told me that the war was looming large. Our new Air Force was to face a bigger enemy. Under these circumstances, had I filed a case against their chief labeling him as traitor, what performance could I expect from them?"

It was a matter of fate that many people at the helm of affairs remained annoyed with me due to the truth that I always spoke and expressed my opinion candidly. Some of the reasons, I have already explained. General Asad was angry because he was retired by General Abdul Waheed before due time of his retirement. He took revenge from me.

I recall another incident of Benazir's annoyance. It was in 1989 when Major General Naseerullah Babar was sent to me by Benazir Bhutto with an enquiry under the title of "Midnight Jackal". Two officers of ISI, Brigadier Imtiaz and Major Aamir were accused of siding with the opposition parties in their efforts to bring no confidence move against her. It was suggested that they should be tried under Field General Court Martial, (FGCM can award death sentence to the accused). I read the report. The evidences presented were not sufficient for FGCM. Exercising my Summary Powers, I tried them summarily and retired them from service. Benazir was not happy on this. When she became Prime Minister again, she got them arrested. Brigadier Imtiaz was shown on television with handcuffs. Her ego was satisfied to some extent but she could not punish them further because as per law, a person already punished for a crime cannot be punished again.

Whether or not my prolonged trial has quenched the thirst of revenge, it did act as a whirlwind which lifted me high and high and I am leading a peaceful life today. I pray Almighty Allah to give me time to complete the project, I have initiated for the welfare of the people. It will be an exemplary project insha Allah.

CHAPTER 8

THE LIFE AFTER RETIREMENT

میسر آتی ہے فرصت فقط غلاموں کو
نہیں ہے بندہ حر کے لیے جہاں میں فراغ

Settling at Rawalpindi after Retirement

Before my retirement, I had submitted names of five senior Corps Commanders to the President and Prime Minister with a request that the new Army Chief should be announced before my retirement. I had already placed the most likely next Chief General Asif Nawaz as Chief of General Staff so that he could understand the functioning of GHQ and military affairs. As per my request, two months before my retirement, General Asif Nawaz was nominated as the next chief.

It was a good decision but the miscreants spread the rumors that General Aslam Beg wanted to take over the country. General Asif Nawaz was also influenced by such rumors. I sent for him and assured him that there was no truth in the rumors. I offered him the Army House (Where the present Chief, General Qamar Bajwa is living) and invited him to move there with his own guard. (I lived in the same old house where I had been living as CGS) Next day, he shifted to the Army House with a Guard Company.

After the retirement, I got a house constructed for residence in Rawalpindi. Its weather is good and it provides military atmosphere. Most of my companions live here. We keep meeting in military functions. The annual functions, held under GHQ afford the opportunity to meet the four star generals of all the three services.

I had started thinking before my retirement how I shall spend my days after leading a busy life, full of events. I decided to establish a Research organization with the name of "Foundation for Research on International Environment, National Development and Security (FRIENDS). I selected suitable friends and colleagues. I organized it and obtained approval from the quarters concerned. Before I explain the details of FRIENDS activities, I would like to mention about my staff and other colleagues who remained associated with me and helped me in carrying out my duties. Some of them had remained with me for the last 32 years. They worked with utmost devotion and sincerity and I am proud of them.

My Personal Staff

My Private Secretary, Brigadier Ejaz Amjad, belonged to Baluch Regiment. He retired as Major General and lives near me. Very fine and sincere person he is. He remembers me on each occasion of happiness or sorrow. I consider him as part of my family. He keeps visiting me. Whenever he wants to present me any gift, he comes himself. There are few people like him.

My ADC, Captain Umer Farooq Durrani, was from Armoured Regiment. He served as Chairman Pakistan Ordnance Factories. He retired as Lieutenant General. He once presented me eleven photographs of mine which represent various stages of my service. I don't know from where he found these photographs. Starting from Second Lieutenant in 1950 till becoming Army Chief, these are eleven photographs with the caption of "Eleven phases of Promotions".

My personal Assistant, Havildar Sadiq Hussain has been with me for last 32 years. He was groomed in the Army Corps of Clerks (ACC). He is quite well versed in Urdu. Once President Ghulam Ishaq Khan was to go to Pakistan Military Academy for reviewing the parade and addressing the cadets. A night before the passing out parade, he rang me up and told me that he was not feeling well and I should go to PMA. I asked my PS Brigadier Ejaz Amjad to prepare my speech. He called Havildar Sadiq and drafted a good speech. I was impressed by his performance and brought him with me after retirement. He was assigned important duties in FRIENDS. Apart from acting as Office Secretary, he translates my English articles so well that they appear original. When Colonel Ashfaq Hussain started interviewing me, the draft used to be composed by Sadiq Hussain. Initially it looked easy but it became difficult when Colonel Ashfaq amended and modified the draft frequently. Sadiq Hussain kept working cheerfully and made my job easy. He was with me in COAS Secretariat from 1987 to 1991. Now he has been working with me as Office Secretary since 1992. Our association has continued for more than 32 years. Despite being advanced in age, his performance is par excellence. I am very thankful to him.

Naib Subedar Muhammed Safdar was from SSG. He was posted as Personal Security Guard of mine in 1988. He retired in 1992 and since then, working with me. Three years earlier he suffered from paralysis but he did not leave me. He works with the same zeal and enthusiasm. Like a family member, he takes care of everybody. Whatever job is assigned to him, he performs it faithfully. A living example of sincerity and loyalty.

Subedar Muhammed was my House ADC and also commanded the Security Guard at my house at Peshawar Road. He belonged to Army Service Corps. After retirement he lives in a village near Deena (Jhelum).

Driver Abdush Shakoor was a very seasoned driver. He served as driver to all the Army Chiefs starting from the first Army Chief, General Gracey till I became COAS. He

also took care of a graceful car, Mercedes 500 which was under the use of General Ayub Khan. I never used it because the Prime Minister Muhammed Khan Junejo had ordered the use of smaller cars. I used a smaller Toyota car. Baba Shakoor retired with me and I brought him with me. He died in 2004.

Despite my all weaknesses Allah Almighty blessed me with respect and honor. I came to Pakistan empty handed in 1949. The nation gave me a lot of respect and I led an honorable life. Praise be to Allah, I always tried to follow the right path, conducted myself with dignity and grace. Wherever I felt difficulties, I sought, help from Allah and He always guided me and blessed me with the company of such sincere, devoted and cheerful persons.

Establishing FRIENDS

As I mentioned earlier, I established FRIENDS after my retirement. I had planned it before my retirement. I thought of establishing this organization because there was no think tank in the country where the national, international and regional affairs could be debated. Basic idea of establishing FRIENDS was to fill this gap and after open discussion with intellectuals, recommendations could be presented to the government. Basic objectives were:

- To create awareness about national and people's problems after open debates and present recommendations in the form of research articles.
- To make up the deficiency due to nonexistence of National Security Council with research essays so that the government and other institutions could get help for their planning.

To maintain the freedom of thought, we depended upon our own resources or sought help from my personal friends. I was lucky to have Director Psychological Operations, Dr Syed Mutiur Rehman, Director General ISPR, Major General Riazullah and Commodore Syed Fisahat Hussain with me. After completing all necessary proceedings, the establishment of FRIENDS was announced in September 1991. Soon after, the first meeting of the Board of Governors was held in which persons for various offices were nominated. Following are the details:

Lt Gen (Retd) Kamal Mateen Uddin	Senior Vice President
Commodore (Retd) Syed Fisahat Hussain	Executive Vice Chairman
Dr. Syed Mutiur Rehman	Secretary General
Col (Retired) Ghulam Sarwar	Senior Research Fellow
Air Marshal (Retd) Ayaz Ahmed Khan	Member Board of Governors
Dr. S. M. Qureshi	Member Board of Governors
Mushahid Hussain Syed	Member Board of Governors
Dr. Maqbool Ahmed Bhatti	Member Board of Governors

Dr. M. R. Khan
Dr. Pervaiz Iqbal Cheema
Brig (Retd) A. R. Siddiqui

Member Board of Governors
Member Board of Governors
Member Board of Governors

Within a few weeks, Provincial Chapters of FRIENDS were established in all the provinces. Their heads were:

Dr. M. R. Khan
Colonel (Retd) Ikramullah Khan
Professor Zaheen Ahmed
Muhammed Ahmed Gondal

President Karachi Office
President Lahore Office
President Peshawar Office
President Quetta Office

Thereafter, various seminars and conferences were held in the country. It proved to be a great success. A climate of Opinion was formed by discussing important issues of national affairs. We decided to hold one International Seminar, ten to twelve national level seminars and three regional seminars. In addition to that, we arranged International seminars abroad also like in China and Turkmenistan.

In 1993, an agreement was signed with "Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament" (CPAPD). It was agreed to hold joint seminars under both organizations. Delegations of Intellectuals were to visit both the countries to conduct research on cultural, social and economic affairs and participate in the seminars and conferences. I visited China five times in this regard. Two visits were very important. No other delegation from Pakistan might have got the opportunity of such visits.

China's Visits

Tombs of the Prophet's Companions (PBUT). The first tour was made in 1994. We reached Khuryrab Pass from Gilgit. We were received there by our Chinese friends. From there we went to Kashgar which looked like our city of Peshawar. Their meals and living was just like ours. From there we went to Urumqi, stayed there for two days and then flew to Xian. This city is known in the world for its culture, civilization and antiques. From Xian, we went to Beijing and participated in a seminar. After staying for a few days there, we went to Shanghai and then onward to Canton. We learnt that there were a few graves of the Companions of the Prophet, including Saad bin Abi Waqas (May Allah be pleased with them).

It was surprising to learn that Saad Bin Abi Waqas (MAPH) was buried there. He had conquered Iran. How come his tomb was in such a far off place? It was learnt that during the reign of Tang Family, the Emperor Tai Zong saw a dream that a man with turban on his head was chasing Satan. While running, Satan entered into his palace. He asked his courtiers the interpretation of that dream. Somebody told that a prophet has appeared in the land of Hijaz who advocates dissemination of goodness and

suppression of evils. It is so believed that he sent an ambassador to Madina that a few persons should be sent to him for apprising about the new religion.

It was the time of Caliph Usman (MAPH). He sent Sabit Bin Qais(who was included among ten persons who were declared to be among those who would enter the paradise), Saad Bin Abi waqas and Uvais Qami (MAPT) through the sea routes to China. Uvais Qami died during the journey at the borders of Yuman and Galinso. Sabit Bin Qais (MAPH) breathed his last in the valley of Shin Ziang. Only Saad bin Abi Waqas (MAPH) succeeded in reaching Canton. He met the Emperor who asked him many questions about the new religion. He also asked how Islam was better than Confushism and Buddhism. He was satisfied and pleased to hear the appropriate answers. He arranged construction of a mosque and some accommodation around and allowed him to preach his religion to his people. On his death, he was buried there.

The government of China has widened the mosque and renovated it. It is so spacious now that 2000 people can offer prayers there at a time. We offered Fatiha at the tomb of Saad bin Abi Waqas and other Companions of the Prophet (MAPT) and then went to Shen Zen where a new industrial city was under construction. Our journey started from the North West of China and ended at Hong Kong. It gave us an idea how vast their country was. Their culture and civilization was as varied as their land.

The second tour started from Lhasa, a city of Tibet. It is located at the height of 12,000 feet above sea level and has an important place of Buddhism. Their culture, ancient buildings and atmosphere are very charming. The melting snow of the mountains and water of many rivers join here. This is the confluence from where the River Barham Putra originates. Due to its height, Oxygen filled pillows are offered in the hotels which can be used by anyone, feeling difficulty in breathing. The main desire to go to Lhasa was to travel by train which was constructed by the Chinese from Lhasa to Xiring over the span of many years. The journey starts at the height of 12,000 feet and train goes upward to the height of 16,000 feet high. Then it comes down to Xiring which is 7,000 feet high. The whole journey takes about 14 hours.

Oxygen masks are available with each seat which can be used whenever need be. It is the eighth wonder of the world which could be constructed only by the brave Chinese friends. We had a unique honor to be the first to travel by this train after its inauguration.

Lhasa is the capital of Tibet. It is almost newly built, expanding both horizontally and vertically. We stayed there for three days visiting many places Hke the old Jokhang Temle, Potala Palace and Norbulingka. Jokhang Temple is the spiritual Centre of Tibet which was built in 647 AD by Hans, Tibetan and Nepali architects. Potala Palace is located in the heart of Lhasa. It remained the residence of their spiritual leader Dalai Lama till 1959 before he shifted to India. Now it has been converted into a national

museum. It is a renowned tourist resort. UNESCO has declared it as the world heritage. Norbulingka is an impressive complex which is surrounded by green parks from all sides. It has served as the traditional residence for all successive Dalai Lamas from 1780 till 1959.

Our memorable train journey started on the fourth day at 9 A. M. The train was completely air conditioned, equipped with Oxygen lifeline, television sets and dining car just like our Tezgam Express which plied between Rawalpindi and Karachi in 1950s. This railway line is a marvel of engineering running zigzag and carved out of high mountains and negotiates very dangerous turns. At times, the train passes through a broad valley where a road and a flowing river beside present very beautiful scenery. At times the valley gets narrow but generally it passes through broad valleys surrounded by high mountains. The train continuously ascends towards the heights for ten hours and reaches the heights of 16,000 feet. There, it stops for some time. The passengers face the dizzying heights and freezing winds. When the night falls, the train starts descending. When the morning dawns, the train is still at the altitude of 12,000 and it has travelled the distance of 1700 kilometers. The descending journey continues till Xiring which is the capital of Shanghai and located at the altitude of 7,000 feet. The total distance is about 2,000 kilometers and it is covered in 27 hours. This railway line was completed in three stages. One thousand kilometers toward Lhasa is an engineering miracle which can be called the eighth wonder of the world. The morning had dawned when we reached Xiring. The city has a population of about ten million, with 50% Muslims. There is a large, fresh water sprawling lake there at such a height. To witness the scene of rising sun, we went straight from the Railway Station to the lake where the staff of the hotel welcomed us by saying "Assalam o Alaikum". The fish of this lake is as delicious as our Trout fish. It is a very charming place.

I had studied in my school days about the plateau of Tibet which is called the roof of the world. I enjoyed travelling on it in a luxurious train. When the train passes through the tunnels, the valleys get narrowed. When it comes out, a new world is waiting for the travelers. The population is very thin and waiting for life to appear in its full bloom. No doubt a very bright future for this part of the world has been opened for exploration and exploitation of the resources with the Chinese untiring and daunting courage. Next day we left Xiring and after staying in many cities reached Beijing. Here we participated in a seminar. The entire journey was very adventurous and eventful. The Pak-China friendship is stable and strong like this project.

FRIENDS Activities

This organization has a vast sphere of research activities. A brief summary is as follows:

- A number of International, regional and national level seminars and conferences were held on the topics of International peace, regional and national security. Research articles were presented on the national security of Pakistan, the

situation of the South Asia, Situation around Pakistan, The future of the Central Asian States, Kashmir Issue and Importance of China in new emerging scenario of the world.

- As Chairman FRIENDS, I addressed many conferences in June, July 1993 in Iran, UAE, Jordan, Norway, USA and UK.
- Addressed a conference, sponsored by The Institute for Political and International Studies (IPIS) of Iran, on the topic of "Regional Cooperation."
- Addressed a meeting arranged by "Arab Thought Forum" in Jordan on the topic of "Regional Security of Central Asia".
- Addressed a meeting at Oslo (Norway) arranged by "Peace Research Institute" on the topic of "The Nuclear Programme of Pakistan: A National Security Perspective".
- Addressed many meetings arranged by Carnegie Endowment for International Peace of USA in Chicago and Berkeley.
- Invited by the Popular Arab and Islamic Conference to attend its Second International Conference in Khartoum on 2-3 Dec 1993. Read a paper on "Dynamics of Global Conflict and Ummah's Response."

Accompanied a five member delegation on a visit to China from 19th December to 24th December 1993. Addressed many meetings of their research Institutes.

- Invited by the Government of Iraq to participate in an International Symposium on Problems Facing Iraq due to Economic Sanctions from Feb 5 to Feb 8 1994, in Baghdad.
- FRIENDS representative participated in the third session of the Preparatory Committee for the 1995 NPT conference held at UNO Office at Geneva from 12 to 15 Sep 1994.
- A Representative of FRIENDS attended UNO World Summit for Social Development, held at Copenhagen, Denmark from 6 to 12 Mar 1995.
- Addressed a meeting held by Henry L. Stimson Center, Washington D.C on "Conflict Resolution in South Asian Region".
- A representative of FRIENDS presented a paper in an International Seminar on "Bosnia Herzegovina: Future Prospects" in Tehran, from 27 to 28 Aug 1995.

- Paid a visit to Iran from September 27 to October 14 on the invitation of H.E. Abbas Maliki, Deputy Foreign Minister for Education and Research. I also addressed the faculty and students of Imam Hossein University.
- A five member delegation of FRIENDS visited China from May 5 to May 13, 1996 on the invitation of the Chinese People's Association for Peace and Disarmament. Visited many Universities and met many notables and Chinese leaders.
- Dr S. M. Rehman participated in an International seminar on "Nuclearization of South Asia: Problems and Solutions", organized by Landau Network Centro Volta, UNESCO Venice Office and Italian Ministry of Foreign Affairs on 20-23 May 1999.
- Mr. Fisahat H. Syed, Executive Vice Chairman, participated in Regional Workshop on "Globalization and Security in South Asia" organized jointly by Bangladesh Institute of International and Strategical Studies and Friedrich Nauman Stiftung, New Delhi and Ford Foundation on 25-27 May 1999.
- Dr. S. M. Rehman participated in the seventh Annual Seminar on "Central Asia and the Caucasus; the Caspian Sea, Opportunities & Obstacles" organized by IPIS, Tehran On June 22-23.
- Three member delegation of FRIENDS visited Germany from 5 to 14 Oct 1999. The delegation met and exchanged views with scholars and intellectuals. I addressed selected scholars at the office of Hanns Seidel Foundation. Also addressed a cross section of Pakistanis residing in Berlin.
- I paid a visit to Iran from 22 to 28 Jan 2000 and participated in a seminar on "The Persian Gulf: Towards the 21st Century".
- Five member delegation of FRIENDS visited China on the invitation of Chinese Peoples Association for Peace and Disarmament from 11 to 20 Oct 2000. Apart from participating in a seminar, the delegation met many government and non-government dignitaries.

In addition to the above activities, FRIENDS arranged more than 90 seminars, conferences and symposia on national and international issues which were held in Rawalpindi, Islamabad, Faisalabad, Peshawar, Bahawalpur, Quetta and Karachi and addressed by prominent scholars. It published more than 40 books on national and international issues. It also brought out a quarterly, "National Development and Security" and a monthly, "FRIENDS Perspective" in which research articles by prominent scholars and intellectuals were published.

It is evident from the above that FRIENDS had emerged as an International Think Tank which was recognized by international organizations including UNO. It was looked upon for consultation and guidance from the governments and non-government organizations around the globe and its members were invited frequently to share their thoughts on international and regional issues. In short, FOUNDATION was functioning as a non-government ambassador around the globe, building a positive image of Pakistan.

Our tragedy is that we worship the rising sun. Our rulers do not want to listen to what is against their sweet will. The government's good points and weak points were openly debated at our platform and recommendations were made for corrections and revisions but men at the helm of affairs took it as enmity. Sanctions were, therefore, imposed on us. The newspapers were instructed to get approval before publishing my articles. The national institutions invited me to address their meetings but it was also banned. General Musharraf openly started opposing me when I criticized some of his decisions which were against the national interests. Now I keep contributing articles on national affairs which are published in some newspapers despite restrictions.

It is painful to state that due to hurdles created by General Musharraf, the activities of FRIENDS were restricted. Our resources shortened and we could not maintain cooperation with the Chinese organization. We could not explain to them what difficulties did we face and how compelled we were not to have links with them. We felt small. If life permits, I shall revive these relations with them. I intend going on that journey again.

In the second tenure of Benazir Bhutto, Peoples Party directed CBR to chase me. When they could not find anything objectionable, they laid hands on FRIENDS. Donors were harassed. There was nothing unlawful but my donors got frightened and I had to close the offices in the four provinces. Only the Central Office is functioning but the organization is in suspended animation.

The Islamabad Branch of renowned Research Institution of Germany Hans Seidel Foundation extended full cooperation to us. They collaborated with us in holding many conferences and seminars. They bore the expenditures of visiting intellectuals from abroad. I am especially thankful to its ex-Resident Representative Mr. Hein G. Kiessling who cooperated with us. They never exerted any pressure on us and our freedom of thought was never affected. After his departure, the circumstances changed and we had to sever ties with them.

In 2001, when General Musharraf made the worst decision to collaborate with USA in Afghanistan War, I challenged him in an open meeting and told that it would be very harmful for our national interests. He got annoyed and then spared no effort to harm

me. My research associates were frightened and forced to leave FRIENDS. They were offered jobs with attractive salaries. They were freshly graduated young students whom we had employed on various research projects. Lured by heavy salaries, they left us. We used to publish a quarterly journal, "National Development and Security". Its copies were sent to all research institutes of Pakistan and American Libraries. Its publication also ceased. A few international NGOs were willing to extend financial help to us but we never compromised on freedom of our thought and liberty of action in speech or writing.

Bitter Experience in Politics

I had very bitter experiences in the field of politics. I decided to join the politics in 1996 and formed my own party with the name of "Awami Qiadat Party" (Peoples Leadership Party). Offices, were opened in all the four provinces. The people welcomed it. First of all, I met Muhammed Khan Junejo of Muslim League. He received me enthusiastically. Then I visited all the provinces and met old workers of Muslim League. They all appreciated my joining the politics. On return, I met the Secretary General of Muslim League (Junejo) and requested him to call a meeting. I wanted to brief them how the old workers could be brought back in the fold of Muslim League. Days and weeks passed but the meeting could not be called.

When I insisted, a meeting was called at Islamabad but it had only one point agenda: How to pacify an ex-chief minister of KPK who had joined hands with the opposition despite being in the party. I said that according to the constitution of the party, he should be issued with a show cause notice and if the reply was not received, he should be expelled from the party. Nobody agreed. They believed that he could be pacified. Then I told them that I wanted to give briefing on my visits to all the provinces. They said that it was not required because no such responsibility was assigned to me. I returned and separated from the alliance. This was my first experience in the field of politics.

The second experience was in Sindh. I initiated my political activities there and met many people, who welcomed me. I met Azim Tariq of MQM. He told me that he was thinking to form a political group of his own. Once that group was formed, he would contact me. He came to me after three months and told that a separate group had been formed and a meeting was scheduled to be held in the next week. I advised him not to do so and work quietly otherwise his life would be in danger. He was adamant.

He was murdered after a few days. Some of the prominent persons who joined my party were murdered. I met my workers and analyzed the situation. We concluded that some "informers" were directed to join my party who keep transmitting every information to our rivals. One of them was Secretary of my party's Sindh Chapter. He was nominated senator by MQM. Perhaps, it was reward of his services.

The style of MQM politics has been exposed by the murder of Azim Tariq. Every target killer of MQM has confessed to have murdered more than hundred people. This was the political atmosphere prevailing at that time. I withdrew from politics. Now in the reign of Imran Khan, accusing, counter accusing, blaming and abusing has spoiled the political atmosphere. It is better to stay away from politics, if your honor is dear to you.

The third experience was with Benazir Bhutto. After President Farooq Leghari dismissed her government, I went to her and offered to work in collaboration with her party. She agreed. Before the elections, seat adjustment was agreed upon. I had nominated seven candidates for National Assembly and nineteen candidates for the Provincial Assemblies. After seat adjustment agreement, I was left with four, National Assembly and nine provincial assemblies' seats. When the election campaign started, my candidates complained that Peoples Party had nominated candidates against our candidates and they were not withdrawing. I complained to Mohtarima Benazir. She gave a brief reply, "My people are not willing to withdraw did not know that a conspiracy had been hatched against me and Air Martial (Retd) Asghar Khan was about to file a case against me.

Thereafter, Peoples Party accused me of violating the law by joining the politics. As per law, no government servant can take part in politics for four years after retirement from the government service. Four years had elapsed since my retirement. But the government withdrew the facilities I was entitled after my retirement as COAS. I still have the letter of the Ministry of Defence, according to which my facilities were withdrawn. It is a very funny letter. It said that the discipline of my orderly, cook and driver was likely to be spoiled due to my participation in politics.

Alliance with Peoples Party

When I collaborated with Peoples Party, an alliance was formed with the name of Pakistan Awami Ittehad (PAI). WE launched a movement with eight point agenda. The biggest public meeting was held at Nishtar Park, Karachi on 14th August, 1998. Next day Mohtarima Benazir and Nawabzada Nasrullah said in a meeting, "If Muslim League (N) stayed in power, it will destroy the country. We have only one point agenda; "Remove the Nawaz Sharif government". Despite my best efforts, they did not agree to deviate from their stand. I separated from that alliance.

Peoples Party formed Grand Democratic Alliance which consisted of Awami National Party, MQM, Pakistan Tehreek e Insaf of Imran Khan and Pakistan Democratic Party of Nawabzada Nasrullah Khan. Before announcing the formation of that alliance, some leaders of the alliance under the head of Ajmal Khatak came to my residence to see me and explained,

"We have formed this alliance and it will be announced within a few days. We want you to join this alliance and support us to launch a forceful movement against the government."

I asked, "What will you gain out of it?"

They replied, "The order has been received from above: launch the campaign, the army will intervene and arrange fresh elections. We shall win the elections and form the government."

"The receipt of messages from "above" has ceased for the last 1400 years. From where have you received the message?" I asked.

Ajmal Khatak gave an explanation.

I said, "Look! You have come to a wrong man. I had an opportunity to grab the power in 1988 but I returned it to those who deserved it. Now you expect from me to pursue the army to take over as did Asghar Khan. I warn you that if General Musharraf took over, he will never hold elections as did General Zia and you will remain empty handed."

GDA group returned disappointed. Later, General Musharraf overthrew the Nawaz Sharif government and assumed the power. GDA supported him but no elections were held as expected. Musharraf consolidated his power and became favourite of USA. Neither Peoples Party could get anything nor Imran Khan who was dreaming to get into the power.

9/11 and its consequences

The incident of 9/11 happened in 2001. Within a few hours of this incident, USA accused Afghanistan of master minding the incident and said that it was planned by Usama Bin Laden. It is an unfortunate tragedy of the modern time that a weak country was accused without investigations by the torch bearers of democracy and justice and then invaded it mercilessly. The Muslim countries looked the other way, took no stand and no country could demand to furnish any proof for the accusations. Americans demanded from Talibans to hand over Usama Bin Laden to them but they took a bold stand and said, "It is their tradition that they do not betray their guests. They could hand him over to Saudi Arabia".

The Worst Decision of Musharraf

USA insisted that Usama Bin Laden be handed over to them. It did not materialize. When Taliban became helpless, they held a Jirga and decided to thank Usama Bin Laden for his services in the war against Russia. But they were not in a position to provide him protection anymore. He was therefore to be requested to go to any other place of his choice. Usama went to Sudan. USA decided to invade Afghanistan which was not possible without the help of Pakistan. USA laid seven conditions before Pervez Musharraf to collaborate with them. They forced him to accept all the conditions. He agreed to cooperate with them in the war against Afghanistan. It was necessary to consult the people of opinion and take stock of the situation before taking such a big

decision. But he bowed before them readily and accepted all the conditions. Thereafter, he started calling the meetings of the politicians, technocrats, bureaucrats and media persons in groups of 45-50. He explained the wisdom of his decision to them. I was also invited with the third group on 23 rd September 2011. General Musharraf spoke for about three hours and tried to explain the wisdom of his decision and justify his logic. Irritated I sought his permission to say something. Permission granted, I said,

"The decision you have made is the worst decision which has no logic or justification. It will prove very harmful for the security of the country. To collaborate with foreigners against a brother Muslim country was a shameful act. You have taken a decision and therefore there is no point in justifying it now. At least draw a red line and tell them that we cannot go beyond that in support of USA. I feel pain in observing that most of the people here believe that Taliban will be defeated. This is wrong. Taliban will win and USA and her allies will be defeated the way Russia was defeated". People laughed.

I continued, *"It will be a prolonged war. After capturing Afghanistan, USA will return to us and target the areas which are the Support Bases for Taliban. Tables will be turned against us. We must prepare for this time."*

"Your decision is a compromise on the blood of those thousands of martyrs who laid down their lives for the freedom of Afghanistan. Whosoever compromises on the blood of the martyrs, is not forgiven by Allah."

On hearing my comments, General Musharraf kept quiet. He mumbled something which was not audible. The meeting ended abruptly. That was my last meeting with him. We never met again as we were two poles apart. General Musharraf turned against me and took many coercive steps but could not harm me. I was right and this righteousness saved me. Sorrowful thing was that none of the prominent politicians, scholars, intellectuals, ambassadors or bureaucrats raised voice against this worst decision. Most of the people worship the rising sun. This is our national tragedy.

General Musharraf initially tried to bring Bush Administration to negotiation table with Taliban. Having failed in that, he accepted all the conditions which were following:

1. Al-Qaida will be prevented to operate from Pakistani borders.
2. USA will be allowed free movement of its personnel in Pakistan for operation against Afghanistan.
3. USA will be given access to Pakistani land and sea waters.
4. Exchange of information will be ensured.

5. Terrorists' attacks will be openly condemned.
6. Supply of man-power and provision to Taliban will be banned.
7. Diplomatic relations with Taliban will be severed and USA will be helped in destroying Usama Bin Laden.

Our joining hands with USA against Afghanistan was a national tragedy. The war started and USA demonstrated the worst type of tyranny, shock and awe. Taliban withdrew and sought protection in the mountains. They did not accept defeat. Rather they started preparing for another round of war. Two years elapsed.

Meeting with Jalaluddin Haqqani

Jalaluddin Haqqani came to Pakistan in 2003. I met him at a dinner at the residence of General Hamid Gul. I asked, "The enemy has captured the whole country. What is your next plan?"

He replied, "We have consolidated our relations with Mujahideen and shall jointly start the new phase of war soon".

I said, "Afghanistan has been subjected to destruction in Russian war, then in civil war and now fighting against USA. Your one generation has been destroyed. Now you have decided to launch another war. You have another option besides the war which can lead you to freedom. USA has planned to establish a democratic government in Afghanistan. If you become part of this system, being in majority you will form the government and be able to make your own decisions.

He kept quiet and did not answer to any of my arguments. I understood that he did not have the authority to take a decision on such matters. I requested him to convey my regards to Mullah Umar and that message. Intimate me whatever he replied.

Reply of Mullah Umar to my Suggestions

I received the reply of Mullah Umar after two months. Whatever he said, helps us to understand the logic of his conflict and also indicates the sentiments of a courageous nation. His reply was:

- "Our traditions do not permit us to act upon the agenda of the occupying force.
- We have decided to continue the war till complete freedom. We shall win. We are determined because Allah has promised, "If you remain steadfast, enemy will flee away turning around.

- We shall not allow any cheating by USA or Pakistan as they did with us after the withdrawal of Russia in 1989.
- We shall establish links with the Northern Alliance to ensure stabilized peace in Afghanistan. It will be acceptable to our neighboring and other countries.
- Though Pakistan is collaborating with our enemies in this war, yet we do not consider Pakistan as our enemy because security demands and our destination are identical".

The unforgettable sacrifices by Afghanistan have changed the strategic balance of the region and now a new alliance between Russia, China, Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan appears to be emerging which will soon become a reality. Pakistan should give up the policies, it had been following in the past and start moving towards new realities which will ensure peace in Afghanistan and will guarantee a bright future for the whole region.

What Mullah Umar said about having the security demands and the same destination needs explanation. The example of Afghanistan is historical in nature. They have faced the super powers with courage and determination. It has no parallel in the history. Pakhtoons are in majority there but minorities are also living peacefully. Despite the civil war, planned by USA, majority population and minorities have identity of their own. There are 36 provinces in Afghanistan. Why can't we follow suit and create 24 provinces for the ease of administration and political reasons. It will flatten our uneven political pitch and stabilize the political system. We had an opportunity to convert FATA into a separate province but we lost it. Its negative results will appear soon.

Afghan nation has set a new precedent of national defence, sacrifices and courage during last four decades. They defeated two super powers of the world as well as European Union. Now the only world power is helpless against them and has been forced to come to the negotiation table with them. Taliban demand that unless Americans get out of Afghanistan, there will be no progress in the talks. This is the reality. Unless their demand is met, USA will keep paying the price for their defeat in the war.

CHAPTER 9

TURNING POINTS OF OUR HISTORY

Jamia Hafsa Blood Bath

The killing spree in Jamia Hafsa, as the sequel to the destruction of seven mosques in Islamabad, ended in the massacre of hundreds of innocent people. The conspiracy which operationalized this heinous act is now patently clear.

The following are the ominous manifestations:

- As a result, the Army is now fully mobilized in Waziristan, Bajour and Sawat areas against the resisting forces. Its scope of operation would further expand which may be extended to Balochistan also. USA is pressurizing Pakistan, not to back out of it, at any cost.
- Chinese are being attacked and some have lost their lives, and as a consequence many of them are leaving Pakistan.
- The world has been shown the blood smeared faces of our pupils (Taliban) in the mosque and madrassas, as terrorists, with weapons and ammunition. USA and Great Britain have expressed their appreciation for the good job done by the Pak Army. Some of our political parties like PPP and MQM have also joined them in appreciating the Jamia-e-Hafsa victory.
- The NGO's, so boastful of promoting human rights, are strangely silent on Lal Masjid blood bath. Not a single voice of condemnation was heard for spilling the blood of the innocents. But there was much hue and cry against the arrest of Aunty Shamim, which depicts the real face of the NGOs, working in Pakistan.
- The government itself has become a captive of its own notion of *enlightened Moderation* and is calling the people to join the Army in its war on the extremists, although there is no such conflict in the minds of the Pakistani people.

There is a very distinct polarization of the political forces of the country, which has recently been seen. On one side are the "liberal, enlightened and secular forces," like Pakistan Muslim League (Q), PPP and MQM. These parties are "sold to the idea of US and Military alliance and wish to perpetuate status-quo of the elitists' group control over power." On the other side, the recently formed All Parties Democratic Movement

(APDM), and the component parties are moderate and nationalist in their commitment. Whereas, the movement launched by the Bench and the Bar and Media, "has generated a new political paradigm, which is founded on the hard rock of justice and equity." This movement has helped create the ground for the emergence of a true democratic order, in which the rich and poor will enjoy equal opportunities, This group must join the political battle in the ensuing elections, to complete its mission of transformation of the society into a viable political culture.

USA and NATO are incrementally demanding military action in Waziristan and Bajour areas at a time when the government is losing credibility. It has lost the constitutional battle after 20 July Supreme Court judgment. The Army's defeat in Waziristan, some three years back, also cannot be compensated by the victory of the Lal Masjid Operation. Finding the government in a weak position, US pressure is getting stronger, to push the Army deeper and deeper into the quagmire of Waziristan & Swat. Therefore, it's time now for the government to take the nation into confidence, as well as the judiciary and the political parties, to reach consensus and determine the right course to get country out of the crisis. The challenge demands a bold decision and tasking of the armed forces of Pakistan, "to contain and crush any violation on our Western Borders," I am sure our armed forces will deliver.

Last week, an article of mine was published, in the Urdu dailies, and a part was omitted, perhaps based on expediency. I repeat it: "Is it an ideology battle which is raging between the extremists and the Army? Do our people endorse the orgy for blood-letting, when our commandos, having completed the mission came out of Jamia Hafsa, with a sense of triumph and victory and no remorse whatsoever? The glee was ironically demonstrated by making the V-signs. Is our Army really on collision course in this ideological conflict, which raises questions that loom large on our minds."

Jamia Hafsa and Lal Masjid were the abode for the orphans and deprived children, who otherwise were a neglected and discarded lot in the society. These institutions gave them sense of acceptance and hope. Not a single child belonged to the rich and affluent segments of the society. They were a very poor lot whose blood proved much cheaper to be spilled mercilessly as if they were the children of a lesser God. One such student who came out of Jamia Hafsa on 4th July, (the Independence Day of USA), said about the poor lot who died unsung.

"The female students were those whose parents and dear ones had perished in the tragic earthquake and there was none to own and care for them. Only these institutions, such as Jamia Hafsa, came forward to carve out a better future for them. Alas! In this massacre they were the major casualties, whom no one appeared to claim. We came out of Jamia Hafsa on 4th July, and according to my estimate, nearly fifteen hundred girl students remained trapped as they could not exit. No one knows what happened to them and if killed, where are their dead bodies?"

I was in distress at the sight of Jamia Hafsa carnage, and my distress turned into a nagging pain as I read the Article by Mr. Muhammad Hamza:

"Oh commanders, I narrate for you an episode of Holy Prophet (PBUH). During the battle of Uhad, he waved his sword and asked who would take the responsibility of using this sword against enemy? The Sword finally came to Hazarat Abu Dajana. After the battle was over, Hazarat Zubair asked Hazarat Abu Dajana, that why did he restrain himself and did not kill the youth, among the enemy, who attempted to kill him. Hazarat Dajana replied that, the youth had covered the face with a piece of cloth and was inciting and encouraging others to fight Muslims but under the fear of my sword, the person, cried-out in a woman's voice. I withdrew my sword and did not kill her, because had I killed her, the sword of Holy Prophet (PBUH) would have been polluted and debased."

The innocent girls and boys in the Jamia Hafsa were no enemies either, yet we didn't hesitate to kill them. Does any religion of the world, any law, any civilization, approve such a bloodletting? Do not we cease to be human and Muslims?

I would like to narrate a historical fact in this connection. Our Prophet (PBUH) left in his heritage, a mat, a prayer mat a shawl, a pair of leather shoes and seven swords. He never used these swords. Similarly, our three Caliphs, Hazrat Abu Bakar, Hazrat Umar and Hazrat Usman (RA) never used their swords. These swords were meant to serve as deterrence as our Nuclear weapons are important parts of our military strategy. The swords of Hazrat Ali and Hazrat Khalid Bin Walid (RA) were used as smashing force and helped widening the frontiers of the world of Islam.

Military Actions in Tribal Areas

When General Musharraf held the elections in 2002, GDA extended full cooperation to him and Imran Khan's dream of becoming the Prime Minister could not be fulfilled because MQM and Muslim League (Q) opposed it. Muslim League was so rhetorical in their support that one of their leaders said that they would keep supporting him even if he came ten times in uniform. It was the time when there was large scale protest against him for being in uniform. Musharraf became more confident and he launched military operations in Dir, Swat and Bajore where people had demanded to restore their own tribal system because they did not get speedy justice according to Pakistani laws.

Benazir Bhutto was wise enough to understand their demands and ordered to establish Religious Courts. The courts were being established when President Farooq Leghari dismissed her government and subsequently the whole matter was suspended when Nawaz Sharif took over. Their demands were termed as revolt against the state and military action started again. Maulvi Soofi Muhammed and his son in law Fazlullah

faced the wrath of the government and thousands of tribal people went across the border.

These proceedings were in progress when Musharraf was attacked twice in December 2004. He remained safe. Americans told him that the master-mind of those attacks was Baitullah Mehsood and he had taken shelter in a hideout in Waziristan. Without investigation, Musharraf launched military action which caused a lot of destruction. Thousands of Waziries migrated to Afghanistan. They started attacking Pakistan Army. Thus the fire which was ablaze in Dir, Swat and Bajor engulfed the whole country.

Tribal People turned against Pakistan for the First Time.

The rampart which was erected by Quaid e Azam in 1947 by assigning the protection of borders to Tribes, smashed and the guns of tribal people turned against us. It was for the first time that the tribes picked up their guns against us. They were a great support for us for the last fifty years. Pakistan never felt the need to deploy its troops along the borders of Afghanistan. But the unwise decisions of the government turned them against us. The government entered into agreements with them many times but American drone attacks on their leaders sabotaged the agreements. Maulvi Nek Muhammed, Baitullah Mehsood and Hakeemullah Mehsood were murdered which further aggravated the situation. Tehrek e Taliban Pakistan (TTP) was established and they started attacking Pakistan. Terrorism spread and it doesn't appear to be coming to an end.

Security Imperatives of Nuclear Pakistan

Our nuclear programme is unique, in that, the late Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto declared to the world in 1975 that Pakistan would acquire nuclear weapon capability to correct the 'balance of terror' in South Asia. And within a short period of twelve years, Pakistan developed the atomic weapons and the delivery system.

Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, who gave the policy definition, set the goals and provided the impetus to the programme was eliminated through a judicial process. Share the pain with him, when he wrote about the atomic programme, which dominated the portrait of his life, on the last day of his life on 3 April 1979:

*"We were on the threshold of full nuclear capability when I left the government to come to the death cell. We know that Israel and South Africa have full nuclear capability. The communist powers also possess it. The Christian, Jewish and Hindu civilizations have this capability. Only the Islamic civilization was without it but that position is about to change — I pray it will happen after I go — for the safety and security of my eighty million countrymen. This achievement I believe **will dominate the portrait of my life** which I was able to achieve after an assiduous and tenacious endeavor spanning over many years against heavy odds and opposition of almost the entire world."*

Our nuclear programme was cheap as compared to the cost in the world, but otherwise our Pakistani leaders had to pay a very high price, which cannot be weighed even in gold or platinum. Five eminent personalities of Pakistan, who had contributed to Pakistan's emergence as nuclear power had to face death, or encounter ouster from the seat of power or face ugly propaganda tirade and 'image' tarnishing:

- Mr. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto as mentioned earlier, gave the policy definition, set the goals and provided the impetus to the programme, was eliminated through a judicial process.
- General Zia-ul-Haq, who provided the "unflinching support" to the programme from 1977 to 1988, was removed from the scene.
- Mohtarma Benazir Bhutto, who added "logic and restraint to our nuclear might," was eliminated through deceit and terror.
- Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan, the work horse, and the technological genius, who achieved the breakthrough in a short period of ten years, has been "deprived of freedom of action, and subjected to systematic humiliation."
- Mr. Nawaz Sharif, the former Prime Minister, who added "credibility and confirmation" to the programme by giving a befitting reply to Indian atomic explosions of May 12, 1998, lost his government and suffered eight years long exile.
- With the counter explosion of 28th May 1998 Pakistan gained the status of a 'nuclear capable state'. The Indian Defence Minister, George Fernandez confirmed it by saying: "A perfect nuclear deterrence has now been established between India and Pakistan." The same was confirmed by US deputy secretary of state Strobe Talbot: "Pakistan has succeeded in achieving the central objective it has long set for itself, acquiring a deterrent capability with respect to India." Thus, a stable nuclear security order now exists in South Asia, with Pakistan and India occupying equal status on the nuclear threshold.

Pakistan has retained the minimum number of nuclear weapons, to deter India, but by no means has it considered these as weapons of war, as the jingoists would declare. Our nuclear weapon capability thus is the prized possession, which the posterity has to protect and possess as an essential element of our national power, supported by a robust nuclear policy, to guarantee national security which has emerged, over a period, and embodies the following main elements:

- It is India specific, maintaining a minimum credible deterrence.

- As an essential element of deterrence, the "first strike option" will be maintained, while the capability for "second strike" will also be retained.
- "A force-in-being concept" will be followed, as against the "push button readiness" of some nuclear powers.
- Nuclear capability will not compensate for the conventional military capability. Both have to develop independently, *i.e.* one to deter and the other to defeat.
- Nuclear technology will be used entirely for peaceful purposes, while research and development on nuclear weapons and delivery system will also continue.

Pakistan is powerful, not because it is a nuclear weapon capable state. It is powerful, because its conventional military forces have the capability to contain and curb military adventures of our adversaries and provide security and resilience to the nation. "Nuclear deterrence means credibility of the weapon system, means of delivery, an efficient command and control system and the will to use this capability" when threat develops. Nuclear weapons cannot redeem conventional military defeat and yet if one prefers to use nuclear weapons under such extreme conditions, one would invite mutual destruction, whereas the conventional military defeat provides the opportunity to live another day, and rise again to avenge the defeat.

Nuclear weapons were used only once in 1945 against Japan, because there was no fear of retaliation. If there was possibility of only one nuclear bomb for the Japanese to drop on United States Territory, the Americans would never have attacked Hiroshima and Nagasaki. These two bombs killed over 350,000 human beings - almost the same number of innocent Germans who were killed at the same time, by the Allied Air Forces at Dresden, Germany, where the refugees were swarming against the advancing Soviet armies. For three days the Allied Air Forces were let loose to use all the deadly weapons in their arsenal, including the napalms, for the orgy of massacre. Was this act less criminal and less deadly than the weapon of mass destruction against Japan? In both cases, it was the "criminal mind" which executed the indiscriminate orders to kill. In our neighborhood, in Afghanistan, Iran, Iraq, and Kashmir, more than five million people have been killed during the last twenty five years, mainly due to foreign aggression. The question arises: Which is more deadly – a nuclear bomb or foreign aggression caused by world leaders, having "criminal disposition", who are the real terrorists of the world?

Pakistan is gifted with large deposits of uranium – almost 20% of the world deposits and a range of nuclear scientists and technicians. It is imperative that Pakistan undertakes setting-up of a number of nuclear power plants, to off-set energy shortfalls, as well as to reduce dependence on oil and gas. Pakistan has always relied on its conventional military forces for security and not the nukes, because the recent events

have proved that, the nukes could not prevent disintegration of the Soviet Union, nor these could save Israel from their shameful defeat at the hands of Hezbollah. The United States and the Europeans also could not escape defeat in Iraq and Afghanistan, at the hands of the rag-tag freedom fighters. The challenging strategy of the contemporary wars, therefore, places greater reliance on 'men and missiles' supported by conventional armed forces.

The two opposing paradigms are operating. USA, Israel, NATO, India nexus, primarily relying on 'militarism' as a means to reconstruct the world to suit their hegemonic designs. Their military mindset is sick and anachronistic, as Professor Paul J. Bailes says: "Neither conscience nor empathy for others defines the qualities of the socio-path," The other one is being pursued by China and its supporters like Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan, (when it is free from foreign occupation) – based on cooperation and resolution of conflict through dialogues and negotiations. China is glittering symbol of peace and shared opportunities, and adheres to the famous Confucius saying: "What you do not want done to yourself, do not do to others."

When I was promoted VCOAS in 1987, I also had the honor of becoming member of the NCA (Nuclear Command Authority). The same year, in the month of July, I was invited by Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan to visit Dr. A. Q. Khan Laboratories. Dr. Sahib himself conducted the visit. First of all, he took me to the Control Room, where hundreds of computers and monitors were functioning. (With the invention of Super Computer, there may be less number of computers now). We, then entered a big hall, where centrifuge machines were creating loud noise. We visited many laboratories where various components were being manufactured. The Dr. Sahib said, "Let me show you the Atomic Bomb". I held my breath, and reciting prayers entered a laboratory. Dr. Sahib explained function of various switches, how detonation was ignited, how the process of fission and fusion would start.

The shock which had gripped my mind was converted into a belief that Dr. Abdul Qadeer and his team, through their tireless efforts, had converted the dream of making a bomb into a reality within ten years. By next year, Dr. Sahib successfully developed the delivery system also through which atomic weapons could be carried and delivered to the desired targets by F-16 aircraft.

Accusations against Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan

In 2004, USA tried to sabotage our Nuclear Programme. First of all, Dr. Abdul Qadeer Khan was accused that he had given Atomic Technology to Iran, Libya and other countries. They produced some photographs in which Dr. Sahib and his team was shown meeting various people of the Nuclear Under World and representatives of various countries. General Musharraf again bowed down and accepted all allegations. Dr. Sahib was brought on TV, insulted and humiliated. All his privileges were withdrawn and was placed under house arrest. Since then, he is under restrictions and

not allowed to attend any meeting or reception. Surprisingly, neither Benazir nor Nawaz Sharif did anything to revive his prestige. Even Imran Khan has done nothing to use his abilities for some useful purposes. He has also joined the line of thankless people.

The general impression is that our nuclear programme must have cost millions of dollars. But the facts are otherwise. After the experiment of delivery system succeeded in August 1987, General Zia asked Dr. Sahib to present the details of expenditures, incurred on the programme. These were presented before the NCA. These were less than 300 Million dollars, much less than the Submarine, we purchased from France.

Pakistan has taken many steps to ensure proper utilization of the atomic capability:

- The capability of producing nuclear weapons of less power and more power, was increased.
- The system of ensuring exact capability and its effective use was developed. Various experiments were conducted from time to time to assess and ensure that all departments concerned reacted timely in case of any emergency.
- By 2006, a comprehensive system of Command and Control had been developed. Written rules and Regulations had been laid down to coordinate among the armed forces.
- The very sensitive policy of "Pressing the Atomic Button" was evolved to determine who had the final authority to launch the nuclear invasion and who will have the button.

By 2007, the entire system of nuclear command and control and its security was developed. It is the best system and has been appreciated by all Nuclear powers. We have adopted rules and regulations of security of our nuclear installations, according to international standard so that these can be transferred as required easily. We intend to use our nuclear capabilities for peaceful purposes like, preparing the fuel for our nuclear plants, health, agriculture and research activities of other departments.

For achievements of peaceful objectives, nuclear technology can be obtained from other countries and provided also. When Pakistan will become member of Nuclear Supply Group, such cooperation will be enhanced. The decisions taken for storing our nuclear weapons and to use them when the enemy could blackmail us are very sound.

Strong political will is of paramount importance for deciding timely increase in our nuclear capability. Our political leadership and scientists have worked in unison in the

past to make such decisions. They were severely punished for their services but they did not hesitate in doing what was needed.

President Bush Visits Pakistan

President Bush came to Pakistan in 2008 when the election campaign was in progress. He appreciated Musharraf for holding elections. He was hopeful that the transfer of power will be done according to the democratic norms. Musharraf was confident to get the desired results of his choice as was seen in 2002 elections but by that time he was forced to quit uniform and hand over the command of the army to General Ashtaq Pervez Kiyani who kept the army aloof from the elections. People voted at their free will.

The election results were big surprise for many. I received many telephone calls from USA, "What has happened?"

"What is so surprising? The elections were free and transparent. People have given their verdict." The same day the editor of the *Washington Post* wrote:

"The American policy makers about Pakistan must rue the day, they decided for regime change in Pakistan, through the democratic process. Democracy is what has now emerged; an unholy alliance of long term American haters - Aslam Beg and Hamid Gul. The behind the scene god-fathers of this broad based, anti-US coalition led by Nawaz Sharif."

Hybrid Strategy was used to achieve the objective which could not be achieved in 2008 elections.

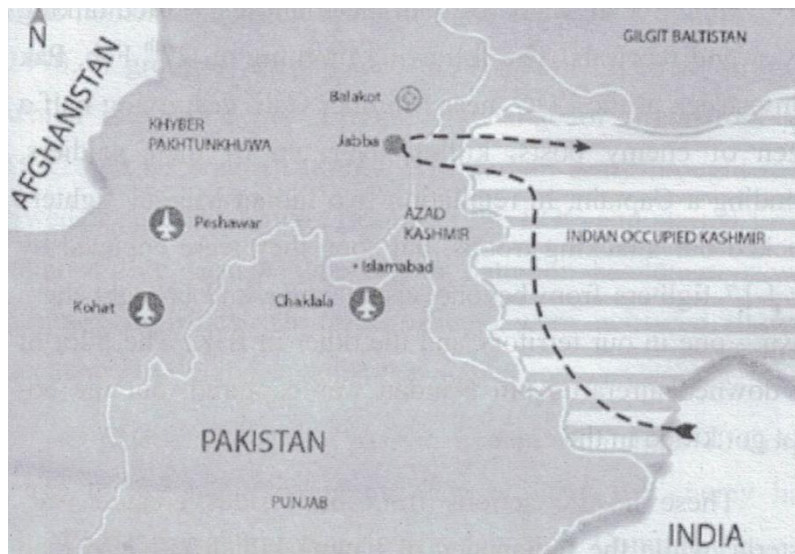
Indian Surgical Strike

Question: What do you say about the Indian Surgical Strike of 27 February?

Answer: Indian aircraft invaded a "Jihadi Camp" near Balakot on 27th February, 2019 and named it a surgical strike. It was a false claim. What happened actually was that on Feb 14th, a suicide bomber hit a military convoy at Pulwama, IJK, killing over 45 x Indian soldiers. The incident created a shockwave of anger and despair in the Indian mind. Their leadership promptly blamed Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) organization of Pakistan, banned already for its anti-state activities. They declared to launch surgical strikes against Jaish-e-Muhammad training camp in Pakistan.

Indians "planned this operation for over 200 hours to carry out the air strike," at the suspected JeM training camp at Balakot, which lies about 30 KM inside KP Province, beyond the AK borders. At 3 AM, on 26th Feb, four Mirage 2000, flew from Ambala Air Base, with security cover provided by SU 30 aircrafts loaded with Israeli missiles, with a range of over 80 KM.

The four mirages flew close to the working boundary opposite Sialkot along the LOC, giving the impression of normal border surveillance. Having reached Chakothei area, these aircrafts suddenly turned to the left, in the direction of Balakot, to strike the JeM camp.



The route of Indian Aircraft when they attacked Malum Jabba on 27th February 2020

Pakistani aircraft, were on high alert and as soon as they spotted the intruding Indian aircrafts, they dashed towards Balakot, covering the 30 KM distance from Nur Khan Air Base, in less than four minutes. The enemy SU-30 spotted the Pakistani interceptors and warned the attacking mirages, which had reached Jabba, 25 miles short of Balakot. The enemy mirages panicked and jettisoned their bombs and fuel tanks at Jabba Mountains and escaped towards IHK. Our interceptors reached Jabba, four minutes after the enemy mirages had left the area.

The Indians claimed to have killed 350 of JeM terrorists at Balakot. This incident alerted Pak Army and the air force, while Social Media of both the countries, started talking of war and reprisals. The following morning on 27th Feb, Pak Army struck at the LOC, near Bhimber Gali, destroying half a dozen of enemy posts, killing over ten of their soldiers, including a Captain. In retaliation two Indian Mig 21 fighters attacked our attacking troops, but soon they were engaged by our J-17 fighters from beyond visual range and brought them down - one in our territory and the other in IHK. The pilot of the downed aircraft Abhi Nandan was captured, but the co-pilot got killed in the crash.

These hostile actions from both sides created war-hysteria, while the Indian lied of having killed 350 JeM men and shooting down of the F-16 aircraft, without any proof, weakened Indian war-mongering hysterics. The Indian social media itself exposed their

lies and failed surgical strike, causing such shame on the Indian government and their armed forces, that they lost moral ascendancy or even justification to go to war with such low morale and heavy burden of shame and despondency. They exposed their potentials of war stamina of only ten days, as confirmed by American intelligence.

I have been roaming around these mountains during SSG exercises in 1950. My driver Ghulam Muhammed belongs to Jabba and he conveyed minute to minute information to me.

There is another example of surgical strike which took place when I was COAS. The Mujahideen had gone back to their homes after the Russian withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1990. A group of them joined the Kashmir Freedom struggle which intensified the struggle. Exchange of fire across the LOC had become a routine. The Indian army brought their Sweden purchased guns, Bofors to the LOC and started firing against deep targets. One of our battalion headquarters was targeted in which our three officers were martyred. It was necessary to retaliate against this aggression.

One week had not passed, when Commander 10 Corps came to see me. On enquiry, he told that the enemy had attacked them at six places. His Division Commander was becoming restless. I rang up Major General Muhammed Safidar, Sitar e Juraat and asked him what was happening. He told that his troops had taken a bold action, destroyed many enemy's posts. The enemy had fled away leaving their dead bodies behind. Two of the enemy's guns had also been destroyed. They were quiet then.

I appreciated him and told him to keep it up. It was a good example of surgical strike. You have to make full preparations and take appropriate steps which should aim at achieving the objectives and yet ensure that the situation should not go out of control. The enemy should get a clear message to refrain from hostile activities.

Indo-Israel collaboration to Attack Pakistan Nuclear Plant

India-Israel collaboration is not something new. They had collaborated in 1980 also to attack our Nuclear Plant at Kahuta when our nuclear programme was still in the embryonic state. We did not have F-16 aircraft to counter the enemy's evil designs. Details of this conspiracy have been revealed in a book, "*Deception: Pakistan, The United States and the Secret Trade in Nuclear Weapons*" authored by Adrian Levy and Catherine Scott-Clark.

A squadron of Israeli aircraft was deployed at "Jahan Garh" base of Indian Province of Gujrat. They planned to enter Pakistan Air Space in the Combat Formation or Fight Group to deceive the Pakistani Radars. Their flying in the Combat Formation could lead the Radar Operators to assume that it was a big passengers' aircraft. They would bombard Kahuta Plant and after destroying it, would exit towards Jammu and Kashmir.

Our Intelligence Agencies discovered that conspiracy only a few hours before the time of invasion. When General Zia received that information, he quickly assessed the situation and immediately decided that the attack would not be stopped, it would be thwarted to enable Pakistan getting justification for counter attack. According to this strategy, a detailed plan was chalked out:

Three groups of PAF war planes were formed. The first group was tasked to allow the Israeli planes to enter Pakistani space, then intercept and shoot them down. The second group was given the mission to destroy the Indian Bhabha Nuclear Plant at Mumb Vitrumbe while the third group was tasked to destroy Israeli Demona Nuclear Plant at Negev Desert. Engaging the targets at such far off places posed a problem. Fuel could finish and planes needed refueling. Return journey was not safe. Despite that, many pilots enthusiastically volunteered to take up the mission. The movements of Pakistani war planes was spotted by American satellite. They immediately informed Israel and India. Frightened, they abandoned the plan.

American Plan for Indian Hegemony in Asia

Question: USA wants to see Indian hegemony in the region of Asia as Israel has been elevated to this position in the Middle East. What do you say about this?

Answer: Indian Hegemony Plan is haunting the nerves of USA and India. After the disintegration of USSR, USA wants to attain the status of supreme power in the region. Israel is protecting their interests in the Middle East. Similarly, USA wants India to act as "his master's voice" in the region from Afghanistan to Bangladesh and further up to Asia Pacific. Accordingly, Strategical Partnership Accord was signed with India in 2005. It was renamed as Strategic Defence Partnership Accord in 2015 according to which USA started providing Hi tech Weapons and Equipment to India as was done in case of Israel.

No doubt that encountering American Technology is difficult and soon India will be superior to us particularly in the Cyber war and outer space technology. It is this capability by dint of which India has not hesitated in using tyrannical actions. She has full support of USA. India is proud of being an ally of USA and due to this she has perpetrated all types of atrocities in Kashmir, which is condemnable.

India-Israel collaboration is the part of Warsaw Plan. Accordingly, Prime Minister of India visited Israel on July 4, 2017 which was given wide coverage by international media. Since the restoration of diplomatic ties between the two countries in 1992, it was the first visit by an Indian PM which ended at an Arms Supply Deal worth 2.6 million dollars. With this deal, Israel has become the second biggest supplier of arms to India. It is the worst situation of strategical collaboration which will upset the balance of power in the region, according to defence analysts and will cause acceleration of the arms race.

India has changed its financial and strategical direction. It is now requesting USA to keep strengthening her financially and militarily. USA has explained that if India wants their support, they will have to establish good relations with Israel. In other words, the route to Washington passes through Tel Aviv. The practical implications of this relationship can be seen in Kashmir and Palestine where India and Israel are resorting to the worst type of tyranny and USA is keeping quiet. There are many incidents which indicate that India-Israel collaboration aims at protecting their interests in the region.

The defence and strategic cooperation between the two countries is strengthening with the passage of time. Their Barak-8 missile which has been jointly designed by Israel Aerospace Industries and India's Defence Research & Development Organization (DRDO), manufactured by Raefel advanced Defence System and Bharat is considered to be the most powerful missile in the world. It can defend against any aerial threat from aircraft, helicopters or drones. It can intercept the invading missile at the range of 0.5 kilometer to 90 kilometers.

The arms deal also includes Spice 2000 Bombs and Laser-designations pods. It includes GSP Guided Precision Targeting and Spike-anti-tank Guided Missile system. It can be carried by a man and has the Tandem-charged Heat Warhead with a range of 4 kilometers. Besides this, Phalcon AWACS, which are the early warning aircrafts of Israel, have been equipped with radars, fitted in the Russian IL-76 transport planes.

USA had established more than 700 military bases in various countries for their military supremacy. All these bases were linked with A-1 Center Pentagon. This system was used to control war in Afghanistan and it was through that center that President Obama and his cabinet witnessed the incident of murdering Usama bin Laden, thousands of miles away.

Conspiracies against Muslim Ummah

Question: After the withdrawal of Russia from Afghanistan, USA and her allies have turned towards the Muslim Countries. They have destroyed many and now Pakistan is facing threats from many sides. What are the threats and how these can be dealt with?

Answer: Besides USA, India and Israel are also in the forefront against the Muslims. Israel has been elevated to the status of super power in the Middle East to safeguard the American interests in the region. Efforts are in hand to give India the same status in the Central Asia, the South Asia and the Asia Pacific. The weaknesses of the Muslim countries are being exploited to be used against them:

Terrorism has been spread in Pakistan. Communal differences have been promoted and efforts have been made to create ideological and political conflicts. The first Crusade war of the present era started in 2001 and is still continuing. It has taken new direction.

The worst decision by Musharraf has caused a havoc to us. India, in collaboration with USA, has established an Intelligence Network in Afghanistan. India has the support of CIA, MI-6, Mossad and Intelligence agencies of NATO countries against Pakistan. No protest has ever been launched against this conspiracy on the government level.

USA entered into Strategic Partnership with India in 2005 and gave her the task of eradicating religious extremism from the area and control the enhancing influence of China. To justify the Indian interference in Afghanistan, Afghanistan has been declared the part of the South Asia while it is geographically part of the Central Asia.

The Turkish President Tayyeb Erdogan, while visiting Pakistan in 2016, warned that Pakistan was facing "Fatehullah Gullen threat" to its security which was highly dangerous and must be addressed on priority. Detailed analysis of his warning manifests its implications. Our internal and ideological divide is getting intensified with the passage of time, demanding immediate action to rectify the fault. Our present system of governance minus the ideology would collapse under the pressure. Allah has given us the option to choose a system of governance, so long as its foundation was based on the principles of Quran and Sunnah. But unfortunately democracy has been preferred over the principles of the Quran and the Sunnah. No government in the past or the present one, ever made any serious attempt to fortify our ideological identity. We have failed to give our children their Muslim Identity, because our educational system is devoid of teachings of the principles of Quran and Sunnah.

The National Action Plan gives the impression as if religion is the root cause of terror in Pakistan. On the contrary, the social disorder, the ideological split of the society into liberals/seculars and the moderates, has been caused by those who hold power and are calling the shots. The religious groups are the marginalized lot, having no political space, or policy decision-making related to governance. They themselves are the terrorized people. People do not vote for them, yet they have been identified as the prime source of terror.

USA openly tried to intensify the ideological divide in Pakistan when John Carry, during Barak Obama tenure, declared that a sum of US\$ 1.4 billion was allocated for "perception management of the Pakistani nation". This amount was to be given directly to the liberal NGOs and various institutions. Our government kept quiet on this. The conspiracy took its toll by splitting the nation into liberals/secularists, the moderates and what not, whereas the Pakistani nation for the last seven decades has been able to assimilate all such elements, into a perfect moderate Muslim society, living peacefully with the liberals, secularists and all schools of religious thought such as Khajji, Takfiri, Salfi, Wahabi, Qadri, Naqshbandi, Deobandi, Bareilvi, Shia and Sunni. But the "political ideological Crusade" by this terrible Mindset has debased the very face of the moderate Muslim Society of Pakistan. We have to correct this dangerous drift by enforcing a

simple decision to fortify the National Purpose as defined in the Constitution of Pakistan.

Next door, in Iran, they follow the system of governance, called Wilayat e Faqih, based on the principles of Quran and Sunnah, which gave them the strength to fight the machination of sanctions, embargo and invasion by Iraq. Iran emerged triumphant, riding the high tide of Islamic revolution. Similarly, the Afghans, upholding the system of Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, have defeated the mightiest of the might during the last three decades and stand firm in their resolve to reject the agenda of the occupation forces, because it contrasts with their value system, traditions and ideology. It was the ideology that prevailed. That also is the verdict of history for Pakistan.

Safeguarding the Basis of our Islamic System

Question: You said that Iran, Pakistan and Afghanistan will form an effective Islamic Alliance. It is obvious that it will not be tolerated by the Western World and they will do everything possible to damage the Muslim countries as they have been doing in the past. How can the Muslim countries safeguard the basis of their Islamic system?

Answer: Muslim leaders are aware of the likely conspiracies. Rohullah Khameni recently said, "the killing of Iranian Nuclear Scientist Mohsin Fakhrizadeh is not about Iranian Nukes, because our enemies are against the basis of our Islamic System, and they will never cease their enmity. This is the 'fundamental truth' that I would like to discuss, as to how relevant it is with regard to Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan and how capable we are to defend our values, our faith and belief.

Iran. In their first attempt, US failed to get the release of their hostages taken by the Iranian revolutionaries. The adventure turned into a disaster. Next they encouraged Saddam to invade Iran, which turned into an eight-year long blood bath, with Iran crossing the Shatt al-Arab, to capture Basra, when Saddam used chemical weapons, supplied by the civilized world, to stem the Iranian offensive. Then followed the series of crippling sanctions and embargos, for the next thirty years that also could not break the will of the Iranians. Early this year a loose coalition was formed under the Warsaw Plan, to punish Iran preceded by Trump's targeted assassination of Iranian General, Qasim Solemani. The Iranians launched preemptive strike, attacking Saudi Arabia and not USA or Israel. It was no ordinary attack, as described by a noted American journalist:

"In the early hours of September 14, 2019 — when the Iranian Air Force launched 20 drones and precision-guided cruise missiles at Abqaiq, one of Saudi Arabia's most important oil fields and processing centers, causing huge damage. It was a seminal event. The Iranian drones and cruise missiles flew so low and with such stealth that neither their takeoff nor their impending attack was detected in time by Saudi or US radar.

Israeli military analysts, who were stunned by the capabilities the Iranians displayed, argued that this surprise attack was the Middle East's "Pearl Harbor."

After Pearl Harbor of 1941, America joined World War II, but in this case Trump did not come to the aid of Saudi Arabia. He only sent a token force of 3000, ensuring that Saudi Arabia will "pay us for everything we are doing for them. That's a first."

During the 2006, Hizbollah-Israel war, Hizbollah defeated Israel, using a few thousand free-flight rockets. Now Iran and its allies, have amongst them over a million free-flight rockets and some precision-guided Iranian missiles. As if that was not enough-there are thousands of suicide bombers, waiting for orders to jump into the cauldron.

As regards the development of the atomic bomb by Iran, Trump helped Iran by pulling-out of the Nuclear Deal that may have encouraged Iran to carry out enrichment of uranium for the device. Similarly America helped Pakistan, join the war against Soviet occupation of Afghanistan, which provided cover for enrichment of uranium and development of the device. Despite the American Watch-dog's positive report about Pakistan's Nuclear Programme, the American President, year after year, verified before the Congress, to the contrary, that Pakistan was no-where near the stage, where it could assemble a nuclear device.

Afghanistan. For the last over four decades, the Afghans have defended the Basis of their Islamic System against the mightiest of the mighty of the world. In 1989 when Soviets retreated, Afghan Mujahideen were denied their right to form the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. A civil war was induced which led to emergence of Taliban rule. In 2001, America unleashed its "shock and awe" strategy to occupy Afghanistan to force the Taliban, give-up their demand for the Islamic Emirate. Taliban were not ready to oblige as Mullah Omer said, "we cannot be cheated again, as we were cheated in 1990 by, both – America and Pakistan".

Afghans have paid a very heavy price defending the 'Islamic System' adding a new chapter of armed resistance against the two super-powers of the world – a feat, which goes unparalleled in the annals of human struggle to protect ones faith, values ad belief. *Masha Allah.*

Taliban are in no hurry to see American troops, leave Afghanistan, because it is they who "have the Time, while the enemy holds the Clock." The ground realities, starkly suggest the 'comfort level' of Taliban as described by a noted Pakistani analyst:

"The Taliban even now, control most of the rural territory, run a shadow government, collect taxes, dominate the night and are a bulwark against the IS; as demonstrated by their successful operations in March 2020 to dislodge the IS from Kunar and surrounding areas. And if over 150,000 troops from some 50 most powerful countries

(2011) for over two decades could not stabilize Afghanistan; a handful of around 2000 troops can hardly make an impression. And the regime in Kabul stands on artificial and temporary moorings as president-elect is in no mood to extend a blank cheque and blanker cover towards it anymore.

"PM Imran Khan's recent journey to Kabul is considered ill-advised and ill-timed. Ghani stands on foreign legs and would be swept away by Taliban tidal waves in a matter of time."

Pakistan. Pakistan has not been very successful, defending its "basis of Islamic System," because from the very out-set, it joined the Cold War, siding with United States, which took control of our political and security systems, retarding healthy growth of our democratic and social order. But the worst happened to Pakistan in 2007, when US allocated a sum of US\$ 1.4 billion, for Perception Management of the Pakistani Nation, as if we were the 'Red-Indians' to be disciplined. And shamelessly our elected government allowed such funds to be dished-out direct to institutions, NGOs, individuals and for that matter, to anybody willing to achieve the purpose, with the result that a mindset has now developed amongst our educated lot, who talk of liberalism and secularism and a social order, where the individual, and not God is supreme.

This is the phenomenon which has created a dangerous social conflict in Pakistan, while our democratic order is so deeply fractured. Therefore, the need of the hour is to seek "social harmony" based on a just democratic order that could safeguard the 'basis of our Islamic System' resonating in harmony with Revolutionary Iran and Jehadi Afghanistan, to provide the much needed Strategic Depth of Security, to this part of the Islamic World, under attack.

Reasons of Political Instability in Pakistan

Question: Since the time of its inception, Pakistan could not achieve the stability which it deserved. Passing through various crises, we lost half of our country which is now known as Bangladesh. Some of the people think that Pakistan is a failed state. Why is it so? What are the reasons and how can we put the country in the right direction?

Answer: The main reason is our internal weaknesses which have not been rectified so far. We have not learnt any lesson from the past mistakes. We have not understood the importance of majority in a democratic system. We must accept the tyranny of majority.

Quaid e Azam and the leaders of Pakistan Movement had promised a democratic system which would be based on the golden principles of Quran and Sunnah. Quaid e Azam, in a public address to All India Muslim League gathering in 1939, spoke out his real mind. He said,

"I have seen enough of the world and possess a lot of wealth. I have enjoyed all comforts of life. Now my only desire is to see the Muslims flourish and prosper as an independent community. I want to leave this world with a clean conscience and content with the feeling that Jinnah had not betrayed the cause of Islam and the Muslims. I do not want your praise nor any certificate. I only want that my heart, my conscience and my faith should prove at the time of my death that Jinnah died defending Islam and cause of the Muslims. May my God testify that Jinnah lived and died a Muslim fighting against the forces of Kufr and holding the flag of Islam high".

The so called pseudo intellectuals do not get tired of claiming that Jinnah was a secular and liberal man. The above excerpt from his speech is enough to negate their claims. And this is not the only one, there are many. The 1973's constitution further elaborates the democratic system which means to accept the tyranny of majority. Unfortunately we deviated from this norm which resulted into separation of East Pakistan. The population of East Pakistan was 53% of the total population. Their majority was not accepted by our leadership. After Quaid e Azam, a leader like A. K. Fazlul Haq, known as Sher e Bengal (Tiger of Bengal) had the right to form the government and becoming the Prime Minister but the leaders of West Pakistan deprived him of his due right. In the elections of 1954, Hussain Shaheed Sohrwardi, Maulana Bhashani, A. K. Fazlul Haq and Shaikh Mujeebur Rehman participated in the election and won the majority but they were not allowed to form the government.

Similarly, Mohtarma Fatima Jinnah gained majority in 1965 elections from East Pakistan but the elections were rigged and she was shown defeated. It deepened the bitter feelings in East Pakistan. Again in the 1970 elections, Shaikh Mujeeb ur Rahman's party Awami League got clear majority. President Yahya Khan addressed him as the future Prime Minister and during his visit to Dacca he announced to convene the National Assembly Session on 3rd March 1971 but after returning to West Pakistan, he backed out which deteriorated the situation in East Pakistan and resulted in separation of the two wings. Democracy means Respect of the majority; sanctity of the vote.

Our national institutions are weak and our political leaders do not abide by the democratic norms which can be called political immaturity. It badly affects our political and national affairs. USA was instrumental in bringing military rules four times in Pakistan. In 2007, efforts were made to change the entire system of the government through Musharraf, but the conspiracy failed because the military leadership refused to become part of it and kept the army aloof. The election results were quite contrary to Musharraf's expectations. Peoples Party formed the government in the center and Muslim League emerged victorious in the most populated province of Punjab. It created turmoil in American lobbies which we have mentioned earlier.

Majority of the Punjab has always been impinging the lobbies of power and has caused ups and downs in our politics. Our friend-like enemies have always exploited the

situation to gain short term benefits. The job is very easy; our National Assembly should rectify the flaws and weaknesses in our system. More provinces can be carved out to maintain a balance in the country and our enemy should not be able to exploit the weaknesses.

It is due to this weakness that ordinary differences which could be resolved through negotiations were snubbed and military action was used. Military action was used to resolve the political matters of Baluchistan, Dir, Bajaur and FATA, despite the fact that we had experienced the fatal consequences in East Pakistan of such actions. It should have served as an eye opener for us.

The Pakistan Movement was a political movement which was zenith of political wisdom of Quaid e Azam and his companions. They gained freedom through a political and organized movement. There were no restrictions on the religion on the Muslims wherever they were in India and it was due to this reason that most of the Religious Parties did not participate in the Pakistan Movement. Maulana Shabbir Ahmed Usmani supported Quaid e Azam parting his ways from his party.

The demand for Pakistan was basically meant to provide protection to the Muslim majority areas; to ward off the dominance of Hindus in social and economic fields. We see the atrocities of Narinder Modi , how he has made the lives of Muslims miserable and the Muslims in Kashmir have been subjected to all types of cruelty and tyranny. Quaid e Azam through his farsightedness had anticipated the danger.

Our political parties hold the religious parties responsible for all evils despite the fact that these parties have no role in forming or running the government. They are an ignored force but yet our political parties remain scared of them. Until and unless these religious parties are brought in the main stream of politics, social confusion will persist. The fault does not lie with religious schools, the fault is with our directionless political thinking.

Deviation from our national ideology is very dangerous. It has been laid down in our constitution that the system of the government will be democratic, based on the golden principles of Quran and Sunnah. All the governments which came to the power, emphasized on democracy and ignored Quranic injunctions and Sunnah. Religion does not mean theocracy. There is no room for theocracy in Islam. What I mean is that basic religious education should be given to every Muslim. The easiest way is to develop particular religious syllabus to be adopted in our schools. This has been obligatory in the constitution. The ideological difference in our society will lead to anarchy which was witnessed in Indonesia in 1965 and led to civil war in which thousands of people were killed.

USA was cognizant of our weaknesses right from the beginning and had been exploiting these weaknesses to get benefits. Her policies harmed our national interests badly. We have been fighting for their interests. We joined hands with USA to fight against Russia and sided with them to fight against our own brotherly Muslim country, Afghanistan. We faced terrorism due to these wrong decisions and then sacrificed thousands of men trying to eradicate it. Yet it is said that we are not doing our duties properly and directed to "Do more". We are asked to bring the brave Afghans to the negotiation table to sit with the puppet of USA, Ashraf Ghani.

We cannot fulfill these demands because we have severed our ties with them fighting against them, in collaboration with the foreigners. The families of those who were fighting against the enemy were expelled from Pakistan in 2010. If they got annoyed, it was a natural reaction against the stupid policies of our governments. On the contrary, Iranian government supported them, protected their families and provided all help. Today USA need our help to settle their dispute with Afghans but our capabilities are limited. We need help from Turkey, Russia and China. God has given us an opportunity to compensate for our mistakes and revive our relations with them by helping them to restore peace in Afghanistan according to their will.

We don't get tired of talking about democracy but we have not understood its meaning. We neither respect sanctity of the vote nor respect the public opinion. The source of power in democracy are the people but we have devised novel ways of ignoring their opinions and ambushing the public mandate.

To gain the good will of the foreign masters, our establishment has been a corroborator in this game of converting the majority into minority. Injustice and suppression of the rights of the smaller provinces is also an important reason. We have never seriously tried to understand their problems. Rather than resolving their problems through negotiations, we preferred military actions to tame them. It is the root cause of our many problems. If we decide to act upon the ideology of Pakistan as explained by our founder, all our problems can be resolved. While addressing the first constituent assembly of Pakistan in 1947, he said, "You may belong to any religion, community or group, you will have equal rights as citizen of Pakistan. It does not affect our principles".

These are the important problems which need our immediate attention. We have to rise above our personal interests to safeguard our national interests. The strong determination and sincerity is the condition.

Two nations in our neighborhood have set glittering examples. Their Ideology of life is dearer to them and they have safeguarded their national interests with utmost devotion and determination. The Afghani nation has defeated the super powers within a few decades which has no parallel in history. Iran has also changed the strategic pivot in the

Middle East despite atrocities by USA and economic sanctions. USA has been forced to sit with them on negotiation table.

Question: The armed forces followed a constitutional procedure in 1988 by handing over the power to the then Senate Chairman. Had it been followed in 1969, the course of history would have been different but President Ayub Khan handed it over to General Yahya Khan. What do you say about it?

Answer: It was lack of confidence in politicians that led him to hand over the power to General Yahya. Ayub Khan announced on national network that due to the deteriorating law and order situation he was resigning. It ended his ten year tenure which started on 27th October 1958 due to political turmoil in the country at that time. While resigning, general Muhammed Ayub Khan wrote a letter to General Yahya which encompasses the whole situation of that time. It may be noted that the abrogation of the constitution was not suggested in this letter, an action that General Yahya Khan took on his own initiative soon after assuming power.

*From
Field Marshall Muhammad Ayub Khan,
N.Pk., H.J.*

My Dear General Yahya,

It is with profound regret that I have come to the conclusion that all civil administration and constitutional authority in the country has become ineffective. If the situation continues to deteriorate at the present alarming rate, all economic life, indeed, civilized existence will become impossible.

I am left with no option but to step aside and leave it to the Defence Forces of Pakistan, which today represent the only effective and legal instrument, to take full control of the country. They are by the grace of God in a position to retrieve the situation and to save the country from utter chaos and total destruction. They alone can restore sanity and put the country back on the road to progress in a civil and constitutional manner.

The restoration and maintenance of full democracy according to the fundamental principles of our faith and the needs of our people must remain our ultimate goal. In that lies the salvation of our people who are blessed with the highest qualities of dedication and vision and who are destined to play a glorious role in the world.

It is most tragic that while we were well on our way to a happy and prosperous future, we were plunged into an abyss of senseless agitation. Whatever may have been used to glorify it, time will show that this turmoil was deliberately created by well-tutored and well-backed elements. They made it impossible for the government to maintain any semblance of law and order, to protect the civil liberties, life and property of the people.

Every single instrument of administration and every medium of expression of saner public expression was subjected to ruthless public criticism and blackmail. The result is that all social and ethical norms have been destroyed and instruments of government have become inoperative and ineffective.

The economic life of the country has all but collapsed. Workers and laborers are being incited and urged to commit acts of lawlessness and brutality. While demands for higher wages, salaries and amenities are being extracted under threat of violence, production is going down. There has been serious fall in exports and I am afraid the country may find itself soon in the grip of serious inflation.

All this is the result of the reckless conduct of those who, acting under cover of a mass movement, struck blow after blow at the very root of the country during the last few months. The pity is that a large number of innocent but gullible people became victims to their innocent designs.

I have served my people to the best of my ability under all circumstances. Mistakes there must have been but what has been achieved and accomplished is not negligible. There are some who would like to undo all that I have done and even that which was done by the governments before me. But the most tragic and heart-rending thought is that there were elements at work that would like to undo even what the Quaid-i-Azam had done, namely the creation of Pakistan.

I have exhausted all possible civil and constitutional means to resolve the present crisis. I offered to meet all those regarded as the leaders of the people. Many of them came to a conference recently but after I had fulfilled all their pre-conditions, some declined to come for reasons best known to them. I asked these people to evolve an agreed formula. They failed to do so in spite of days of deliberations. They finally agreed on two points and I accepted both of them. I then offered that the un-agreed issues should be referred to the representatives of the people after they had been elected on the basis of direct adult franchise. My argument was that the delegates in the conference who had not been elected by the people could not arrogate to themselves the authority to decide all civil and constitutional issues including those on which even they are not agreed among themselves. I thought that I would call the national assembly to consider the two agreed points but it soon became obvious that this would be an exercise in futility. The members of the assembly are no longer free agents and there is no likelihood of the agreed two points being faithfully adopted. Indeed members are being threatened and compelled either to boycott the session or to move such amendments as "would liquidate the central government, make the maintenance of the armed forces impossible, divide the economy of the country and break up Pakistan into little bits and pieces. Calling the assembly in such chaotic conditions can only aggravate the situation. How can anyone deliberate coolly and dispassionately on fundamental problems under threat of instant violence.

It is beyond the capacity of the civil government to deal with the present complex situation and the Defence forces must step in. It is your legal and constitutional responsibility to defend the country not only against external aggression but also to save it from internal disorder and chaos. The nation expects you to discharge this responsibility to preserve the security and integrity of the country and to restore normal, social, economic and administrative life. Let peace and happiness be brought back to this anguished land of 120 million people.

I believe you have the capacity, patriotism, dedication and imagination to deal with the formidable problems facing the country. You are the leader of the force which enjoys the respect and admiration of the whole world. Your colleagues in the Pakistan Air Force and in the Pakistan Navy are men of honor and I know that you will always have their full support. Together the armed forces of Pakistan must save Pakistan from disintegration.

I should be grateful if you would convey to every soldier, sailor and airman that I shall always be proud of having been associated with them as their Supreme Commander. Each one of them must know that in this grave hour they have to act as the custodians of Pakistan. Their conduct and actions must be inspired by the principles of Islam and by the conviction that they are serving the interests of their people.

It has been a great honor to have served the valiant and inspired people of Pakistan for so long a period. May God guide them to move toward greater prosperity and glory.

I must also record my great appreciation of your unswerving loyalty. I know that patriotism has been a constant source of inspiration for you all your life. I pray for your success and for the welfare and happiness of my people.

*Khuda Hafiz,
Yours sincerely,
M. Ayub Khan
General A. M. Yahya Khan
H.Pk., H.J., C-in-C (Army)
General Headquarters, Rawalpindi.*

Importance of National Security Council

It is not easy to run the government these days. Our governments have been running it with the help of "Kitchen Cabinet", Core committees or through Adhoc Group. In the civilized government important responsibilities are assigned to the National Security Council. It consists of representatives of Research Institutes, selected technocrats and experts of various fields. They put up their recommendations to the government and the head of the state decides to implement them within the available resources. India had established the National Security Council 20 year before and benefitted from it.

Formulation of knowledge based policies are possible with the help of the intellectuals' opinions. Surprisingly, our rulers are allergic and scared of the name of National Security Council.

The present National Security Council is not active since 2008 The NSC was abandoned by the government of Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP), with a unified confirmation from the Parliament, and its functions have been taken over by the Defence Cabinet Committee as of 2009. One of our weaknesses is that we refuse to accept the ground realities and close our eyes to face the facts. No nation can find an honorable place in the comity of nations unless it acts according to its ideology. Our ideology is mentioned in our constitution but we have always deviated from it. We have to give up this attitude. Unless we have close links with our origin (Islam), expectations for better life will remain a crazy dream.

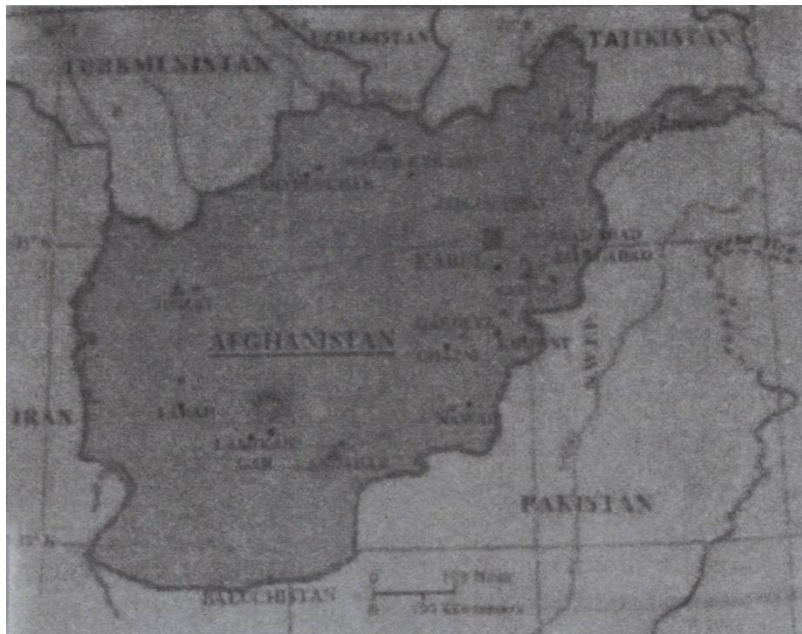
Global Conspiracies Against Pakistan

Question: Pakistan is engaged in military action against miscreants on its western borders for many years, yet terrorism has not been wiped out. What are the reasons and who is responsible for this?

Answer: Main reason is Global conspiracies that have been hatched against Pakistan. The conspiracies started with the occupation of Afghanistan in October 2001, when a large intelligence set-up was created at Jabal-us-Seraj, north of Kabul, to provide the much needed intelligence to the occupation forces, who failed to consolidate their hold over the territories of Afghanistan, except the garrisoned cities of Kabul and Kandahar and the few air bases. The areas in the north from Heart to Mazar-e-Sharif to Badakhshan are virtually under the control of the warlords. In the south, areas bordering Pakistan, are practically controlled by the Taliban. Afghanistan, as such presents a sad picture of a fractured society and a 'free for all' territory for the smugglers, narcotic dealers, conspirators, intelligence agencies and the NGO's to operate with impunity.

US and India signed the Strategic Partnership Deal in 2005, with the declared objectives, "to contain and curb the rising military and economic power of China and the increasing threat of Islamic extremism in the region." In this respect, both found harmony and commonality of interests in pursuit of these objectives. However, as military situation worsened, attention got focused on the establishment of a large intelligence network in Afghanistan, to destabilize Pakistan and other neighboring countries such as China, Russia, Central Asian States and Iran. It was this time that the US state department declared that Afghanistan, which has been part of the Central Asia is part of the South Asia." The implicit purpose was to bring Afghanistan, within easy reach of India, to use it as the base for intelligence network against the neighboring countries. For this purpose, a vast intelligence network, has since been established and is fully operational.

We have enough information to identify this intelligence network inside Afghanistan to accurately determine the dimensions of this Great Game. The nerve center is at Jabal-us-Seraj, manned and operated by CIA, Raw, Mossad, MI-6 and BND (German Intelligence). It's a huge setup with concrete buildings, antennas and all the modern electronic gadgetry one can conceive of. Its out-posts are Sarobi and Kandahar against Pakistan; Faizabad against China; Mazar-e-Sharif against Russia and Central Asian States and Herat against Iran, as indicated in the map:



Intelligence Network of the Occupation Forces of Afghanistan

Sarobi is the nerve center headed by an Indian General Officer, who also commands the Border Road Organization (BRO). Its forward bases are, Ghazni, Khowst, Gardeyz, Jalalabad, Asadabad, Wakhan and Faizabad. BRO has built an all-weather road from Sarobi to Asadabad to Faizabad. Sarobi network, targets the province of NWFP, Pakistan. Dissidents from Pakistan are trained at Sarobi for mission inside NWFP. Wakhan salient has been infested with dozens of electronic outposts, covering Pakistan, China, Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Kandahar has its forward bases at Lashkargah and Nawah. Their target area is the province of Baluchistan. The dissidents from Baluchistan are trained at Lashkargah for undertaking mission in Baluchistan as well as in support of the Balochistan Liberation Army (BLA). One of their tasks is to target Chinese working in province, particularly at Gawadar, Sandak and Hab. The American anchorages, on the Pakistani coast at Jawani and Kalamat, jointly plan operations with BLA inside Baluchistan. They also use Pakistani out-posts at Mand, for operations inside Iran. The American warships in the

Arabian Sea and their intelligence base in Muscat, provide the back-up support. The facilities at Jawani and Kalamat were provided by Pakistan, as logistic support bases to the Americans for operation in Afghanistan, but the same are now being used to destabilize Baluchistan and Iran.

Against China. The setup at Faizabad (Badakhshan) holds over 350 personnel mainly Muslim soldiers, engineers and workers from India. It serves as the training camp for Chinese dissidents from the Xingjian province. Indian Ulemas impart motivational education, giving the impression that the entire out-fit at Faizabad was run by Pakistanis. The recently acquired facility for military deployment by India, across border in Tajikistan at Kali Kumli, adds a meaningful capability to India to operate inside Tajikistan, as well as Uzbekistan.

Against Russia. The intelligence bases at Mazar-e-Sharif is run jointly by CIA, RAW, Mossad and BND. Chechnyan dissident and agents from Turkmenistan are trained for operation in these countries. Rasheed Dostum and Ahmad Zia Masood are very active supporters of such activities in Uzbekistan and Tajikistan.

Against Iran. The forward bases at Herat and Farah are manned by CIA, RAW and Mossad for subversive activities inside Iran. Jointly operating with the bases inside Pakistan, such as Kalamat, Jawani and Mand, they have been able to undertake terrorist actions inside Iran, killing a number of security forces personnel. The terrorist organizations raised and named as Jandullah have been used for conduct of such operations inside Iran.

The outposts of this network have been granted the status of 'Consulates' to provide diplomatic cover for their activities. To cover-up their crime, they blame Pakistan and Iran for supporting terrorists in Afghanistan, whereas Afghan territory is being violated so blatantly to destabilize the neighboring countries of Afghanistan, by nations, who claim to be the flag bearers of the ideals of international norms of justice and fair play. This is the worst kind of 'Terrorism through Consensus', by the so-called civilized nations in occupation of Afghanistan. The brutal violation of Afghanistan's sovereignty for the shameful purpose of destabilization of Pakistan and the regional countries is condemnable. Was this the purpose of the strategic partnership deal between India, United States and NATO?

What has been said in this paper is based on our research and study. Yet it is surprising that after so much of suffering, as the result of this conspiracy, the government of Pakistan has woken-up now, to say that "foreign hands are involved in recent killings of the Chinese," and on the floor of the assembly, the finger was pointed also to CIA. Why this announcement has come so late? Why culpable lack of responsibility to protect our national interests, while our enemies have spun a web of espionage and conspiracies, which undermines our national security.

Our national ideology of life is very clear and further clarified by our founder Quaid e Azam Muhammed Ali Jinnah. A few excerpts from his speeches have been quoted earlier. I shall add a few more. While addressing the troops at Malir Cantt in February, 1948, he said,

"You are to defend our Islamic democracy which is based on social justice. The principle of equal rights for all, brotherhood, social coordination and unity is the integral part of our civilization and culture".

While addressing at Chittagong on 23 rd March, 1948, he said,

"I can say with full confidence that our system of government will be based on the basic principles of Islam which will be democratic. These principles we follow and were enforced thirteen hundred years ago".

While addressing Sibbi Darbar on 14th February, 1948, he said,

"Following the golden principles of life is the way to our progress and becoming powerful which had been formulated into laws by our Prophet (PBUH)

The guiding principles for the government were laid down by Quaid e Azam much earlier, yet we took about quarter of a century to draft the first constitution of Pakistan.

Freedom of Kashmir is Imminent

Question: For the last one year, Kashmiris have been subjected to the worst type of tyranny while it was being said that time of their freedom had arrived. How do you see the situation in Kashmir?

Answer: Narendra Modi has accelerated the cruel actions in Kashmir due to the very fact that Kashmiris are determined to win the final phase of their struggle for freedom. It is necessary to understand the background of Kashmir Problem.

The Afghans had occupied Punjab and Kashmir after fighting against Mughals and ruled these areas for a long time. Afghans were over thrown by Sikhs who ruled Punjab and Kashmir. When the English came to the sub-continent, they defeated Sikhs and occupied Punjab and Kashmir. Later on, Maharaja Gulab Singh paid 7,500,000 Nanak Shahi and entered into an agreement which is known as "Lahore Armistice". He thus became ruler of Kashmir in 1846. On his death in 1885, Partab Singh sat on the throne. According to the prevailing conditions at that time, nobody from outside the state could purchase any land in Kashmir. This law was effective till recent times. Nobody from Pakistan or India could purchase land there. Modi has introduced new legislation which allowed the Indians to purchase land there and become citizens of Kashmir.

At the time of partition of the sub-continent, Maharaja Hari Singh was the ruler of Kashmir. When the states were given the option to join India or Pakistan according to the aspirations of their people, the Muslims desired to Join Pakistan. Hari Singh wanted to remain independent. There were two political parties at that time; Muslim Conference and National Conference. Muslim Conference enjoyed majority in the Kashmir Legislative Assembly. On July 19, 1947, a convention of All Jammu & Kashmir Muslim Conference, adopted the "Accession to Pakistan Resolution" demanding accession of the Kashmir state to Pakistan. This was included into the 1974 Constitution of Azad Kashmir. The armed struggle for the freedom was led by 22 year old Sardar Abdul Qayyum. This struggle which started on 23rd August 1947 from Neela But continued for fifteen months and an area of 84 thousand square miles was liberated which is now Azad Jammu and Kashmir and Gilit, Baltistan.

When Maharaja Hari Singh realized that the situation was slipping from his hands, he sought help from Shaikh Abdullah and Indian Government stating that Pakistan had invaded his state. Indian forces landed in Srinagar but fearing the advance of the Mujahideen, she approached UNO. UNO sponsored ceasefire and formed a group, United Nation's Commission for India and Pakistan. UNO also passed a resolution demanding both the countries to arrange a plebiscite to enable the people of Kashmir to decide which country they wanted to join.

Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehro while addressing on All India Radio, on 2nd November, 1947 said,

"The option to decide the fate of Jammu and Kashmir rests with the people of Kashmir. We have made a pledge to the people of Kashmir and to the world and we shall not deviate from it".

Addressing the Indian parliament on 25 November, 1947, he said,

"We have proposed that when the plebiscite is held to enable the people of Kashmir to decide their future, it should be held under the supervision of a neutral tribunal to be appointed by UNO".

Shaikh Abdullah did oppose the accession with Pakistan, but he never talked of accession with India. In this background, the occupied Kashmir is not part of India; it is a disputed territory and its fate is yet to be decided. After the ceasefire and UNO resolution, Azad Kashmir was declared the Base Camp for freedom struggle. The puppet governments established in the Indian occupied Kashmir have never been accepted by the people.

Three wars were fought between India and Pakistan on Kashmir. In the meanwhile, UNO had passed 19 resolutions to which India has turned deaf ears. Kashmiris are struggling and have sacrificed more than 150,000 people against the barbarism of Indian 900,000 troops there.

The peace in our region depends upon resolution of the important issues and Kashmir is the most important. The so called civilized world have adopted a criminal silence on this issue. UNO's role is also shameful that it has failed to implement its resolutions. Appreciable thing is that they have rejected the Indian proposal to remove all resolutions on Kashmir from the UNO agenda. India claims to be the biggest democracy in the world but it's cruel actions in the occupied Kashmir are the black slur on her secular face and democracy.

Question: With the imposition of strict restrictions on Kashmiris during last one year, it appears that the Freedom Struggle has slowed down. The Indian Government has amended the constitution also and allowed the Indians to purchase land in Kashmir and become Kashmiri Citizens. What do you say to that?

Answer: Since the time Kashmiris have taken the freedom movement in their own hands, it has taken a new turn. The tyrannical forces feel helpless. The freedom movement will reach its logical conclusion. Modi government has realized it and that is why they have increased the restrictions and their troops in the valley.

The freedom movement got fillip with the martyrdom of Maqbool But. He was imprisoned in Srinagar Jail on the charges of murder from where he escaped with his two companions on 8th December 1968 through a tunnel. They travelled for weeks on snow covered mountains. Their feet were injured. Facing a lot of hardships, they reached the LOC and told their story to the local people. They carried them on their shoulders and brought to the village. Their feet were treated. Maqbool But conveyed the information to the Pakistan Army. He was brought to Chinari. Troops treated him with great respect but when President Ayub Khan learnt that he was the companion of K. H. Khurshid, all three were imprisoned in the Black Fort of Muzafarabad. He was subjected to severe violence and beating but he kept quiet. He said that he could protest against the cruelty of others but how could he speak against own people. General Ayub thought that he was opposing the Tashkent Agreement. So he was kept behind the bars. Protesting demonstrations were held against his arrest in various cities of Pakistan and Azad Kashmir and finally he was released.

At the time of 1970 elections, he demanded that the elections should also be held in Gilgit and Baltistan. He was arrested in Gilgit. In the meantime, two young men, Hashim Qureshi and Ashraf Qureshi hijacked an Indian plane, Ganga and brought to Lahore. Maqbool But was arrested again on the charges of collaborating with the hijackers. When he was released after two years, the then Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali

Bhutto offered him to join Peoples Party and in turn he would be made Prime Minister of Azad Kashmir. He thanked him but politely declined the offer saying that his destination was not prime minister ship. He was fighting for the freedom of Kashmir.

He went back to the Occupied Kashmir in 1976 where he was arrested again. When General Zia took over, his foreign Minister Agha Shahi advised him to help the freedom fighters of Kashmir but General Zia was collaborating with USA in Afghanistan. General Zia was taken aback when India occupied Siachin in 1984. The same year Maqbool Bhat was hanged resulting in wide spread demonstrations in Kashmir. Nawaz Sharif had banned his books in Pakistan - "*The story of escape from Srinagar prison*" and "*Who am I*".

Imran Khan Government has raised the voice at diplomatic level which is appreciable. Soon the freedom movement will reach its logical conclusion and the people will decide their own fate. What will be their decision, we must keep the possibilities in sight otherwise we may feel humiliated. The broad possibility is that they will accede to Pakistan but keeping in view the cold attitude of our governments in the past, vague policies on Kashmir, political turmoil and military actions against our own people may create doubts in their minds. There will also be a question mark about their relationship with Azad Kashmir because Azad Kashmir has no role in the freedom movement. There is a clear difference of attitude between the people of the Occupied and Azad Kashmir. All these things should be kept in mind and a strategy be ready so that there is no difficulty in accession.

Now with the abolition of article 370 and 35A, Modi wants to transform the population of Kashmir into non-Muslim majority as Trump is doing in Palestine by handing over Jerusalem and their land to Jews. Keeping in view the Indian conspiracies and evil designs, it is important to make decisions in the light of new emerging realities:

- The moment, the last soldier of the occupying forces gets out of Afghanistan, Mujahideen will rush to Kashmir and freedom movement will become violent. India has already sent two division troops there to control the situation resulting after abolition of article 370 and 35A.
- India has decided to crush the movement mercilessly because they do understand that any weakness on their part will accelerate the movement and it will also encourage the other separatist movements in different parts of India. So India will not hesitate in taking coercive steps.
- Implementation of Warsaw plan has started engaging Pakistan in Kashmir so that it cannot help Iran. It will help Israel in limiting Iran's military and economic power.

Coordinated planning is most important for Pakistan in taking the necessary steps keeping in view the demands of national security. Developing our strategy, we should give equal importance to diplomatic, political, economic and military aspects which should reflect the national aspirations. A few points for military planning are:

The base of our national security is the regional alliance between Pakistan, Afghanistan and Iran. The combined force of the alliance will foil the conspiracies against any country. It is an undebatable fact which has been blocked through conspiracies.

Iran has proved to be a brave nation in thwarting the USA conspiracies and unethical economic sanctions. It is now ready to face the evil challenges of Warsaw plan. We badly need each other's help in this difficult time.

Our armed forces are great hindrance against the expansionist designs of India. Our army is the best army of the world and Insha Allah will be victorious in case of any war. We must be ready for any eventuality of war to keep our independence intact. Preparations for war are necessary to protect our independence and water which is vital for life. The real strategy is to achieve the objective without a war.

The objective of whatever is happening in Kashmir, is to convert the Muslim Majority into Hindu Majority area. Kashmiris know it that if the government plans succeed, their independence will be lost and the only Muslim State of Kashmir will perish. Modi agenda is just like the one, USA undertook a few centuries back when Red Indians were restricted to certain areas and they are still confined to those settlements.

Modi agenda is indirectly inviting the Jihadis around the globe to rush to Kashmir and launch Jihad against Kufr. These Jihadis will take over the freedom movement in their hands and tomorrow India will be begging them for peace the way USA is doing today begging Afghan Taliban. This is the force which has defeated all satanic forces that consider Islam as their enemy. They have destroyed many Muslim countries during last four decades but Allah will fulfill His promise: "They (The Unbelievers) like to extinguish God's light with their mouths, but God will not allow but that His light should be perfected, even though the Unbelievers may detest". (32-9)

New War Devices & Pakistan's Responsibilities

Question: Various new war devices have been invented these days. What are their capabilities and how can Pakistan defend itself against these devices?

Answer: The modern technique is not to destroy the enemy through war but to acquire such weapons and technology which may frighten the enemy and adopt a strategy that the enemy, under pressure, may lose the courage to fight. Thus you attain the objective without a devastating war. For this, we must know what the capabilities of the enemy

are and what dangers can be created for us. We must also assess our own technologies and its capabilities. New devices are:

- Space warfare. USA is working on it. She has created "Space Command". Other countries having resources are also busy in acquiring this technology.
- Cyber warfare. It aims at weakening the enemy's ideology, exciting revolt among their ranks, spreading terrorism and confusion and establishing governments of own choice in the enemy country. Our country is subjected to this conspiracy for the last many years.
- Artificial Intelligence Warfare. By using computer technology, destroy the enemy's capabilities which are connected with computers, control their computers, jam them or hack their data.
- Guerilla Warfare/Psychological warfare. This have been in use for centuries.

New strategy of the present era is known as the Hybrid Warfare. Some people call it the Fifth Generation Warfare. To counter all these warfare, "Jihadi warfare" has come into being as a reaction to enemy actions. It is now haunting the Modi's nerves.

Our Political Dynamics: Challenges & Response

Question: Maulana Fazlur Rehman started long march against the government of Imran Khan then laid *Dharna* (sit in) for quite some time. What is your assessment?

Answer: Imran Khan introduced "*Dharna*" in 2014, to bring about regime change. The same now has recoiled back on him, knocking at his doors with greater intensity. The Religious Right under Maulana Fazlur Rahman's Jamiat-e-Ulema-e-Islatn (JUI-F) having remained a marginalized political entity for the last seventy two years, has suddenly emerged at the central stage of national politics, knocking at the "gates of power with a mammoth gathering of over 500,000 of his supporters. He is accompanied and supported by the top political leadership of the country, who declared:

Shahbaz Sharif: "Imran is brainless and a threat to the country."

Bilawal Zardari: "Selected government, time is up."

Asfandiyar Wali "Puppet PM must go."

Mahmud Khan Achakzai: "A failed government has no right to govern."

The crowd roars: "Go Imran go."

What an irony of fate, that only a few years back, here at D Chowk, it was none else but Imran demanding ouster of Nawaz Sharif government. He succeeded taking-over the government, as its Prime Minister, with the promise to lead the nation to the lofty goal of a "New Pakistan" free from corruption and exploitation. But he failed and failed miserably, alienating himself politically, creating more enemies than friends he could make, with the result that the crowd surge of over half a million which now supports Maulana at Islamabad, consisted of three main elements:

Maulana's own party, a diehard disciplined lot.

The broad masses suffering from the ills of Imran's bad governance, with no hope of improvement of their lot.

The angry youth, who reject liberalism and secularism or any other ism, stick to their faith.

Imran's political alienation has been caused because of his strong urge to correct things in haste. He went too far, defaming and degrading his political opponents. He downgraded the parliament — his political bed-rock. Imran relied more on the support of the national institutions than the strong political base he had inherited.

Seeking spiritual guidance, Imran got lost between Islam, liberalism and the khankah. He himself admits.

"My Islam was selective. I accepted only parts of the religion that suited me. It was not so much out of conviction but love for my mother that I stayed a Muslim" — Arab News.

While Allah commands the Muslims to enter into the religion wholeheartedly. (32-8)

Thus Imran created a political vacuum, which has now been filled by the 'Religious Right' led by shrewd Maulana Fazlur Rehman, who took the lead and gave the call to the opposition to join him. Willy Nilly, the opposition now stands with him.

Maulana then played real politics and negotiated safe entry into the critical zone of Islamabad, and by mid-night of 31st October, his crowd swelled to over half a million - the "critical mass" that gives him what we call in our military terminology the "*Superiority of Strategic Orientation*" threatening multiple objectives. He is now in a comfortable position to dictate-terms.

Now there are two centers of power — the Critical Mass, Maulana has created and The Parliament, which has been so debased by Imran, through personal disregard and Presidential Ordinances. The opposition, therefore, has to rise to lift the parliament to its rightful place and negotiate a political solution. Luckily the Critical Mass is

disciplined and appears amenable to such a solution. The opposition has the "collective responsibility" to save the situation. They are now meeting separately, to develop the plan for removal of the government.

Fresh elections were not the answer, because all the parties are bruised and battered. They need time to regain their vitality which is possible if a couple of years' time is gained by establishing a National Government for national integration and for the parties to get vitalized and necessary steps taken to facilitate the election process.

Yet all this is not so simple to achieve in a charged and turbulent regional security environment. It is the collective responsibility of the parliament, the politicians and the national institutions to rise to the occasion to deliver.

Comparison Between PDM and PNA

Question: It is said that PDM is similar to PNA which was an alliance to oust Bhutto. How do you compare the two movements?

Answer: The PNA was an Alliance, while the PDM is a Movement and that subtle difference explains the game that was played in 1977 and the one that has yet to begin now. PNA had a foreign agenda, seeking Bhutto's elimination because he had initiated Pakistan's Nuclear Programme, had brought about unity of the Muslim World through OIC Session in Pakistan, a leaderless organization which King Faisal had agreed to lead. Bhutto established the strategic linkage with China, through Karakoram highway.

Bhutto was politically powerful and he could be brought down only through non-political means. Thus the religious parties and a group of political opportunists got together to play the game. Amongst the political leaders were such personalities who had no qualm directly calling the Army Chief to take-over, because, without the strong hands of the Army, American agenda could not be completed. It all happened as planned. Both Bhutto and King Faisal were eliminated, one after another.

The PDM is quite different. It has no foreign agenda. It is a movement that will use democratic means to bring-about change — a natural reaction to:

"Imran Khan's vision of Naya Pakistan, based on the fundamental socio-economic principles of Riasal-e-Madina; a corruption free Pakistan and return of the looted wealth of the people of Pakistan."

These issues have been pressed ruthlessly for the last two years, focusing on corrupt politicians, under a slur campaign, launched so crudely, that has debased political parties as well as democratic values. The Courts of Law, NAB, FIA and the intelligence agencies are in hot pursuit of the corrupt without any significant improvement in day to day life of the common folks. "Unchecked use of authority and rulers inability to

government, has led to loss of authority and power deflation." Press gag, has further eroded the moral authority of the government.

The situation has thus created a suffocating atmosphere forcing the opposition to join hands, to correct the course. Young Bilawal Bhutto was able to put the 'humpty dumpty' of the opposition together, which consists of two major political parties and a strong religious group, that can mobilize large crowd as it did early this year, near Islamabad. It is a formidable lot, ever garnered together for a common cause, and certainly can create difficulties for the government, particularly when Imran Khan himself says "Both PML(N) and PPP are the product of the establishment." He should know that establishment's mood changes with the mood of the public, though the 'pitch' may be the same. Imran therefore has two options:

- Adopt a conciliatory approach and find a political solution for early elections, leading to a coalition government and save the country from a painful transition.
- Let the opposition play its hands and Imran to fight it out an uncertain end.

Imran Khan is loath to meeting the opposition; hence Army Chief met the opposition to ease the tension. Knowing Imran Khan, who "fights, till the last ball", he would prefer the matter to be decided in the open field. In response to that the opposition has evolved a political strategy, for the movement which is very different from the PNA alliance, such as:

The APC declaration was read-out by Maulana Fazlur Rehman and not by any political leader.

The lead role has been assigned to JUI(F) with a political purpose, unlike religious parties of PNA who had a negative role. It means that, in any future set-up, JUI(F) will gain significant political space for itself something that was long awaited, particularly during the 2018 elections, when religious parties tried to enter the mainstream national politics, they were denied entry, particularly Maulana Samiul Haq, who stood on the side of PTI, but was ignored.

There is no Asghar Khan amongst them, who could appeal to the Army Chief to take-over the reigns of the government, when things go wrong.

Nawaz Sharif's sharp address has precisely focused on the important issue, which is being construed as creating misunderstanding between national institutions.

The decision to use force has been taken. Shahbaz Sharif has been nabbed, Zardari indicted and the witch-hunt has started. Imran may be tempted to mobilize the Tiger Force, as Bhutto used FSF, with dire consequences. It will create a critical situation for

the government calling for the Army to take-over. Whereas, the masses are in no mood to invite another military rule.

The opposition leaders as a whole consist of politicians dubbed as corrupt, yet amongst them are clean and competent ones also, who have experience of governance, and have respect for rule of law and democratic values. They will take charge, establishing the precedence of a clean change-over, than a take-over by a "Nexus of Four As, or through the Deep State manipulations.

People are ready to "give a chance to democracy, to breathe fresh air, despite covid-19 virus pollutions." The time for this 'noble thought' is now, to become a reality, an unstoppable force, that cannot be stemmed.

Civil Military Relations

Question: It is generally said that the present government of Imran Khan has come to the power with the help of the Army and men in uniform are the persons who are calling the shots. Is it true?

Answer: It is difficult to understand the relationship of the army with political parties. When the army stays away from the politics, it is said that the relations with the army are strained as happened when General Raheel Sharif was the Army Chief. When he retired, the companions of Nawaz Sharif said, "Thank God, he has gone. He was riding on our nerves". On the contrary, General Bajwa is keeping close relations with the government. It is being said that he is patronizing them.

When Imran Khan laid the Dharna, he kept waiting for "umpire to raise his finger". He was waiting for the army to intervene and remove Nawaz Sharif. They played the same game in 1998 when Imran Khan was part of GDA. They came to me inviting me to join them but I refused.

In fact, there is a 'deep state' in Pakistan which keeps playing such games. During the 2014 Dhama, General Raheel Sharif called Imran Khan and Qadri. They were overjoyed and thought that their mission was about to accomplish. But General Raheel dashed their hopes saying, "Stop this agitation, go and settle your affairs with Nawaz Sharif'.

On Extension of Army Chief

Question: The extension of Army Chief has become very complicated for quite some time. Why has this simple affair become so complicated?

Answer: You are right. It is a simple affair which has been used by the conspirators to exploit. They want to use it for change of regime. It is these conspirators who have been given the name of deep state. The social scientists explain it in these words:

"The real government that exists beneath the surface, as shadowy conspirators, who use street power to thwart the agenda of sitting government, skillfully manipulating the power of the state institutions".

On the other hand, something equally sinister happened. The manner, in which the government processed the case for the grant of service extension to Army Chiefs is really pathetic. As the Supreme Court took over the matter into its own hands, the government panicked as if it had committed a crime and surrendered the right to "stick to the convention" of granting extension to the Army Chief. As a matter of fact, five Army Chiefs, three Naval Chiefs and one Air Chief had been granted service extension during the last seventy years.

The extension granted to General Kiani was challenged in the Supreme Court of Pakistan, but the Honorable Court rejected the petition saying they had no jurisdiction to take up the case under article 199(3) of the constitution. How could the present Honorable Court grant six month extension of service to General Bajwa and pass on the matter to the Parliament for decision?

CHAPTER 10

OF THE CURRENT AFFAIRS

American Conspiracies against Afghanistan

The defeat of Russia and USA is the most important event in the present day military history. Soviet Union of Russia had anticipated their defeat in 1988 and therefore decided to withdraw from Afghanistan. On the contrary, USA had seen their defeat in Afghanistan in 2012 but they did not have the courage to accept their defeat. They had evil designs and engaged in conspiracies. In fact they wanted to have an exit honorably.

American's Desire to Negotiate with Taliban

I received a call from American Embassy in February 2012 that former Deputy Secretary of State Mr. Richard Armitage desired to talk to me. I was invited to the Embassy on a lunch. I told them that if he wanted to see me, he should come to my residence, I shall not come to the Embassy. They agreed. Next day he came and told me that they wanted to establish contacts with Taliban. It was decided to meet again the next day. He was the same Richard Armitage who had telephoned General Musharraf and forced him to accept the American conditions against the war in Afghanistan. Musharraf was the most powerful man at that time. I prayed to Allah, "Ya Allah! Help me against a man who was threatening Pakistan of war in the past and now he wants to seek my help. Let him be humiliated".

I had invited Colonel Imam (Shaheed) to assist me in the talks. Next day when Mr. Richard Armitage came to my house and found Colonel Imam with me, he was puzzled. But I pacified him and told him that he is the same person who was our Counsel General in Herat. Mr. Armitage told us that he was president of Afghan Committee of American Senate and desired to talk to Afghan Taliban. Colonel Imam told him that it was possible if they wanted to hold the talks with sincerity. After detailed discussions it was agreed that we would stay in contact and efforts would be made to arrange the meeting.

Colonel Imam contacted Taliban leadership and within a few weeks, five names were provided by Taliban. Three of them were Pakhtoon, one Tajik and one Hazara. Rendezvous was to be decided with mutual consultation. Colonel Imam conveyed this to the American guest. Authorities in Pakistan were kept informed about the whole affairs.

The matter was in progress when one day, Colonel Imam came to me with Wing Commander Khalid Khawaja who was in contact with Mujahideen. He told that he had

been assigned a task by BBC Channel 4 to prepare a documentary on Pakistani and Afghan Taliban. He wanted to visit the border areas in that connection. I warned him that the borders were not safe and infested with enemy's agents. It was not safe to travel. They both said that they had friends there and they would take care of them. I specifically asked colonel Imam if he was going with him. He categorically denied but later I learnt that both had proceeded on their mission. I was surprised and worried. After three days the news was received that while going from Miran Shah to Mir Ali, both were abducted and later mercilessly killed.

It was a conspiracy to sabotage the likely negotiations. When Armitage intimated his people at the helm of affairs, some elements with negative thinking became active who had sabotaged our talks with Pakistani Taliban, and important people like Maulvi Nek Muhammed, Baitullah Mehsood, Hakeemullah Mehsood and even Mullah Mansoor were killed because they were in favor of talks. BBC was also used in this plot. Perhaps they were doing it as part of their professional activities. The irony of fate is that after lapse of six years, Americans are again trying to revive their contacts with Taliban because the American Army in Afghanistan have come to the conclusion that they are no more in a position to face the frequent attacks of Taliban and cannot afford to prolong the war.

The situation of war and talks between Taliban and USA has seen many ups and downs. Many a time talks were held but failed because USA wanted to stay in Afghanistan keeping her forces there but Taliban were not willing for this. They kept attacking American installations and their troops and American soldiers remained helpless. Taliban are steadfast in their demands:

- Leave us and the Afghan nation free. We ourselves will decide our future.
- Get out of Afghanistan.
- All sanctions against us be removed.
- Release our prisoners.
- You are responsible for destruction of Afghanistan. Promise to reconstruct it.
- We were deceived in 1989 after the withdrawal of Russians. We would not let ourselves be deceived anymore.

The talks were in progress and some good news were expected after the final phase of talks at Camp David when President Trump unilaterally declared to end the talks and created uncertainty. There could be many reasons for that:

- India desires the Afghan war to continue so that Mujahideen do not turn toward Kashmir and their conspiracy network there may not end.
- If the peace prevails in Afghanistan, it will help Iran, China, Russia and Pakistan to enhance their influence in the region and USA will have to retreat.

- The projects of CPEC and SCO will unite all the neighboring countries and will thwart the twenty year projects of India and USA.

The most important thing is that Taliban want to establish an Islamic State in Afghanistan which is not acceptable to USA and other Western countries because it may be a prelude to formation of a tripartite alliance of Jihadi Afghanistan, Revolutionary Iran and Islamic Republic of Pakistan. This alliance will be a source of strength for the whole Muslim Ummah and will be able to take a united stand at the platforms of International organizations. Likelihood is that more countries of Central Asia, Middle East and Africa will join this alliance and it would be strengthened further.

Taliban have already started working on this plan. They are in control of about eighty percent of Afghan territory. Karzai's government is limited to Kabul and some surrounding cities which are likely to fall any time to Taliban. USA is supporting their puppet government for last many years but it has not accrued the desired results. Establishment of an Islamic State in Afghanistan is imminent. No power on earth can stop it.

Some people think that Taliban are threat to the security of Pakistan. It is a wrong myth. The unstable and ill-disciplined Afghanistan may be a threat to us where terrorists roam around freely. But a stable and disciplined Afghanistan will be a source of strength to Pakistan as well as other surrounding countries. Recent history is witness to the fact that during five years tenure of Taliban Government, law and order situation considerably improved. The public was disarmed. The country was fairly peaceful. USA had tried her best to wipe out the cultivation of poppy crops but failed, despite spending millions of dollars. It was completely wiped out on one directive of Mullah Omer. Taliban leaders have frequently stated that they did not consider Pakistan as their enemy, despite being betrayed after Russian withdrawal and siding with USA. Our security demands and our destination are identical.

There are no possibilities of success for America in Afghanistan. They have lost the war of Afghanistan. Their position is weak. They have no option except to withdraw from there but they want an honorable exit.

Trump's Exit Plan from Afghanistan

This plan should have come some eight years earlier in 2012, when they realized having lost the war and sent Mr. Richard Armitage to Pakistan as head of the Committee of the Senate on Afghanistan, to explore the possibility of dialogue with the Taliban. He met me and we were able to convince the Taliban to designate the members of their delegation for the talks but Mr. Armitage was restrained by Pentagon from proceeding any further. However, it's not too late now to initiate Trump's Plan.

The main element of the plan is withdrawal of the US led forces from Afghanistan in eighteen months' time, in return to security guarantees by the Taliban and return of 5000 Taliban prisoners, held by Afghan government. On the face of it there are negative as well as positive trends in the plan that would determine the peace parameters. On balance, it is the positiveness of the plan that may prevail over the negative trends. Let us examine:

Negativeness

- The Exit Plan has come as a rude shock to the Indians. Therefore in collaboration with NDS, RAW, they may carry-out terror attacks in Pakistan and the neighboring countries, blaming Taliban. India considers the plan a betrayal and big victory for ISI, and a big relief to Pakistan on the Western Front.
- Internal factions, such as Ashraf Ghani, the war-lords and splinter groups will oppose the formation of a Taliban government. Their effort would be to fail the intra-Afghan dialogue as a way forward to decide Afghanistan future, through an inclusive process. If the intra-afghan dialogue succeeds, that would be the first major step to provide a firm-base for the future Afghan government.
- USA itself would resist the formation of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan. The words "USA does not recognize the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan" has appeared umpteen times in the peace accord document. No US government official signed the peace accord so that a U-Turn may be possible, later-on.
- On purpose, an eighteen months delay has been imposed for the departure of all US and allied troops. A sizeable number of troops would, thus be retained for ulterior motives. Due to this reason Iran has rejected the plan and for the same reason Turkey has warned Russia to leave Syria.
- The countries that opposed the formation of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan in 1989-90 after the Soviet withdrawal are also opposed to it now, because a Jehadi Afghanistan, a Revolutionary Iran and an Islamic Pakistan, together would form the Strategic Pivot providing Strategic Depth of security to the entire Muslim World.

Positiveness

- The positive trends are stronger and most likely to prevail over the negativeness.
- The Americans are tired of this war and ashamed of the shameful defeat at the hands of Taliban. They want a *"peaceful exit with honor, before it becomes a dishonorable surrender. In Afghanistan, America is in danger of repeating Vietnam"*

mistake." They want to leave, but after creating face-saving devices for which they have sought eighteen months' time.

- There are too many guarantees being sought from Taliban who are dispersed and are not formed into an organized system of governance, to deliver. They need time that could give them the much needed stability. The time lag is the real 'danger period' the negative forces could exploit to defeat the cause of peace.
- Time and space, the two important factors of war have been used with great advantage by Taliban, whereas, Americans control the air-space, which has not helped them win the war. Taliban are not tired of the war, after forty years of the brutal conflict. In their recent surge against Ashraf Ghani army they launched attacks in thirteen provinces, hitting thirty-three targets. In retaliation, Americans carried out air strikes restraining the Taliban.
- In 1989-90, the Mujahideen had seven field commanders and two Masters - ISI and CIA. Now they have only one commander who is also their leader and guide. Their command structure is firmly established with Mullah Umar's sons in command of the Northern region, from Mazar-e-Sharif to Badakhshan and Sarajuddin Haqqani in command of the Southern region from Herat to Nuristan. Taliban command Headquarters is located in Kunduz province. Almost 80% of Afghan territory is under their control, where Shariah Law is in practice. The necessary infrastructure already exist for a state to develop.
- The hard core of the Taliban now consists of the Afghan youth, born during the last four decades and grown under the shadows of war, are diehard fighters dedicated to their leader Mullah Umar and his vision. In 2003, Mullah Umar gave his vision in reply to my question:
- "We have decided to fight to the end to win our freedom. For us to follow the agenda of the occupation forces is not compatible with our traditions, our national ethos and purpose. We will fight and win our freedom, Insha Allah, to establish the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, friendly to all neighbors and countries beyond. "Pakistan does not stand by us at the moment, yet we stand by Pakistan, to safeguard our interests at all times."

Mullah Umar's vision is also reflected in the Policy Guide-lines recently given-out by Sarajuddin Haqqani in his write-up, having a clear political vision, which guarantees a resilient government in Afghanistan governed by rule of law and fortified by the honor-code of a people who have defeated the mightiest of the mighty in a short period of four decades - a feat un-paralleled in the history of mankind.

Trump's exit plan is fairly complicated and deceitful, attempting to retain enough power, to stem the establishment of the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan, as well as achieve a peaceful exit. The two objectives are contradictory and would fail to give the advantage of an honorable exit, which Soviets could achieve in 1989 and earned the respect and good-will of Afghans.

What is DAISH

Question: A new organization has emerged recently with the name of DAISH. They are fighting in Iraq and Syria and it is feared that they will spread in other countries also. Who are they? From where have they appeared?

Answer: DAISH is abbreviation of "Daulat Al Islamia in Iraq and Sham (Syria). An article was published in the *New York Times*, which was captioned, " Caliphate is Gone, but ISIS is Not". The ISIS is the phenomenon which emerged fourteen hundred years ago, by the name of Khowarjis, when the two revered factions of early Islam, started fighting against each other. Similarly, it emerged again under Abu Bakar Baghdadi, opposing the internecine war in Syria. In 2014, the ISIS comprised three main groups - the Syrian, Iraqi and the 3-4000 Saudis under Ahmad Khashoggi. They now stand defeated in Syria, but will continue to threaten these two countries, as well as other Muslim countries devastated by war during the last three decades. "There are 15,000-20,000 armed ISIS fighters in Iraq and Syria, accelerating faster than the efforts to prevent it."

I wrote the article "The ISIL Enigma" some five years back, published in our English and Urdu dailies in September 2014. Describing the phenomenon of the Islamic State of Iraq and Levant (ISIL), I said, it is not new to the Muslim World, but for others it is an enigma. ISIL has grown out of the deep frustration, hate, disenchantment and injustices experienced by a group of people who now have risen in revolt, to correct the course, in their own puritan ways. Such a phenomenon first occurred in 37 AH, by the name of Khowarjis, who fought the bloody battle of Niharwan against Caliph Hazrat Ali. They revolted because the battles of Jamal and Siffin, which Hazrat Ali fought against Hazrat Ayesha and Hazrat Mu'awiyah, so gravely disenchanted them in respect of these personalities, whom the followers of the Faith, so much revered and loved.

The 'shock and awe' brutalities committed by US and their allies, on Afghanistan, Iraq and Syria, and sanctions on Iran, drew the Hate Line. Now, the Sunni-Shia divide in Afghanistan, Iraq, Pakistan and Palestine, was induced to create internal conflicts. Political Islam was rejected in favor of modernity, whereas the Muslims in general believe:

"Human existence should be God-centered human order, whereas the proponents of modernity prefer an order that favors individual autonomy and marginalized God. Not God first but We first."

Even a country like Pakistan, where an exemplary Shia-Sunni harmony exists, and all kinds of machinations have been devised to break the harmony. The Khawarjis of early Islam revolted because of their disenchantment with their most respected personalities of the Faith. Similarly, the ISIL of the present times has revolted against the Shia-Sunni conflict and the collusion of their leaders with the enemies of Islam. Shia and Sunni countries now are pitched against each other in Syria and Iraq – a reminiscence of the battles of Jamal and Siffin.

As if, all that was not enough, under the leadership of United States of America, a new plan now has been worked-out, on 14th February 2019 at Warsaw, to accelerate the Shia-Sunni conflict, by assigning responsibility to Israel, to contain and curb Iran, while India has been tasked to deal with Pakistan, and bring Central Asia, South Asia and the Asia Pacific region under Indian hegemonic domination. Trumps is oblivious of the reality, because he thinks that by using the military power they can "contain, degrade and destroy the ISIS." He is wrong. The problem has gone much beyond the military capability to restore order. The Americans went all out to destroy Al-Qaida and claim to have killed Osama and his entire network, yet Al-Qaida is alive, splintered and spreading over several countries and more destructive than ever. How to deal with ISIS, is the primary concern.

With India and Israel, joining this nexus, it becomes much more ominous for the Muslims and the world at large. The Muslim World was able to contain and assimilate the Khawarjis into the Islamic order. That is the approach, the civilized world must follow. Of necessity, it requires of the Americans and their allies a cool heart and a perceptive mind to develop a new strategy, a new plan and a new approach to deal with this problem. But unfortunately, they don't know what else to do. Use of military has become their "Default Option."

Hezbollah-Israel War

Hezbollah-Israel war is an eye opener for the Arab countries. In 2006, when Israel was threatening Iran and Hezbollah, an Iranian delegation came to see me and sought my advice. I told them that there was no need to worry. They had the capability to give a befitting response but they should not invite trouble like Pearl Harbor by attacking any American installation. They should concentrate on Israel and launch massive missile attacks to destroy Israel's Air Defence System. Iranian delegation was still around when a few journalists from Reuter News Agency visited me. They asked what transpired between me and the Iranian delegation. I told them that if Israel started the war, Iran would retaliate with rockets.

A few days before the war started, the Washington Post of America published a news stating that former Army Chief of Pakistan had advised Iran to take Israel hostage and launch a massive rocket attack. Israel invaded Hezbollah. Hezbollah launched rocket

invasion which could be neutralized by Israeli Air Force. The attack kept shifting toward Tel Aviv. The citizens fled away and sought asylum in Cyprus. Hundreds of them took refuge in American Ships. It was very dangerous situation for Israel. The infantry troops were ordered to destroy the Hezbollah missile sites. Hezbollah Mujahideen encountered them and forced them to retreat. Finally ceasefire was accepted. Israel has no defence against Hezbollah's rockets. Even Russian S-400 air defence system is helpless against these rockets. Iran is a big force, Israel cannot fight against them. Iran, Hezbollah, Hamas and Yemenis have these rockets in millions. They also have drones and the most lethal weapons with them are the suicide bombers who cannot be stopped by Israel. I am sure if Israel attacked Iran, its very existence will be threatened.

Strained Relations between USA and Iran

Question: Missile and drone attacks on the Saudi oil installation have upset the strategical balance of power in the Middle East. It has also rendered the American Iron-Dome system useless. Iran has become the focus of attention and facing the wrath of America. What do you say about this?

Answer: The intelligent machines like the drones and the cruise missiles that hit Saudi oil facilities, demolished the myth of security, which the multi-billion dollar US "Iron Dome" air defence system was to provide. With one stroke, it has exposed the vulnerability of eight military bases of Americans in the Middle East region, and all the oil producing facilities of Saudi Arabia, UAE and Arab countries. That is the reason that "locked and loaded" threat of Trump, was rejected by the saner elements, who didn't want American forces acting as mercenaries to Saudi Arabia. Iran is equally vulnerable, facing the economic war sanctions and more.

The Israel-Hezbollah war of 2007 is one such example, where the American Iron Dome air defence system was defeated by free flight rockets of Hezbollah. Israel lost the war. Such is the tyranny of high-tech expensive weapons defeated by the very simple and inexpensive weapons. It is reported that the Houthis fired 22 drones and cruise missiles from a distance of about 100 KMs. Abqaiq was struck 18 times while nearby Khumrais was hit four times, that triggered multiple explosions and towering flames that took hours to extinguish.

I remember, President Clinton in 1998 fired cruise missiles from a distance of 1200 KM, targeting Osama Bin Laden hide-out in Afghanistan. Seventy of these missiles hit the targets areas, while the remaining, over a hundred fell in Pakistan territory, many of them in good condition. These were picked up by the Pakistani technicians, who did the reverse engineering, to develop the prototype of the Tomah Hawk missiles. It's the Americans, Iranians and Pakistanis who have this technology now. Pakistan is now working to increase its range to 2000 KMs so that the last limit of Indian territories are within our range.

Now the US Secretary of States, Pompeo says, "Our mission is to avoid war with Iran. We are sending more troops to the region to deter aggression", which is meant to fool the Arabs, with a false sense of security. Iran warns, "We have stood tall for the last forty years. If any country attacks Iran, that country will become the battle ground". The situation is explosive. On the other hand, our soft diplomacy has emboldened the Indian Army Chief who threatens hitting strategic targets in Pakistan, and we are seeking clarification of such out bursts. The Arabs have no hope of getting any reliable defence of their vulnerable assets. They should fight their own wars. The United States after pulling out of the 2015 nuclear deal, appears ready to reach out to Iran to accept more restrictive agreement. The Iranians suffering from the sanctions of the economic war, have no doubt, orchestrated threat to the flow of the Gulf oil causing pain to United States and their Arab allies. Now it would be foolish to counter this escalation with an escalation that would mean choosing between an unwise escalation, or a humiliating climb-down.

The defensive measures would continue to be taken by the adversaries such as, the US military cyber command carried out strike against military computer systems used by Iran's Revolutionary Guards, to control rocket and missile launchers. Any miscalculation in this explosive situation would blow up the entire region into a conflagration of uncontrollable dimensions. For sure Israel would jump into the foray inviting strong retaliatory action by Iran, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and Yemen. And the weapons of war would be missiles, rockets, drones and suicide bombers in thousands, to break the will of adversary. Israel would be the main target, whose very existence may be threatened. Trump appears to take the risk of such an expanded conflagration that would signal a "catastrophic situation for the region that may be his long term objective".

The Israeli defence analysts, Uzi and Eran Etzion, say - Iran has developed long range missiles and drones with precision guidance system, capable of hitting strategic targets, has deployed them close to Israeli borders and at several places in the Middle East, which has so fundamentally altered the region strategic balance that no nation can take on Iran, including the United States" whose eight military bases in the region, are vulnerable. Hezbollah alone can destroy part of Tel Aviv. That is called a game changer. They would need only two hundred such systems to stop Israel's ability to wage its own war. This is the reason that US President is now trying to meet Mr. Rouhani to find peaceful solution of this complex situation.

Trump's best friend Modi would be facing similar challenges, as Jihadis of the world, would reach out in support of the Kashmiri freedom fighters. Decision will be taken here and not at Washington. Better sense appears to have prevailed as is evident from the statement of the US Secretary of State, Pompeo, "US want to give diplomacy, every chance to succeed".

The days of strategic domination over the West Asia are over. On the other hand, Mr. Rouhani has decided to attend the General Assembly Session, to unfold his "Hormuz Peace Endeavour", a sagacious and timely move.

The stark realities of the recent past must be remembered:

- The stinger Missile, in 1987, made the Soviets pull out of Afghanistan.
- The Green Arrow Anti-Tank missiles in the hands of Bosnian Muslims, in 1995, forced the Serbian killers retreat.
- The Free Flight Rockets of Hezbollah in 2007, forced defeat on Israel.

The Precision Guided Missiles and Drones, now in the hands of Iran, Syria, Iraq, Lebanon and perhaps the Houthis of Yemen also have changed the strategic balance of the entire Middle East region. It will be better for Pakistan to acquire such systems instead of depending entirely on the Nuclear weapons.

Question: Our relations with India are based on soft diplomacy while you say that dependence on "such" system will be useful for us. Will you please explain that?

Answer: We have open options to break the stalemate. Preventing India from violence at the LOC and their cruelties inside Kashmir is necessary. We need to strike the way Iran did and as Turkey secured its interests by military force without caring for USA. Very strict actions on our part are necessary because they do not understand any other language.

Situation after Assassination of General Qasim Suleimani

Question: USA has mercilessly killed General Qasim Suleimani of Iran. What will be its implications and how Iran will react to it? Is there any possibility of a bigger war or will it remain restricted to the Middle East?

Answer: Gen Qasim Suleimani was the top military leader of Iran, playing active role in the Middle East region, as well as Afghanistan. In fact, he was described as the "single most powerful operative in the Middle East today." According to American intelligence, Suleimani was planning large scale assault on American troops and interests in the region. Thus he had to be eliminated. The weapon that was used to assassinate Suleimani was drone Q9 Reaper, in service since 2007, having significant capabilities. It was launched from Centcom forward base at Qatar, controlled by American Cyber Command, 12000 miles away in Nevada State, killing Suleimani and his deputy following behind him. In fact, "Mossad targeted Suleimani, Trump pulled the trigger." Mossad had already killed five eminent scientists of Iran.

Iran may also have an equally capable drone like Q9 Reaper, because few years back Iran brought down this drone violating their air space and developed the prototype, through reverse engineering, adding a meaningful capability to the wide range of missiles, rockets and drones Iran has developed, during the last three decades and has deployed them at different launching sites, controlled by three Cyber/AI Command Centers. Lo and behold; Iran scraps the Nuclear Deal thus raising the threshold of deterrence at very appropriate time.

Iran's high-tech weapon capability coupled with Cyber and AI technologies has enabled Iran to fight a limited war, as the Iranian Supreme Leader Ayatollah warned that "a harsh retaliation is waiting for the United States," whereas the former US Vice President called Trump's operation reckless, "having tossed the stick of dynamite into the tinder box openly killing a senior government official in peace time, that is unprecedented terrorism."

A better alternative for Iran to avenge Suleimani killing would be, to combine cyber-drone missile technology with ground support, presently available in various countries, such as Iraq, Syria, Yemen and Lebanon. Afghanistan is another country where Iran enjoys goodwill and respect. Iranian operations would be targeting American personalities and troops at already identified 35 targets, including the 5th Fleet forward base in Bahrain and the Centcom forward base in Qatar. For Iran it would be a total war fought mainly at the Cyber War technological level, supported by ground troops having enough experience of fighting conventional war. This strategy would enable Iran to fight a war, limited in time and space.

The recent decision of the Iranian government to raise the Red Flag over the central mosque in Qum, indicates that, Rahbar Ali Khamenei has raised the "thresh-hold level of punishment to America for the grave mistake they have committed," that would engulf the entire Middle East Region seriously impacting the neighboring countries. The war will not be targeting only America troops and interests, but the main target would be Israel — the source of all trouble in the region.

Iran has suffered for the past four decades at the hands of America and Israel and now is the time for Iran, to break the shackle. The technological superiority of American and Israel could be challenged by massive use of missiles, drones, rockets and suicide bombers from Iran, Iraq, Syria, Yemen, Lebanon and Gaza. As the war extends, the Jihadis from neighboring countries would start pouring-in to add new dimensions to the war. It would be a bitter and bloody war, causing economic disaster to oil and gas producing countries of the region and the rest of the dependents stand to suffer equally particularly China getting oil supplies mainly through the 2 kilometer wide shipping lane of the Straits of Hormuz, which can be closed not by the Iranians, but by the Americans themselves, because their supply-line from North-West Europe remains secure.

Russia and China would not get involved in war. They would urge restraint and caution and stand to gain either way as America suffers another shameful defeat after Afghanistan. Countries like Turkey, Malaysia and Indonesia will support Iran. Pakistan would follow a policy of restraint and caution as it did during the Iran-Iraq war of the eighties. But Pakistan would face serious ethnic turmoil that would shake it to the roots. As a matter of fact, the entire Gulf region would experience major geo-political shifts and changes causing great instability.

There is no possibility of a world war, because the world at large has learned to watch the destruction and decimation of Muslim countries during the last four decades and would do the same now, during the impending Middle East War. The world organizations like UNO and their financial institutions would maintain their discreet neutrality, while the struggling people of Palestine and Kashmir may win their freedom because Israel would be facing existential threat and India would be embroiled with several freedom movements within and serious political turmoil caused by Modi's policy of Hindutva eating away at the very roots of Secular India.

India is a strategic Defense Partner of America and under obligation to support USA in their war against Iran. It would be interesting to watch what course India adopts to extricate itself from a very embarrassing situation. Their decision would impinge upon Pakistan's security.

Iranians are quite aware of the threat to their nuclear assets and facilities, which they have protected deep into tunnels dug into the mountains, yet Americans have the capability to cause damage using the F-35 fighter aircrafts, with new weapons, as Trump has threatened, which will be more deadly than the GBU 43/N-MOAB- the Massive Ordnance Air Blast. Iranians have no reliable defense against the F35 which may prove very damaging for them.

Someone has rightly commented:

"Middle East would find itself in a state of enhanced flux, uncertain geopolitical dispensation and marred with distrust among the states. The US had long considered Iran as a 'counterweight' to Arabs and Israel. All previous US Presidents wanted to keep Iran as a credible and viable threat for the Arabs, which was the 'balancing policy' and that appears to be changing."

Likely Reactions of USA & Israel after Iran's Retaliation

Question: When we were talking of Iran's reaction to their General Qasim's killing, you said that Iran will retaliate. It did happen. Iran has attacked two American bases in Iraq. What will be the reaction of USA?

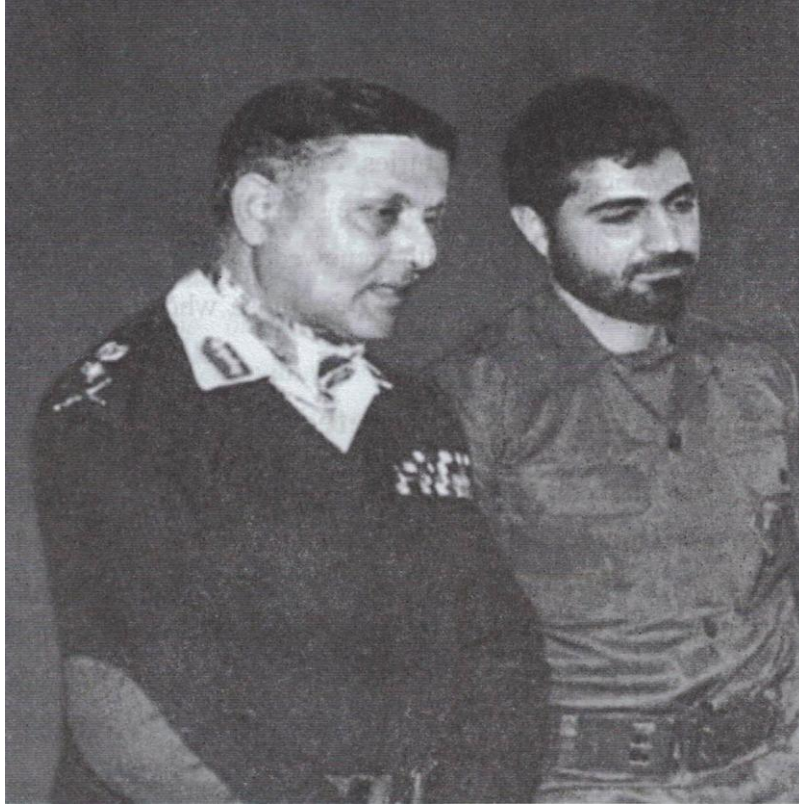
Answer: America is saying "all is well, they have not suffered any loss". Despite their claim of no loss, USA is threatening to retaliate with full force. Her allies of the European Union and Israel are requesting her to exercise restraint. European Union countries are scared of irreparable financial loss to them and Israel fears that her very existence may be threatened. Trump has, therefore, decided to impose more financial sanctions against Iran. USA has also given the message to Iran for negotiations. These steps have saved the world from great devastation but image of USA as the only super power has been tarnished. It was quite unexpected.

Now important strategic and political changes are expected in the Middle East. The collaboration of USA and Israel which was dominant in the entire Middle East will be weakened and Israel will be forced to settle the disputes with its neighboring Arab countries. Leader of the Iranian Revolution Imam Khomeini had once said, "The resistance and perseverance will persist with renewed determination and devotion. Success will be destined for those who follow this path".

General Aslam Beg, Bracketed with Terrorists

Question: On the occasion of General Qasim Suleimani's murder, the International Media published a photograph in which General Qasim had been shown with you. Perhaps this photograph is of 1989. It is said that Qasim Suleimani was given commando training at Cherat. What are your comments?

Answer: This photograph must have been published by CIA portraying as if he was trained as commando at Cherat. The fact is that a delegation of Iranian Pasdaran e Inqilab came to Pakistan in 1989 under the head of General Mohsin Rajai. Qasim Suleimani was also with them. At that time, he was Divisional commander of Iranian Revolutionary Guard Corps - IRGC. He performed great deeds during Iran-Iraq war. Showing this photograph aims at bracketing me with the international terrorists as has been mentioned in American Media. Trump also said, "We have killed Usama Bin Laden, Abu Bakar Albughdadi and Qasim Suleimani and soon will take care of other terrorists".



Iranian Gen Qasim Sulemani with Gen Aslam Beg during his visit to Pakistan

Question: How come they want to bracket you with international terrorists when you have never been involved in killing of any American?

Answer: No. I have not done anything like General Qasim Suleimani or Abu Bakar Al Bughdadi which could lead to killing of any American but my thinking and advice did cause humiliation to USA and Israel. First, during the war between Hezbollah and Israel, I advised Iranian delegation to shower rain of free flight rockets and missiles on Israel to render their military power helpless. Instead of Iran, Israel selected Hezbollah as the weaker enemy, They countered by firing free flight rockets and missiles in large number, a threat which the American iron Dome could not effectively counter. Israel faced humiliating defeat.

Second, I wrote in an article that in case of war, free flight rockets, missiles and drones would be raining over Israel from Iran, Syria, Yemen and Gaza in addition to suicide bombers who would render Israel helpless. It is such a deadly technique that even USA cannot effectively counter it. USA and Israel have understood this danger and in case of aggravation of the situation, very existence of Israel would be threatened. It is due to this reason that Israel has raised loud voice and pressurized USA to abandon war steps against Iran. Digesting his humiliation, Trump has restricted to imposing economic sanctions against Iran.

Iran Embraces BRI

The Fundamental Blow has been delivered creating the Magical Realism. Some 45 years back, Prime Minister Bhutto established the Strategic Linkage with China by opening the Karakoram Highway across the Khunjrab Pass. That helped us to build the bed-rock of the "Strategic Pivot of our Defence Forces" which now anchors the CPEC armada, known as Belt and Road Initiative - (BRI). Similarly, Iran, brutalized by 40 years of crippling sanctions and embargos, decided to embrace the BRI, creating shock waves, that have changed the Strategic landscape of the region. The objective, as defined in the draft is: "Two ancient Asian cultures, two partners in the sectors of trade, economy, politics, culture and security, with similar outlook and many mutual bilateral and multilateral interests will consider one another strategic partners."

There are nearly 100 projects cited in the document with Chinese investment, while Iran is to provide regular and heavily discounted supply of oil to China for the next 25 years. There are host of opportunities now for Iran to trade in Chinese currency known as Renminbi:

Strategic Defense Partnership (SDP), will help develop operational capability of Iranian Armed Forces, as Pakistan was able to achieve during the period 1980-90. At present the high priority for Iran could be to defeat the threat from Israeli F35 aircrafts, which reportedly have caused damage to Iranian nuclear facilities, particularly the one at Netanz. In the past few weeks, according to Post's Diehl, "Israel has apparently been conducting what amounts to a slow motion, semi-covert military campaign against Iran's nuclear and missile programmes, and perhaps other industrial and infrastructure targets as well. Mysterious explosions and fires have struck a key centrifuge production facility, a military base where missiles are produced, as well as power plants, aluminum and chemical factories, and a medical clinic. Last week, a fire erupted at the port of Bushehr on the Persian Gulf destroying seven ships." The Israelis were not particularly shy about distancing themselves from these activities. The draft also talks about "deepening military cooperation, with joint training and exercises, joint research and weapons development and intelligence sharing" Sky is the limit.

Infrastructure Development.

China is to invest US\$ 120 billion for upgrading Iran's road infrastructure beginning with 2,300 kilometer road that will link Tehran with Urumqi, already linked with Gwadar under the 'New Silk Road'. The road link when completed would have an ambitious plan to provide connectivity with whole of Central Asia, and thereafter via Turkey into Europe, a development, that soon may lead to political and economic integration of Eurasia. There are also plans to build the 628 KM - Chabahar-Zahidan road that will be extended to Zaranj, across the borders to Afghanistan.

The development and electrification of the main 900 kilometer railway line connecting Tehran to Mashhad is on priority. Another project to be taken up, is the completion of

Tehran-Qum-Isfahan, high-speed railway, extending north-west to Tabriz, which is home to a number of key sites relating to oil, gas and petrochemicals. It is also the starting point for Tabriz-Ankara gas pipeline.

Petro-Chemicals Industries.

Major portion of the USS 280 billion is earmarked for developing Iran's petrochemical, oil and gas industries which have suffered immensely as a result of US-led economic sanctions.

Telecommunication and Cyber Space.

The draft agreement also talks about China building infrastructure for 5G telecommunication network in Iran. This would see Chinese telecommunications giant Huawei enter the Iranian market - a company that has come under severe US sanctions and banned by several countries. Chinese global positioning system, BeiDou, will also to assist Iran's cyber space in regulating what is already there in the country. Thus, potentially paving the way for Iran to develop a China-like "great firewall."

There are several strategically important developments, such as bases at Djibouti and Keshm Island in the Persian Gulf; free trade zones in Maku, near Abadan; the proposed tie-up between Gwadar port and Chabahar; the offered interests to China in the Bandar-e-Jask port, 350 km from Chabahar and the duty free zone there. These developments pose a direct challenge to both Western and more - specifically, American economic interests, creating new geo-political flashpoints.

The Magical Realism. The changing Strategic Landscape, defines the contours of the new world order.

Quote:

"America's knee on Iran's neck has been lifted. "

"Dramatic changes in world political thought and balance of power have occurred."

"With one of the highest literacy rates, Americans are showing total disconnect between education and common-sense."

"A new geo-strategic Economic Order, comprising China, Pakistan, Afghanistan, Iran and Central Asia is the emerging reality, which beckons Russia to join for easy reach to the warm waters of the Arabian Sea."

"It all augers well for Pakistan."

America and India will soon face the *coupe-de-grace* in Afghanistan, as the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan (IEA) becomes a reality. America is allergic to IEA. Since 1989, treacherously America has prevented the establishment of IEA. Recently, when it signed the Exit Plan from Afghanistan the words: "America does not recognize the Islamic Emirate of Afghanistan" appeared about a dozen times in the peace accord document. No US government official signed the document, either. This gesture demonstrates America's crude diplomatic mannerism.

The freedom movement in Kashmir will gain impetus after changes in Afghanistan, and the Jihadis return to Kashmir, as it happened in 1990, forcing India to quit or grant the right of self-determination, as the honorable option.

Options and Opportunities. Pakistan must fortify connectivity both with Iran and Afghanistan:

- Complete the Pakistan-Iran gas pipe line, as well as the parallel road and railway lines.
- Upgrade the rail and road network from Quetta to Zahidan.
- Extend and upgrade the road and railways from Quetta and Peshawar to Afghanistan and link-up with Central Asia.
- Remain mindful of the 'extreme pressure' expected from US and its Asian-Pacific partners, trying to save the crumbling American Order.

Iran-China Strategic Partnership has kicked-up a geo-political storm, defining the contours of the New World Order, which promises interdependence, as key to economic and social progress. Indeed, China has succeeded building a financial system that bypasses the US. It is strategic defeat of US and its "maximum pressure" policy. World is witnessing the dawn of a new era under the emerging logic of conflict:

"China is the only country in recent decades that has become the world's second largest economy without resorting to warfare, colonialism or slavery whereas the US has waged unjustified wars and military operations in Iraq, Libya, Syria, Yemen, Somalia, Afghanistan and other Muslim countries, spending over US\$ 6 trillion, causing over 800,000 deaths and displacing tens of millions."

The Changing Dynamics of Iran-Israel Conflict General Qasim Solemani of Iran was assassinated, blaming him and Iran for the death of many American soldiers. Soon after, American and Israeli forces deployed to punish Iran. Instead of direct confrontation, Iran preferred a "strategy of deterrence":

"If Iran was attacked, the response would begin with massive use of free flight rockets, missiles and drones from several directions to degrade the iron-dome air defense system of Israel as well as the public morale, followed by explosive loaded vehicles to breach the barrier at multiple places and the suicide bombers rushing forward through the breaches, to cause fear, panic and rout to the enemy."

The deterrence forecast existential threat to Israel, forcing retreat, including the fleet blocking the Persian Gulf. A 'Stealth Strategy' was therefore developed to harm Iran through punishing strikes at several targets. Reportedly the 5th generation F-35 air superiority stealth fighter aircraft was used against which Iran has no defense:

"Israel has apparently been conducting what amounts to a slow motion, semi-covert military campaign against Iran's nuclear and missile programmes, and perhaps other industrial and infrastructure targets as well. Mysterious explosions and fires have struck a key centrifuge production facility; a military base where missiles are produced, as well as power plants, aluminum and chemical factories. A fire erupted at the port of Bushehr on the Persian Gulf, destroying seven ships."

Similarly, Hizbollah was targeted with a huge blast in Lebanon, as punishment for causing defeat to Israel in 2006 war. The tri-lateral US-Israel-Arab Strategic Alliance, called Abraham Accord, is exploiting the Shia-Sunni divide, to isolate Iran. Ever since the Iranian Revolution of 1979, USA has demonized Iran as a threat to the Sunni Arab countries, who have been buying weapons and military hard-ware from USA, worth billions of dollars. Now as, the threat becomes focused, there would be a spree of defense purchases from Israel, in particular.

The diplomatic offensive of Israel-UAE Agreement - Abraham Accord has ruptured decades of Arab unity. The deal also reverses the order of diplomatic offensive by the Arab Peace Initiative of 2002. Under this treaty Egypt and Jordan recognized Israel but they stand cheated, now. As a matter of fact a creeping annexation is already underway, that would dash all hopes for the two nations' strategy. Oman, Bahrain and Sudan appear more interested in establishing diplomatic ties with Israel. As a matter of fact *"a tri-lateral US-Israel-Arab strategic alliance is shaping up against Iran, seeking a cynical alliance and not benevolent peace."*

Iranian Response

In response, Iran lost no time forging the Strategic Defense Partnership with China. This Partnership has kicked-up a geo-political storm, defining the contours of the New World Order. China has succeeded building a financial system that bypasses the US and its "maximum pressure" policy. It is for the first time that the Chinese "Economic Order" has created the Economic Deterrence which provides security to Iran, and to all those who come under the security umbrella of this order.

The Chinese economic order, has created a meaningful "Economic Deterrence" against the forces of aggression. It provides security to Iran, against the US-Israeli stealth strategy. The United States displayed the strategy of "Shock and Awe" and u Extreme Pressure" over the last four decades, decimitating several Muslim countries, killing over eight million Muslims, now is engaged with Israel, against Iran, putting the entire Middle East in a state of turmoil. Indeed a dangerous juxtaposition of events has emerged, creating a complex situation. Thus "the political and strategic blue-print which is being drawn in the Middle East, is pushing Arabs into an undiminished mutual enmity and an internecine war that would benefit Israel."

At present Iran is vulnerable to Israeli attacks by its air superiority aircrafts F-35 fighters and accurate intelligence. It is a matter of time that China develops the capability to counter this threat, which is so critical for Iran. The Chinese J-20 also is a 5th generation stealth jet fighter. It may or may not be able to challenge the American F-35, but knowing that the China can shoot-down a satellite in the outer-space, it should not be difficult for them to develop the capability to shoot-down the F-35. When that happens, Israeli "Stealth Strategy" will fade away, which rests at the cutting edge of technology, as of now.

Options for Pakistan

The American and Saudi factor would be compelling for Pakistan to take a neutral stance, notwithstanding Chinese open-hearted support both to Pakistan and Iran. However, now we must start thinking about our "deterrent capability" other than the nuclear. The cost of a conventional deterrence is the actual difference between the cost of a free-flight rocket and a patriot missile.

Our best wishes are for the Arabs, seeking peace with Israel but not at the cost of Palestinians blood. The movement of truth will soon arrive, when the Israeli Prime Minister visits UAE, and their national anthem is played, relaying the message from Tel Aviv:

"Let those who are our enemy shudder, Let all the inhabitants of Egypt and Canaan tremble, Let the inhabitants of Babylon shudder, To loom over their skies, panic and terror from us, When we plant our spears in their chests, And we see their blood being shed, And their heads cut off."

جو چپ رہے گی زبان خنجر، لہو پکارے گا آستیں کا

(If the tongue of the dagger will keep quiet, the blood of the shirt will speak out)

The stains of blood on the mortal hands, convey "the divine verdict" (Quran, Surah Al-Haj (22) verse 40), that the Nazi's could not liquidate the Jews, the Jews cannot curb

Palestinians resolve for freedom and the Indians cannot crush the Kashmiris struggle for right of self-determination.

Funny "Peace" Plans for Kashmir and Palestine

Question: It is very strange that Modi has decided to change the status of Kashmir and Trump has offered a funny peace plan for Palestine. What do you say about this conspiracy?

Answer: No doubt, it is a great conspiracy. It is part of Warsaw plan. Violating the seven decades old UN Resolutions, the Strategic Defense Partners of United States have unilaterally imposed Peace Plans on Kashmir and Palestine, establishing dangerous precedence for the Muslim World. In fact, two different conflict zones now have been established with different logic of conflict emerging that would determine the future course of events in the region.

The internal dynamics of the Kashmir freedom movement are strong, now taking it to a boiling point, which cannot be suppressed by force. So far it is peaceful, but will soon turn violent, as brutalities continue unabated. Jehadi groups from within would emerge, joined by the Jehadis of the world similar to what happened in Afghanistan during the wars against Soviet and American occupation. The steps Modi has taken to assimilate occupied Kashmir, cannot be reversed either, thus the conflict would drag-on with more death and destruction taking place. Khalistan Movement would become alive, causing lot of pain to the soft under-belly of over 800,000 Indian troops deployed in IOK. Pakistan's' policy of uNot joining others wars" will also be put to test.

Likely Palestinians Reaction to American Peace Plan

Question: Is there any possibility that Palestinians would Rise against Israel like Kashmiris have risen against India?

Answer: The Palestinian Movement's internal dynamics are weak. Their leadership is divided. The Palestinians appear reconciled with their fate, and would prefer that:

"Merely staying on the land, with steadfastness would be an act of resistance and a long-term challenge to Israel. "What do I need a state for, if it does not give me more than I already have."

Thus a weak and divided Palestinian leadership and half the Arab World supporting Trump's Peace Plan, has emboldened Mr. Trump to impose a solution, "as if the Palestinians have no voice, no rights, trapped in a detention camp. The world does not hear their narrative, nor see their realities."

Trump's "Vision for Peace" permanently deprives the Palestinians of their participation in the negotiations and deprives them of their land, liberty and dignity. The deal also

approves Israel's existing annexation of East Jerusalem. All terms and conditions are to be accepted within four years otherwise Israel would plunder more territory. It is the plan worked-out in Israel by Trump's son-in-law and the US Ambassador David Friedman. Everything about the plan is farcical gullibly accepted by the American President, so quickly for so little." Palestinians are torn over whom to protest against: "Do we overcome our internal problems with Abbas first or with Israel?"

The serious ramifications of the Peace plan lies in its connection with Iran, after assassination of General Qasim Solemani, Al-Quds commander, adding a new dimension to Palestinian logic of conflict. Americans never believed Iran could retaliate so boldly, in Iraq against American military bases and could shoot down the American high-tech reconnaissance plane in Afghanistan. Perhaps CIA top anti-terror operative of the region, commonly known as Ayatollah Mike has also been killed. He has, since not been seen either. Under shock, Israel pleaded with Americans not to escalate the situation for fear of a war which could cause existential damage to Israel.

The Muslim World is divided. Even the OIC is not prepared to allow Iran to attend the conference, because it does not suit the Saudi masters who also dissuaded Prime Minister Imran Khan, not to attend the Kuala Lumpur conference which could create a vibrant and effective platform attending to the problems of the Muslim World in a more effective manner.

Yet it is a matter of pride that Iran, which has been demonized and brutalized for the last four decades, has been able to maintain its dignity, pride and a powerful fighting spirit to challenge the super-power of the world. With the first "punishing blow" of only 22 missiles, against American bases in Iraq causing brain concussion damage to American soldiers hiding deep into concrete bunkers, came as a rude shock to the Americans. In this context imagine the impact of thousands of rockets and missiles raining over Israel. Let's examine the likely scenario:

A new kind of asymmetric war is lurking over Israel, against which the Israeli Army has no defense. It is a threat which combines the 2006 Hezbollah-Israel war technique which Israel lost, with 2015 Taliban battle for Kunduz in Afghanistan. Simply stated:

This asymmetric -war against Israel, in the first phase, -would begin with massive use of free flight rockets, missiles and drones from several directions to degrade the Iron-Dome air defense system and the public morale, followed by explosive loaded vehicles breach the barrier at multiple places and the suicide bombers in thousands rushing forward through the breach to cause fear and panic and rout among the enemy.

Israel was warned well in time about the threat from Hezbollah, but they did not care and suffered a shameful defeat in 2006. They are being warned now about the threat from Iran, and they better care. Therefore, for America and their proxies Israel and

India, the choice is very clear, either to pursue the Modi and Trump peace deals or engage with the Kashmiris and Palestinians to evolve honorable solution, acceptable to all concerned.

Relationship among the Generals

Question: Sir! It is generally said that a general is nobody's friend. When an officer becomes a general, he does not develop friendship or even intimacy with junior officers. Once I went to see a retired Lieutenant General. He was very happy to receive me but having tears in his eyes he said, "Nobody comes to see me. I feel very lonely". The renowned poet, Major Zamir Jaafari also wrote a poem,

اس اونچی لال حویلی میں

اک میجر جنرل رہتا ہے

"In that red brick high walled house Lives a Major General"

In that poem, he has portrayed the loneliness of a general. What is your experience?

Answer: (Smilingly). No, my experience is quite different. I have very close association with the officers and other ranks whom I served with. I have already mentioned about my staff. They are with me for the last many decades. When I established FRIENDS, many officers joined me. The fact is that you earn respect when you are still in service. If you handle your subordinates fairly, administer justice and respect their ego, they start respecting you. This respect continues even after the retirement.

The officers and men of the units, you command, remain close to your heart and develop lifelong association with you.

Truly speaking, with my commitment to national security matters, my writings and comments, living with my family and friends have made my retirement life much more meaningful and enjoyable. Allah has been very kind to me to bless me with a robust health and a long life.

Question: Sir! You were very lucky that despite very dangerous ups and downs in your career, you rose to the rank of a general. How are your relations with other generals?
Answer: Very cordial relations. We remain human beings after promotion to the rank of general. And man is gregarious; cannot live without others. We keep meeting and exchange our thoughts and gifts also.

Four Star Alumni

I am reminded of an important gathering. Once, Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, General Zubair Mehmood Hayat and President National Defence

University, Lieutenant General Majid Ehsan invited all four star generals, Admirals and Air Chief Marshals of the three services to National Defence University, on December 6, 2018 to form Four Star Alumni. Following high ranking officers attended the meeting:

Army	Navy	PAF
Gen Shamim Alam Khan	Adm Karamat Rehman Niazi	A.M Muhammad Abbas Khatak
Gen Muhammad Yousaf Khan	Adm Abdul Aziz Mirza	A.M Kaleem Saadat
Gen Muhammad Aziz Khan	Adm Muhammad Afzal Tahir	A.M Tanvir Mehmood Ahmed
Gen Ahsan Salim Hayat	Adm Numan Bashir	A.M Rao Qamar Suleman
Gen Ehsanul Haq	Adm Muhammad Asif Sandheela	A.M Tahir Rafiq But
Gen Ashfaq Pervez Kiani	Adm Zakaullah	-
Gen Rashid Mehmood	-	-
Gen Zubair Mehmood Hayat	-	-

It was a very graceful function. Being the senior most officer, I was invited to address the gathering. I was given a brief also but I requested to be allowed to speak extempore and express my own thoughts, which was granted.

On Creation of the Universe

I started my talk with a verse from the Holy Quran,

"There are signs in the heavens and the earth for the believers (2-3/45Al Jasia)

It was a unique gathering of the men of wisdom and knowledge who had commanded thousands of men and discharged their obligations towards the people. It was a great honor to address such a gathering. I said,

"When there was nothing, Allah Almighty was present. He thought of creating man for whom He was to create the universe to test how he follows the right path and achieves the Allah's will. Allah has mentioned about the creation of universe at many places in His Book,

"It is Allah who created seven heavens and the earth and like them where descend the commandments of Allah (12-65 At Tallaq)

"It is God -who created the heavens and the earth and all that is between them in six aeons (days)...His one day is like one thousand years of your reckoning : (5-32 As Sajdah).

The process of the creation of the universe and sequence has been described in details in Sura Ha Meem As Sajdah,

"(O Prophet!) Say: "Would you indeed deny Him Who has created the earth in two (days) aeons? And do you claim that there is any power that could rival Him, the

Sustainer of all the worlds. He placed firm mountains on it, (towering) above its surface and bestowed (so many) blessings on it, and equitably appointed its means of subsistence to all who would seek it and all this he created) in four days" And He applied His design to the skies which were (Yet but) smoke; and He said to them and to the earth, "Come into being, both of you, willingly or unwillingly!" to which both responded, "We do come in obedience

*And He (it is who) decreed that they become seven heavens in two days and imparted unto each heaven its junction. And we adorned the skies nearest to the earth with lights and made them secure; such is the ordaining of the Almighty, the All-knowing.
(9 to 12-41 Ha Meem Sajdah)*

Allah the Exalted created world for man which is like an atom with compared to the universe. It took two days to create the world means two thousand years according to our calculation. Other two days to decorate it and make this world livable for man and other creatures. The whole universe was created in rest of the two days. The sky of the world was decorated with the moon and the stars. All blessings in the heavens and the earth were made subservient to man. It is difficult to estimate the vastness of this universe which is spread over millions of light years. It is still expanding and heading towards its center *i.e.* its creator.

When Almighty Allah decided to create man, he said to the angles, "Behold, I am about to establish upon earth one who shall inherit me".

They said, "Will thou place on it such as will spread corruption thereon and shed blood-whereas it is we who extol Thy limitless glory, and praise Thee and hallow Thy name.

Allah said, " Verily, I know that which you do not know (20-2 Al Baqrah)

Then Allah Almighty molded earthly soil with His own hands to make Adam and blew His spirit in it. Blessed him with knowledge and gave him a status which is meant only for Himself. Man was His creature but raised to the status of worshipping. All angles and Jinns were ordered to prostrate before, man. Iblis refused and sought His Permission to lead man astray till the day of resurrection.

Allah sent a glittering book which is light for guidance. Sent His Prophet Muhammed (PBUH) who is the guide and destination. Man is the dearest of all the creatures to Allah. This love demands that man should understand the depths of this closeness and adopt the loving attitude towards everything which earns the pleasure of Allah.

Along with raising the status of man to such a magnificent height, he has also been put to a trial. He is to follow the right path to seek Allah's pleasure. Allah has warned,

"And most certainly have we destined for hell many of Jinn and men who have hearts with which they fail to grasp the truth, and eyes with which they fail to see, and ears with which they fail to hear. They are like cattle-nay they are even less conscious of the right way: it is they, who are (truly) heedless". (179-7 Al Aaraj)

What I have said, raises many questions in mind. A few questions, I am presenting as food for thought:

Allah took six thousand years to create and decorate this universe. This span of time is sign of His wisdom. How can this process of creation of the universe be called "Big Bang"

Allah created seven heavens and similar earths where descend the commandments of Allah. Are there wise creatures like us in these other earths also on whom the commandments of Allah descend?

Allah has created this world with love and affection. It can neither be given up all together nor we to be absorbed in it.

Our religion is based on two pillars; discharging our obligations towards Allah and men. Allah's love and His particular attention towards this world demand that we should understand the obligation towards the earth. It is a fact that the careless attitude of human beings has caused dangerous situation for the world which is called "Threat to Environmental Security". If human beings do not take care and discharge their duties towards the earth, their very existence would be threatened.

Allah Almighty says, "And know that God intervenes between man and(the desires of) his heart" (24. Infiaal) Concept of being limited and limitless is evident from this verse. The question is, "If Allah is limitless and human being is limited, how can a limitless entity be accommodated in a limited being?"

Obligations towards Allah, men and the earth is the will of Allah and leads to His pleasure. Our journey through this temporal life encompasses the love for Allah, this world and the earth. It is like a fathomless sea having the pleasure of Allah in its depths. Finding it, is the zenith of humanity.

Four Star Galaxy

Martyrs Day is celebrated every year throughout the country. A function is also held at GHQ in which the relatives of Shuhada are specially invited. Dignitaries from all walks of life, diplomats and political figures are also invited. It is a very graceful function. A group photo of four star serving and retired generals was taken in 2017 which is very memorable. I call it "Four star Galaxy". Being a member of this galaxy is a great honor for me.

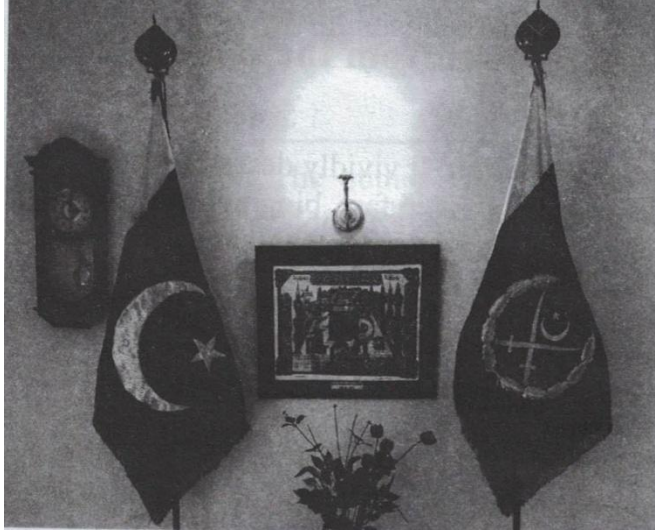
THE FOUR STAR GALAXY 2017



Symbols of our Identity

Question: Sir! I am thankful to you for answering my questions very patiently and calmly. Last question. What is the symbol of our identity as a nation and as part of Muslim Ummah? The General kept quiet for some time, then took me to an adjoining visitors' room and pointing towards a mural of Khana Kaaba said,

- "Look! This is a picture of Khana Kaaba which 135 years old. It has four "Hujrahs" (cells) of our four Imams in all the four directions. Cells of Imam Shafae, Imam Abu Hanifa, Imam Malik, and Imam Ahmed Bin Humbal (May Allah's blessing be upon them). (These have been removed and are no more there) They were the persons who kept our ideological directions and religious thinking on the right path according to the teachings of the Prophet (PBUH). Same is our ideological direction and identity as part of Muslim Ummah.
- This is our national standard. Allah is great. Its dignity demand that it should never be lowered before anyone. This is our national identity.
- On the other side is the standard of our land forces which is the symbol of our resolution and determination. It is our honor and identity. Every soldier feels honored in laying down his life for preservation of its prestige.



A painting of Khana Kaaba at the residence of General Aslam Beg which he calls the symbol of identity of Muslim Umma

- This clock denotes that every passing moment is part of our temporal life. Don't let it be wasted. Its tickling is like the murmur of our hearts. It is the sound of "Haq, Haq" and reminds us that Allah is present between our entity and heart and demands that we should listen to our hearts when making important decisions of life. This is the guarantee of Success.

Masha Allah! What an identity