

Journal of Contemporary Studies

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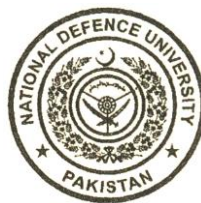
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Faculty of Contemporary Studies
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Islamabad, Pakistan

Editor's Note

The *Journal of Contemporary Studies* is a flagship publication of the Faculty of Contemporary Studies (FCS), National Defence University (NDU), Islamabad. It started with the unequivocal objective of advancing critically oriented, inter-disciplinary academic and intellectual discourse. It is a biannual, double blind peer-reviewed journal which offers its readers- in academia, the government as well as policymaking circles- insightful scholarly analyses, diverse policy perspectives on important contemporary issues, and ongoing debates concerning national and international security, public policy and the wider field of world politics.

This is the tenth issue of the journal containing five articles, two book reviews and five primary documents containing valuable information on significant international developments. The first article, titled *Impact of Violent Extremism on Girls' Schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa* by Dr. Mussarat Jabeen, dwells on the effects of militancy on girls' education in KPK. She argues that a conservative socio-cultural tradition, along with violent religious extremism, impedes girls' education as the militants target girls' schools.

The second article, titled *Continental Drift: Tracing the "Why" of Brexit in the History of European Integration*, is by Muhammad Farouq Khan Lodhi. It examines three perspectives pertaining to Brexit: UK's historic rivalry with European powers, Britain's aversion to the process of European integration for the last seven decades, and the economic considerations that have overshadowed the post-World War II era. The author concludes that the economic rationale is a formidable force behind Brexit.

The third article on the *Role of UN and European Union in the Syrian Refugee Crisis* is by Dr. Fauzia Ghani. It analyses the role played by the United Nations and the European Union in managing the Syrian refugee crisis, their policy response and the challenges faced in return. It also offers recommendations that can make their role effective in dealing with this situation.

The fourth article on *Digital Payments: Prospects for South Asia and Pakistan* is co-authored by Dr. Muhammad Zia-ur-Rehman and Umara Afzal. It discusses the prevailing digital payment patterns across South Asia and subsequently the trends and challenges that are emerging in Pakistan. It also analyses the advantages of various instruments of digital payments.

The last article on *Burhanisation of Social Media and the Resistance Movement in Kashmir* is co-authored by Sheikh Gh. Waleed Rasool and Ameer Abdullah Khan. The authors analyse the impact of the killing of social media icon Burhan Wani on the Kashmir resistance movement. They argue that the interplay of images and sentiment has given birth to a new phenomenon called "Burhanisation." These images did not pass through routine media gate keeping; and therefore, triggered a mass resistance against the Indian rule in occupied Kashmir and Burhan Wani became glorified as a freedom fighter.

I am grateful to all the contributors who have sent their articles for this issue, and the anonymous peer-reviewers whose valuable comments helped the authors to improve their contributions. We hope that the study of this Journal will invoke the desire among the readers to contribute their perspectives in the ongoing academic discourses. Contributions are welcomed from a broad spectrum of inter-related fields like political science, security studies, political economy, terrorism, politics and religion, politics of energy, feminism, media and politics, leadership psychology, military strategy, modern history, international law, sociology, education, conflict management and resolution, demography, social anthropology, and foreign policy analysis etc.

We are accepting articles for the upcoming issue of the Journal of Contemporary Studies based on original qualitative or quantitative research, an innovative conceptual framework or a substantial literature review that opens new areas of inquiry. Case studies and comparative analyses are also welcome. The editorial team at the journal encourages submissions from expert analysts from around the world. The Journal seeks to promote a scholarly understanding of contemporary developments and changes related to the aforementioned disciplines/fields of social sciences. It intends to stimulate interdisciplinary research and writing.

Editor
Dr. Shaheen Akhtar

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IMPACT OF VIOLENT EXTREMISM ON GIRLS' SCHOOLS IN KHYBER PAKHTUNKHWA

Dr. Mussarat Jabeen*

Abstract

All over the world, terrorist attacks on places of learning are increasing. These attacks are different in types, including armed assaults, bombings and hostage taking. In Pakistan, these attacks began in 2009 and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KPK), with its conservative culture was the worst affected area, where mainly girls' schools were the targets of militants. Women in a conservative society are already marginalized and the extremist elements have further constrained their rights. According to the extremist's viewpoint, a woman's life is limited to the traditional roles where education is unnecessary and counterproductive. The customary norms also discourage female education and interpret it as a 'futile pastime.' The existing literature, focusing on gender disparity in the low enrolment of girls in schools, points out three main causes: tradition, poverty and extremism as hurdles in women's path to education. The religious extremists are deliberately keeping girls/women away from education. The paper explores the impact of violent extremism on educational facilities and a look into how it impedes the path of girls going to school.

Key Words: *Girls' schools, Extremism, Terrorist attacks, Traditional roles, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa*

Introduction

In the contemporary world, rising waves of extremism and terrorism, with diverse dimensions, pose the biggest threat to mankind. The worldwide proliferation of terrorist attacks motivated by religious extremism, are raising concerns across all segments of society as a threat to human security. The War on Terror once again brought Pakistan at the forefront (Pakistan was the front-line state in the Afghan war) and it became an American ally in the US-led coalition for counter terrorism. Apart from the loss of human lives and economic resources, the war

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caused enormous damage to the social and cultural fabric of Pakistan and enhanced religious extremism, militancy and violence in the society. The socio-religious milieu of Northern Pakistan was directly influenced by extremism and terrorism, and no sphere of life was free from its impact. Women, a relegated gender in the patriarchal setting of the area, became victims to the prevailing circumstances. The war also led to the proliferation of *Jihadi* organizations, controlled by the Islamist militias, which directly controlled the region under their influence. It was reported that women employees of international NGO's were forced to wear the veil (*burqa*) and were prohibited or discouraged from working away from their homes. Girls' schools were under direct threat from militants who threatened female teachers as well. Video/music shops and barbershops were either closed or destroyed, showing an extremist approach.¹

Female literacy rate in Pakistan is still quite low, ranking it in the bottom ten countries of the world and such practices have further worsened the ranking. Above it, poverty has kept 5.4 million children (aged 7-12) out of schools; girls constituting 62 percent compared to boys who are five percent.² According to a report of the UN, about two third of girls have not been enrolled in any school, whereas 55 percent of adults are unable to read or write, thus increasing the illiterate population. The overall female literacy rate is 25 percent.³

Definitions of Extremism

Extremism and militancy are two inseparable terms. However, it is pertinent to differentiate between the two. Terrorism is a physical act while extremism is related to a mindset. Terrorism resorts to violence or threat of violence in order to accomplish religious, political or ideological objectives. Extremism means having beliefs and support for ideas that are considered unreasonable and unacceptable by most people. Extremists forcefully preach and convince others to follow their thoughts. The term extreme is taken from the Latin words *extremus*, which means far from the centre. Metaphorically, an extreme meant behaviour and ideas, which are not in conformity with the mainstream, particularly in the political arena.⁴ A study by Kornilov (2011) explained that the first use of this term

¹ Magnus Marsden, "Women, Politics and Islamism in Northern Pakistan," *Modern Asian Studies* 42, no. 23 (2008): 405.

² "If You're a Girl in Pakistan: What are Your Chances of going to school," *ABC NEWS*, October 7, 2013. <https://abcnews.go.com/International/girl-pakistan-chances-school/story?id=20475108>.

³ "Nearly three quarters of Pakistani girls not in school," *Dawn*, December 12, 2012.

⁴ Josie Ryan, "What language tells us about changing attitudes to extremism," *The Conversation*, August 31, 2017. <https://theconversation.com/what-language-tells-us-about-changing-attitudes-to-extremism-80789>.

was found in the statements related to theory of the state. In the middle of the 19th century, the terms extremism and extremist began to be used extensively by the press in England. The Civil War (1861-1865) in the USA introduced these concepts as the hardliners in warring parties (Northern and Southern States) called each other extremists. In France, the term extremism began to be used during the World War I (1914 - 1918) when the confrontation started between the left-wing and the right-wing political forces, which continued for several decades.⁵ The Macmillan English Dictionary defines an extremist as one who "tend to have political or religious ideas that are considered extremely unreasonable by the most of the people."⁶ According to another definition, extremism is a commitment to extreme views and actions usually political.⁷ Merriam-Webster dictionary defines extremism as "the quality or state of being extreme."⁸ The Greenwood Encyclopaedia of International Relations defines extremism as "immoderation in policy or in one's intellectual political or social opinions and judgments."⁹ Oxford English Dictionary defines extremism "opposed to moderate."¹⁰ Shanghai Convention called extremism "an act, aimed at the forcible seizure of power or forcible retention of power, as well as a violent change of the constitutional system of the state and a violent encroachment upon public security...as well as illegal armed formations and participation in them."¹¹ After the 9/11 terrorist attacks, the UN Security Council's Resolution 1373 (September 28, 2001) stated, "the Security Council ... is deeply concerned that in the various regions of the world, the acts of terrorism are more likely to occur, motivated by intolerance or extremism."¹²

After the terrorist attacks of 9/11, the terms terrorism and extremism have become abused terms and are associated with Islamic

⁵ Diana B. Baisagatova, Saken T. Kemelbekovb, Diana A. Smagulovaa and Aigul S. Kozhamberdiyeva, "Correlation of Concepts 'Extremism' and 'Terrorism' in countering the financing of Terrorism and Extremism," *International Journal of Environmental and Science Education*, 11, no. 13 (2016), 5908. <https://files.eric.ed.gov/fulltext/EJ1115522.pdf> (accessed January 10, 2017).

⁶ *Macmillan English Dictionary for Advanced Learners*, 2nd, ed., (Oxford: Macmillan Edition, 2007).

⁷ Baisagatova et. al., "Correlation of Concepts," 5908.

⁸ *Merriam Webster Online Dictionary*, s. v. "Extremism," <http://www.merriam-webster>.

⁹ *The Greenwood Encyclopedia of International Relations*, Vol:1. "Cathal J. Nolan."

¹⁰ *The Oxford English Dictionary* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1989).

¹¹ Baisagatova et. al., "Correlation of Concepts," 5909.

¹² UN Security Council Resolution 1373, September 28, 2001, www.un.org/.../United%20Nations%20Security%20Council%20Resolution%201373.

jihad. No doubt, religious extremism has existed throughout the human history, but it appears to have become surprisingly strong at the end of the last millennium.¹³ Viewing the current scenario, it seems that extremist groups have no concern for Islam and its fundamental teachings. Quite the contrary, they are working with their own perspective, ignoring religious teachings and are deviating from it. It appears that mostly these people have reverted to the pre-Islamic darkness of ignorance in applying extreme ways towards their loyalty to groups, clans and tribes.

Linking extremism with religion has become common and supporters of such views and ideas have existed throughout human history. In conservative societies, diverse restrictions are imposed in the name of religion. Many Christian communities, Zionist groups, orthodox Buddhist associations, Hindu extremists and radical elements in Muslim societies made religion an instrument for achieving their specific objectives, which would have otherwise been difficult to gain. Looking at such manifestations, a few commonalities are visible among these elements like the opposition of liberalism, claim of purity and intermingling state authority with the religious one for occupation of political power. Maltreatment of weaker segments of society and prejudices against other creeds and beliefs are also their common feature. Religious extremists and fundamentalists maintain hierarchical order where decisions are made by perceived authority, which are in the form of sacred messages that are not challenged.¹⁴

In September 2007, the Association for Women's Rights in Development (AWID) conducted a survey and inquired about the meaning of religious fundamentalism (extremism) from more than 1,600 gender activists. The survey revealed that 49 percent were either uncertain or rejected the phrase for different reasons including feeling that it emphasized negative stereotypes and 'targets Muslims in particular or it is too jargonistic' while 51 per cent of the respondents opined positively, taking it as useful in their work.¹⁵

Claudio, a philosopher and gender activist, mentioned that religious extremism poses a threat to gender rights and women's 'physical integrity' as they are physically tortured for control of their bodies. In several Asian societies, women are granted a broad range of rights through domestic and international laws, but they are on paper and scarcely fully exercised. The traditional settings of these societies keep women away from the decision-making process, restricting their roles and

¹³ Manuel Castells, *The Power of Identity* (London: Blackwell, 1997), 13.

¹⁴ David Domke, *God Willing?: Political Fundamentalism in the White House, the 'War on Terror' and the Echoing Press* (London: Pluto Press, 2004), 119.

¹⁵ Cassandra Balchin, *Exposed: Ten Myths about Religious Fundamentalism* (Toronto: AWID, 2008). <http://www.awid.org/Library/Exposed-Ten-myths-about-religious-fundamentalisms>.

curtailing their emancipation in comparison to their male counterparts.¹⁶ For example, during the Taliban era in Afghanistan, extremist policies were enforced in the name of religion and these policies not only restricted women movements, but also denied them freedom, suppressing their role in society through draconian laws. It is ironic that reassertion of an ideology of past is nothing, but to marginalise women and as it occurs in all conservative societies from Kabul to Cambridge.¹⁷ Keeping in view the phenomena of extremism, it is difficult to construct a shared definition of extremism. A more useful approach can be looking at the practices of the religious extremists rather than finding a clear-cut definition.

Religious extremism encircles every sphere of a woman's domestic and social life, including education. Constraining women's role, denying identities, depriving them of rights, creating insecurity, harassing sexually and controlling them physically remain central to pseudo religious extremist practices. Analysis of power relations between men and women at the micro level of society indicates that women are being victimized at domestic level as well as facing certain barriers at global level, due to prevailing notion of masculinity. Imbalance in relations arises due to inequality of power, particularly in a gender-based conflict. In such a situation, males attempt to subdue females either in groups or as individuals. Their aim is to govern their actions and control their decisions. Women are taken as the 'weaker sex' in the hierarchy of power relations. The 'powerful sex' enjoys more freedom of action as compared to those whose options and opportunities are limited and social norms and culture weakens them further. Due to these practices, women have to face socioeconomic problems, labour exploitation, gender discrimination, honour killings, acid attacks and above all extremism in developing societies.¹⁸

Culture of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

KPK is the third largest province of Pakistan in terms of population. It is located in the northwestern region of Pakistan. Its former name was the North-West Frontier Province (NWFP), commonly known as *Sarhad* (frontier). It shares an international border with Afghanistan and

¹⁶ Sylvia Estrada Claudio, "Sanctifying Moral Tyranny: Religious Fundamentalisms and the Political Disempowerment of Women," in *Religious Fundamentalism and their Gendered Impacts in Asia*, ed. Andrea Fleschenberg and Sylvia Estrada Claudio (Berlin: Friedrich-Ebert-Stiftung, 2010).

¹⁷ Kavita Ramdas, "Feminists and Fundamentalists," *Current History*, 105, no. 689 (March 2006).

¹⁸ Laura Christina Macedo Piosiadlo, Rosa Maria Godoy Serpa da Fonseca and Rafaela Gessner, "Subordination of Gender: Reflecting on the Vulnerability to Domestic Violence against Women," October-December, 2014. <http://www.redalyc.org/pdf/1277/127732789026.pdf>.

the people living on both sides of the border belong to the same tribes, living on one side while having relatives and jobs on the other side. This affinity has brought KPK under direct influence of the Afghan culture. These cultural similarities have denied empowerment to women in the tribal setting where the society is conservative. Impacts of cultural traditions, religious teaching and gender prejudices have reduced the women's status, generating gender discrimination. Tracing the link between extremism and culture, Elaine Pressman explores "extremism to be a culturally relative term in that extremist beliefs are dependent on the cultural perspective since the person who holds views which (have been) considered to be extreme within another cultural context or time may not be considered to hold extremist beliefs within another cultural context or time."¹⁹

Furthermore, economic underdevelopment and poverty have reduced a woman's position. Besides, the patriarchal setting has given control to men for administering women's roles. Interpretation of familial relations is often derived from the Holy Quran, strengthening it with tribal code '*Pakhtunwali*',²⁰ which is a hybridized compromise of religion and a tribal code of masculinity. It mostly negates female rights.²¹ This prevailing cultural environment has made women exceptionally vulnerable to abuse, exposing state's failure to ensure their rights. Islam delivers a message that seeking of knowledge is obligatory for every Muslim, but in conservative societies, it is being denied to women by cultural laws.

In the 1980s, Soviet military intervention in Afghanistan gave birth to extremism in the region, which was due to a process, encompassing socio-political change under the influence of jihadi culture and transformation in the perception of the people, considering war against the Soviets as a religious duty. Pakistan, being a front-line state in the Afghan war, was equally affected by it. The war gave birth to a generation of 'Jihadists' in Pakistan and Afghanistan, propagating religious extremism.

¹⁹ Muhammad Feyyaz, "Youth Extremism in Pakistan – Magnitude Channels, Resident Spheres and Response," *Defense Against Terrorism Review* 6. no. 1 (Spring & Fall 2014): 65.

²⁰ Pashtunwali or Pakhtunwali is a non-written ethical code about tribal traditions, which is following by Pashtun people. It is a system of law and governance that began in prehistoric times is valid even today, especially in rural tribal areas. It is a set of customs and manners of the Afghan tribes. It was originated in the pre-Islamic era. Every Pashtun feels pride in following it either he lives in Afghanistan, Pakistan or any other place. Aftab Yasmeen Ali, "Understanding Pashtunwali," *The Nation*, August 6, 2013. <http://nation.com.pk/>.

²¹ H. Ahmed-Ghosh, "A History of Women in Afghanistan: Lessons learnt for the Future or Yesterdays and Tomorrow" *Journal of International Women's Studies*, 4, no. 3 (2013).

Moreover, Islamization by General M. Zia-ul-Haq, the former president of Pakistan, strengthened this affect. The Afghan Jihad brought enforcement of rigid policies, particularly regarding women's freedom. The *Mujahideen* (warriors of faith) paved the path for the emergence of the Taliban in Afghanistan. After consolidating their power, the Taliban imposed draconian laws and curtailed women's role, denying rights to them. Limited access was given to women in different areas including education. Girls' schools were closed down in Kabul, which had been an area of liberal traditions and women were forced to wear a veil. After the fall of Taliban regime, the pictures of Afghan women celebrating their freedom by throwing their veils fascinated the West and the US, but more amazing was the role of those women who reopened schools amid the debris and started teaching children. Throwing away the veil is not a new phenomenon as Queen Soraya, wife of King Amanullah (1919-29), took a bold step to bring a revolutionary change in the country. She removed the veil from her face during a public speech and the wives of the officers followed her, taking away their veils. Later the queen used to wear a wide brimmed hat in public gatherings, promoting liberal traditions in the society. She opened the first girls' school and a hospital in Kabul, while her mother launched the first women's magazine in the country, which featured stories of brave and successful women from history and their elevated place in society. Soraya was also the minister of education. She managed to send a young woman of 18 years old to Turkey for higher education in 1928. This happened for the first time in the history of the country.²² This was a highly bold step in a traditional society with its conservative approach.

Militancy, Extremism and the Role of Sufi and Fazlullah regarding Girls' Education

Following Taliban's policies, the religious extremists in KPK publicly opposed girls' education. These elements looked down upon education, taking it as an intrigue of the West or state-led bodies. They not only threatened the female students by attacking their schools, but also prevented health workers from performing their duties. Observing this situation, a gender activist, Sudduth commented, "The fundamentalist elements launched campaigns against polio vaccination, and called girls' education as un-Islamic."²³ These observations surfaced when the terrorists attacked girls' schools and threatened female health workers in

²² "Leading Lady Spraya Tarzi: The Afghan Queen," *Dawn*, January 29, 2012. <https://www.dawn.com/news/691638>.

²³ Jennifer Sudduth, "CEDAW's Flaws: A Critical Analysis of why CEDAW is Failing to Protect a Woman's Right to Education in Pakistan," *Journal of Law & Education*, 2009.

hospitals. Girls were prevented from going to schools in the areas under their control or influence. South Waziristan Agency was the first area where the militants destroyed a girls' school.²⁴ They had also blown up many girls' schools before the eruption of fighting with security forces. They were not hesitant to target the schools even during the fighting.

Sufi Mohammad, a Taliban leader and founder of the *Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi* (1992), was the first person who publicly called for the implementation of Sharia (Islamic) law in 1994. Sufi, along with his son-in-law Fazlullah, tried to enforce Sharia laws, restricting women's education and closing down the girls' schools. Fazlullah established 30 illegal FM radio stations to communicate his message to like minded groups and allies. He was known as 'Radio Mullah.' He used to broadcast extremist views from these radio stations and also advocated a ban on female education. During July 2007, Fazlullah declared jihad against military forces of Pakistan to take revenge of the siege of the Red Mosque (*Lal Masjid*) in Islamabad.²⁵ His *Tehreek-e-Nafaz-e-Shariat-e-Mohammadi* (TNSM) was reported to be one of the founding groups of the Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), along with the other groups and at the time of its formation, Fazlullah, was formally appointed in Swat as the Taliban commander.²⁶ He motivated hundreds of people and acquired new recruits for enforcement of Sharia law forcefully. Doing all this, he followed Sufi Muhammad, who took ten thousand *jihadis* to Afghanistan to fight against the US-led forces in 2001.²⁷

Sufi was imprisoned when President Musharraf banned terrorist organizations in January 2002, criticizing religious extremism after the terrorist attacks on the Indian parliament in December 2001. Sufi was involved in acts of militancy and destroying girls' schools. However, he

²⁴ Ali A. Naqvi, S. Z. Khan & Z. Ahmad, "The Impact of Militancy on Education in FATA," *Tigah, A Journal of Peace & Development*, 2(2012).

²⁵ The Lal Masjid (Red Mosque) was founded in 1965. During the Afghan war, the mosque was frequently used by the Pakistan military and government. Imam (leader) of the mosque and General Zia-ul-Haq were closed-friends. After the Afghan war, the mosque continued its working as a center for Islamic teaching and thousands of male and female students had been residing in neighbouring seminaries. It was reported that young students were being trained for jihad in Kashmir or any other area. Training camps were also established by the terrorist organisations like Al-Qaeda. In July 2007, Lal Masjid Operation was carried out by army, targeting clerics and students. Qandeel Siddique, "The Red Mosque Operation and its Impact on the Growth of the Pakistani Taliban," *Norwegian Defence Research Establishment*, October 8, 2008. <https://www.ffi.no/no/Rapporter/08-01915.pdf>.

²⁶ Q. Siddique, "The Red Mosque Operation".

²⁷ Rabia Zafar, "Development and the Battle for Swat, Alnakhlah," *The Fletcher School Online Journal for Issues Related to Southwest Asia and Islamic Civilization* (2011).

managed to come out of prison in April 2008, signing an agreement with the government on not engaging in the heinous act of schools' destruction and other violent activities. Sufi also promised to maintain peace in the militancy-hit areas. He also agreed to surrender, along with his militant allies, in lieu of acceptance of his terms and conditions for enforcement of *Shariah* law. For this purpose, an official deal was made with him on February 15, 2009, but he immediately rejected the deal and renounced it formally in April 2009. He accused the government of violation of the deal and not establishing for *Shariat* courts.²⁸

In December 2007, Fazlullah gained administrative control of Swat valley and established Islamic courts. He enforced his hard-line interpretation of Sharia law and launched a violent campaign against female education. On January 15, 2009, girls were banned from going to school outright through an edict. About 900 schools were either closed or stopped enrollment of female-students. This decree snatched the right of education from 120,000 girls and remaining were 40,000 only.²⁹ Moreover, closure of schools and the violent campaign against female education deprived 8,000 female teachers of their jobs in Swat Valley.³⁰ These events were protested nationwide. Under the pressure and protest of the people, he amended the edict, allowing girls to 'attend school up to grade five.'³¹ Over the following months, the military launched 'Operation Black Thunderstorm'. Its aim was to free the area from the militants' control. The operation started on April 26, 2009. In post-operation period, attempts were made by the military and the government to bring back girls to school, restoring the confidence of both teachers and parents. But a large number of female-students were not prepared to join the schools out of fear of terrorist attacks. A Fact-Finding team of the Human Rights Commission of Pakistan (HRCP) portrayed the tragic situation, showing the dismal state of affairs in Taliban-controlled areas, which were the worst-hit zones. Access of girls to school was affected disproportionately and most girls' schools were either destroyed or damaged by the militants' bombing. If school-buildings remained intact, parents were doubtful about the safety of their daughters and were reluctant to send them back in their schools.³²

²⁸ HRCP Fact Finding Mission, "Swat: Paradise Regained?" (July 2010), 35-37. <http://www.hrcp-web.org/pdf/Swat-Paradise-Regained.pdf>.

²⁹ "Taliban bans education for girls in Swat Valley," *The Washington Times*, January 5, 2009. <https://www.washingtontimes.com/news/2009/jan/05/taliban-bans-education-for-girls-in-pakistans-swat/>.

³⁰ HRCP Fact Finding Mission, "Swat: Paradise Regained."

³¹ Baela Raza Jamil, "Girls Education in Swat," *South Asian Journal*, April-June 2009: 31.

³² HRCP Fact Finding Mission, "Swat : Paradise Regained," 24.

Destruction of Girls' Schools in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

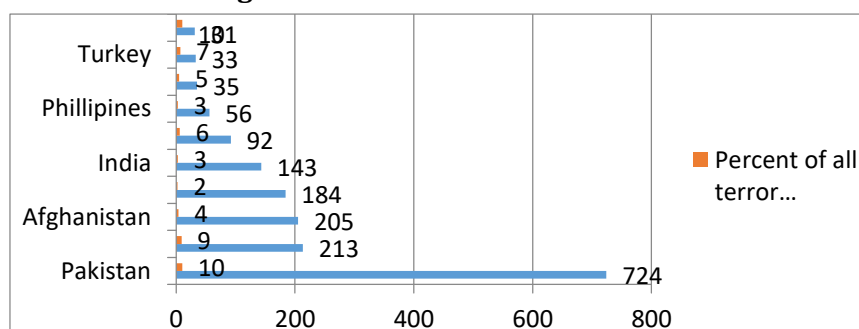
From 1970 to 2013, about 3,400 educational institutions were attacked by terrorists in 110 countries. The ratio of these attacks was 2.7 percent of the total worldwide attacks in this period. In Pakistan, from 2009 to 2013, this ratio was higher than any other country of the world, and the north-western area was its main target.³³ Apart from Pakistan, educational institutions in Afghanistan, Colombia, Somalia, Sudan and Syria were also victim of terrorism.³⁴ These countries had experienced more than one thousand attacks on schools, universities, teachers and students. These attacks target the persons and facilities of the institutions, which were used for military purposes. The most dangerous country was Colombia, where 140 teachers lost their lives and a thousand received death threats during 2009-2012. A report on the killing of teachers pointed out that in remote areas, teachers and schools were the only signs of state authority in the face of powerful armed non-state groups, who alleged them of collaboration with the enemy.³⁵ In Swat, education was also the target of extremism, challenging the writ of the government.

³³ Erin Miller, "Background Report : Terrorist Attacks on Educational Institution, *National Consortium Study of Terrorism and Response to Terrorism*, December, 2014. <https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/Peshawar%20School%20Background%20Report%20December%202014.pdf>.

³⁴ Global Coalition to Protect Education from Attacks (GCPEA), *Country Profiles: Pakistan*, 2014. <http://www.protectingeducation.org/country-profile/pakistan>.

³⁵ Sarah Marsh, "Targets for Terror : The Shocking Data on School and University Attacks," *The Guardian*, April 30, 2015. <https://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/datablog/2015/apr/30/terror-data-school-university-attacks-peshawar>.

Terrorism against Educational Institutions 2004-2013



Source: University of Maryland analyzed data of the Global Terrorism Database. <https://www.start.umd.edu/gtd/>

In Pakistan, terrorist attacks on educational institutions increased in the aftermath of the operations of the Red Mosque and Swat. *Tehrik-i-Taliban Pakistan* (TTP) was taken as the prime perpetrator in these attacks despite the fact that many attackers were unidentified and there were other sources of tension as well. In the beginning, these attacks mainly targeted educational institutions, destroying the infrastructure. These were non-lethal in nature as their primary objective appeared to be the disruption of education, particularly of girls. Mostly the buildings were vacant at the time of attack; therefore, no loss of life occurred.

According to a BBC Report, more than 500 schools were demolished by the TTP in the tribal areas from 2009 to 2013. This situation not only dissuaded half a million students from going to schools, but also took the lives of many teachers. It was also reported that more than 838 attacks were launched, which destroyed hundreds of schools from 2009 to 2012. This was a higher number than any other country of the world. In the same period, 15 teachers were shot dead and eight were injured while four female teachers became victim of acid attacks.³⁶

In January 2009, five schools of Mingora in Swat Valley were destroyed by the militants, which resulted in a worldwide protest, particularly in the Western world, which condemned the tragic event as subject to international law and demanded the safety of children and women. The French ministry took a hard stance and insisted that Islamabad take operative measures to secure gender rights in the region. It stated, "It is, however, by the acknowledgment of the dignity of women that this great country (Pakistan) will achieve peace and development. Pakistani authorities have to do everything they can to protect the fundamental rights of women and children as recognized by international

³⁶ GCPEA, "Country Profile : Pakistan,".

law.”³⁷ France supported Pakistan against the evils of fanaticism, terrorism, extremism and militancy.

Despite nationwide protest and condemnation at the international level, the militants continued their practices. Two female teachers were killed in Bajaur Agency on November 4, 2009, despite high security alert in the area.³⁸ Killing of females at the hands of militants seems to be motivated by their stance against education and women working outside their homes. However, other reasons were also there, including use of school buildings by the military as its base.

From 2009 to 2011, about 758 schools were destroyed by the militants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and neighbouring tribal areas, including 640 schools in Malakand Division. Among these schools, 477 were partially damaged and 166 were totally destroyed. In addition, 36 schools in Peshawar, Hangu, Bannu, Lakki Marwat and other areas were destroyed while the number of damaged schools was 82.³⁹ Mushtaq Jadoon, Education Secretary of KPK, issued a statement while talking with the media, “Most of the damaged schools were rehabilitated by the Pakistan Army and different NGOs. However, the schools completely destroyed are still awaiting reconstruction. Unfortunately, when a school is rebuilt, it is destroyed again by militants. However, we will not lose hope and spread education to all corners of the province.”⁴⁰

In 2011, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa and Federal Administrative Tribal Areas (FATA) collectively lost 1,600 schools. These schools were either demolished or partially damaged. This devastation affected 3, 71,604 girls out of 7, 21,392 students.⁴¹ According to another report of FATA Directorate of Education (2011), 505 schools were demolished or devastated, while 108 girls’ schools and 542 boys’ primary schools became

³⁷ France in Pakistan, “Destruction of five Schools in Swat Valley: Statement by the Foreign Minister for European Affairs,” January 20, 2009. <https://pk.ambafrance.org/Pakistan-destruction-of-five>.

³⁸ Anwarullah Khan, “Militants kill Two Women Teachers in Bajaur,” *Dawn*, November 5, 2005.

³⁹ Naveed Ahsan, “Schools vs Militants: An Overview of the Situation in KPK and FATA,” *Conflict Monitoring Centre*, January, 20, 2013. <https://cmcpk.wordpress.com/2013/01/20/schools-vs-militants-an-overview-of-the-situation-in-kpk-and-fata>.

⁴⁰ Islamuddin Sajid, “Over 3000 Schools were destroyed in Militancy, Disasters: Official,” *The Express Tribune*, June 15, 2012. <https://tribune.com.pk>.

⁴¹ S. Younis, “Militancy Fallout: 7 Lakh Students deprived of Education in KP, 2011.” *Associated Press of Pakistan*. http://www.app.com.pk/en_/index.php?option=com_content&task=view&id=134087&Itemid=200. (accessed, January 15, 2014).

dysfunctional due to militancy and the threat of terrorism.⁴² In the same year, Pakistan saw more than 135 attacks at different educational institutions. Out of 76 attacks, 53 took place in FATA and KPK.⁴³ In Charsaddah and Peshawar districts, ten and seventeen public schools were destroyed respectively. Many girls' schools remained closed due to threats. On March 09, 2011, a school was blown up in Darra Adam Khel while another school was destroyed in Nowshera. A girls' school of Mardan was also bombed in November 2011. All such attacks did nothing but deprive children of their places of learning, as hundreds of schools became non-functional. Moreover, school children and madrassa students were recruited by the militants for suicide bombings. There were also targeted killings of teachers and academics.⁴⁴

In July 2012, a newly constructed school was attacked while another girls' school became the target of militants in Swabi district in August. In Swat, a school girl named Malala Yousafzai became the target of Tehrik-i-Taiban Pakistan (TTP) on October 9, 2012. She was accompanied by two school girls on her way to school in her school pick-up van. Ehsanullah Ehsan, a TTP spokesman, took responsibility for this attack as he himself admitted and alleged Malala was working against the Taliban and propagating secular values. Malala was identified by a gunman before being shot in the head and neck.⁴⁵ She was a 15-year-old school girl of Swat Valley, who raised her voice against the atrocities of the militants, highlighting their heinous character and contempt towards girls' education. The militants alleged Malala was writing an anonymous blog for the BBC against the Taliban, highlighting the life of a school girl under their control. She was also blamed for launching a campaign for female education, which aroused TTP's anger against her. Afterwards, the military ousted this group from the valley. All this made Malala an icon of education worldwide. The UN General Assembly invited her to New York and she addressed the Assembly as the representative of youth in July 2013. In her address to the UN, she advocated the need of education for the poor school girls of Pakistan and asked for "free, mandatory education

⁴² Islamuddin Sajid, "The Woeful State of Education in KPK, Fata," *The Express Tribune*, May, 3, 2011. <https://tribune.com.pk>.

⁴³ GCPEA, Country Profile: Pakistan.

⁴⁴ Ludovica Iaccino, "Peshawar School Massacre: Girls-hating Taliban Attacks 1,000 'Un-Islamic' Pakistan Schools in last five years," *International Business Times*, December 16, 2014. <http://www.ibtimes.co.uk/peshawar-school-massacre-girl-hating-taliban-attack-1000-un-islamic-pakistan-schools-last-1479821>.

⁴⁵ Fazal Khaliq, "Malala Attack: Government finally realizes there were two other victims," *The Express Tribune*, October, 14, 2012. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/451332/malala-attack-govt-finally-realises-there-were-two-other-victims/>.

around the world.” She also stated that her goal was to educate females “because they are suffering the most.”⁴⁶

The annual report of Conflict Monitoring Centre (CMC) (2012) highlighted that 81 schools were blown up by the militants and mainly girls’ schools were their target in the area. In FATA, 29 schools were destroyed, whereas 52 schools were attacked in KPK. The worst-hit districts were Charsadda and Swabi where militants destroyed 10 and 13 schools respectively. Nowshera and Mardan districts were the next victim as eight and five school-buildings were destroyed respectively. In Tank district, one school was destroyed while in Hangu and Dera Ismail Khan each, two schools were demolished. Kohat and Laki Marwat were equal targets, where eight (four in each) schools were destroyed. Mohmand Agency and Khyber agency of FATA were the worst affected parts where sixteen and nine schools were destroyed respectively. Bajour Agency, North Waziristan Agency and South Waziristan Agency each lost one school to extremism.⁴⁷

The situation did not change and militants continued their attacks on schools. In March 2013, a girls’ school was blown up in Lakki Marwat while a boys’ school was attacked in Mohmand Agency in June. A girls’ school of Bannu was blown up in July 2013 with a 10-kg explosive device and in August, another school was attacked in Mohmand Agency. Hussaini Madrassa in Peshawar was also attacked in this year. On January 2014, a school in Hangu was attacked by a suicide bomber, countered by a brave student named Aitzaz Hasan, who lost his life but saved the school by killing the attacker. However, the militants did not stop their atrocious act and only after one month burnt down another school. In Bajaur agency, a girls’ school was again destroyed on September 8, 2014, after its reconstruction. It was first destroyed on International Literacy Day in 2010. In Bara, a girls’ school was attacked in October 2014.⁴⁸ While a girls’ school was blown up in Charsada on November 14, 2014, in the same city,

⁴⁶ Valerie Strauss, “The Amazing Thing Malala Plans to say if a Taliban Gunman Approaches her Again,” *Washington Post*, October 10, 2014. https://www.washingtonpost.com/news/answersheet/wp/2014/10/10/the-amazing-thing-malala-plans-to-say-if-a-taliban-gunman-approaches-her-again/?utm_term=.f193cd1ac1b7.

⁴⁷ Naveed Ahsan, “Schools vs Militants: An Overview of the Situation in KPK and FATA,” *Conflict Monitoring Centre*, January 20, 2013. <https://cmcpk.wordpress.com/2013/01/20/schools-vs-militants-an-overview-of-the-situation-in-kpk-fata>.

⁴⁸ “Militant Attacks on School in Pakistan,” *The Tribune Express*, December 16, 2014. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/807617/timeline-militant-attacks-on-schools-in-pakistan/>.

an NGO school was attacked on December 15, 2014.⁴⁹

The most heinous event happened on December 16, 2014 when the school children of Army Public School, Peshawar became the victim of terrorism. The militants attacked the school and opened fire, which killed 134 children and nine staff members. This attack left 118 students injured along with three teachers.⁵⁰ Prior to this event, the average death ratio of lethal attacks on educational institutions was 0.8 percent as compared to 2.3 percent for all other types of attacks.⁵¹ Previously, school buildings were the target of militants at the time when they were unoccupied and the number of casualties was low.

Responding to this fatal attack, the government launched the 20-point National Action Plan in December 2014. The plan underlined the need to adopt a political discourse to counter religious militancy. The government took different initiatives to control the situation, but destruction of schools did not stop. On the first anniversary of the martyrs of APS, Peshawar, the parliament was informed that 360 schools were destroyed in FATA, 166 in North Waziristan Agency, 139 in Khyber Agency and 55 in South Waziristan Agency during 2015.⁵²

In January 2015, two girls' primary schools in Swabi were attacked while two boys' schools were blown up by the militants in Bajur Agency on June 17 and July 5, 2015 respectively. On October 29, 2015, an aerial firing was opened on two girls' schools in Charsada and Shabqadar separately. The most recent event of students' killing was not against a school, but Bacha Khan University in Charsadda became the target of militancy. On January 20, 2016, four terrorists killed 21 people, including students and teachers. These people were gathered for a poetry recital to commemorate the death anniversary of Bacha Khan, the leader of KPK whom the university is named after. It was reported that the mastermind of APS attack, Khalifa Omar Mansoor, commander of banned TTP (Geedar Group), was the person who planned this attack, while based in Achin district of Afghanistan.⁵³ Later he was killed in a drone strike in Afghanistan. Both

⁴⁹ Rana Muhammad Usman, "Will Pakistan see more School Attacks?" *Dawn*, May 12, 2016.

⁵⁰ Rameesha Qurashi, A. Gulraiz and Z. Shahzad, "An Analysis of Media's Role: Case Study of Army Public School (APS) Peshawar Attack," *Social Communication 2* (2016), file:///C:/Users/HPGv66/Downloads/An_Analysis_of_Medias_Role_Case_Study_of_Army_Pub.pdf.

⁵¹ Erin Miller, "Terrorist Attacks on Educational Institutions" December, 2014. <https://www.start.umd.edu/pubs/Peshawar%20School%20Background%20Report%20December%202014.pdf>.

⁵² Azam Khan, "360 Schools were Destroyed in 2015," *Express Tribune*, December 17, 2015, <https://tribune.com.pk>.

⁵³ Ismail Khan, "APS massacre mastermind killed in US drone strike," *Dawn*, July 12, 2016.

attacks (APS and Bachah Khan University) caused a huge cost in terms of human lives. During this period, 450 persons were killed in Pakistan, which was the highest number, while the next was Russia with 361 casualties.⁵⁴

Across the Swat Valley, the militants' campaign of pulverizing the education system began in 2008 and forced the government to step in to continue education in the affected region. In spite of the combined efforts of the military and civilian government, it still appears that the radical and violent interpretation of religious teachings has not yet stopped.

In KPK, there are many 'tented schools,' as their buildings have been destroyed. These schools are uncomfortable and hardly keep out the whips of the cold winds of winter. The little girls of the valley shared their feelings about the cold weather, sitting on the debris of their school, which was now situated in a tent and unable to compete the severe weather. The tented school setup was established on a temporary basis due to lack of time and funding, but severe weather conditions foiled it. Besides the 'tented schools,' double shifts were also introduced in schools to continue education. The government worked for the repair of schools and tried to continue the system without interruption. However the attendance remained poor as many schools were still under the threat due to continued danger of returning of the Taliban laws. The Provincial Disaster Management Authority (Peshawar) estimated in its preliminary damage assessment report that US\$ 68.1 million were required to reconstruct the schools.⁵⁵

Causes of Low Enrollment in KPK and FATA

Enrollment in girls' schools is discouraging in KPK and FATA. A high drop-out rate exists between grade one and two and overall ratio of drop outs is 70 percent in girls as compared to boys, which is 43 percent. Dropout rate varies from one area to another. Those areas that are rural or more exposed to the TTP have low enrollment with high dropout. The dropout rate of school girls of the age 6-14 years of poor families is 76 percent as compared to boys of 46 percent. In 2011, net enrollment in primary education was 72 percent, secondary education had 35 percent and tertiary institutions had eight percent.⁵⁶ It also pointed out that young Pakistani girls have not been enrolled in schools for the last three quarters. The dropout ratio is quite depressing in rural areas where the

⁵⁴ Usman, "Will Pakistan See More School Attacks?" *Dawn*, May 14, 2016.

⁵⁵ I. Khattak, "Pakistan Struggles to keep Education System Intact amid Militants' Bombings," *Central Asia Online*, (February 25, 2010), centralasiaonline.com/en_GB/articles/caii/.../pakistan/.../feature-03?

⁵⁶ GCPEA, "Education Under Attack 2014, Country Profiles: Pakistan. <http://www.protectingeducation.org/country-profile/pakistan>.

average education that a girl receives in schools is one year as compared to boys of wealthy families living in urban areas, who attend school for ten years.⁵⁷ Education for All Global Monitoring Report (2012) pointed out that 5.1 million Pakistani children were not enrolled in any school.⁵⁸ This number is alarming and ranking of Pakistan is the second highest country in the world, where children are away from schools. In terms of population, Pakistan is at sixth number in the most populated countries facing the problem of illiteracy.⁵⁹

Apart from extremism, several other factors are keeping a large number of children out of schools. These include poverty (cost), social attitudes, poor teaching, unavailability of female teachers, corporal punishment, location of schools, domestic duties, lack of mobility and unavailability of accommodation. Poverty and environmental hurdles lead the majority of the enrolled students to leave school without completing the full course of study while teachers' unavailability and poor infrastructure equally impinge upon the quality of education. The nature of the curriculum and division of school systems in private, public and madrasa system are also affecting the education. The cost of education for poor families is un-affordable even in public schools. It is observed by many studies that female education has suffered sometimes due to perceived opportunity cost. Increase in fee and other expenditures cause dropouts among girls as their chances of future earning are nominal while boys are not affected.⁶⁰ There is great disparity in the number of schools for boys and girls and lower number of girls' schools is a big cause of low enrolment. The heavy dropout rate at primary level discourages higher education and in the absence of advanced degrees, there is a shortage of female teachers. The traditional environment does not encourage teachers from settled areas to serve in schools located in remote areas. Other social factors like early marriage, tribal hostilities, travelling hazards and cultural taboos are equally impeding the path of female education.

A report by UNESCO about the education of girls of poor families ranked Pakistan as the least developed country of the region. It stated, "the poor girls in Pakistan are twice as likely to be out of school as the poorest

⁵⁷ Ibid.

⁵⁸ Aroosa Shaukat, "Despite having Second Worst Record for Children out of School, UNESCO Optimistic," *The Express Tribune*, October 24, 2012. <http://tribune.com.pk/story/456334/despite-having-second-worst-record-for-children-out-of-school-unesco-optimistic/>.

⁵⁹ U. Manzoor, "Over 800 Schools blown up in KPK & Fata," *Dawn*, January 27, 2013.

⁶⁰ Elizabeth M. King and Rebecca Winthrop, "Today's Challenges for Girls' Education," *Working Paper 90* (Brookings : Global Economy & Development, June 2015). <https://www.brookings.edu/wp-content/uploads/2016/07/Todays-Challenges-Girls-Educationv6.pdf>.

girls in India, almost three times as likely as the poorest girls in Nepal and around six times as likely as the poorest girls in Bangladesh.”⁶¹

A college teacher of Mingora (Swat Valley) shared that the majority of students were male and out of 1000, only 300 were girls. The major reason of girls’ are being deprived of education is poverty and conflict. Moreover, cultural norms are also a hurdle in their path due to societal biasness against educated and independent women. The tradition and practice of early marriages mar the prospects of girls’ education and restrict their learning period.⁶²

Several studies have observed that attendance in schools is highly gender-imbalanced. The ratio of girls is only three percent among 5-9 years old while boys’ ratio is 26 percent, several times higher. It is a known fact that four out of ten girls, at the age of 15 years, can read and write while this ratio in men is 70 percent. The reason for this disparity is an unsupportive atmosphere for girls’ education and the patriarchal values of society. However, improvement is visible in girls’ enrolment, but only at the primary level. At the secondary and higher level, the position is quite disappointing and girls’ enrolment is only 29 percent.⁶³

Proliferation of *Deeni Madaris* (religious schools) is also one reason of low enrollment as they fulfil the need of boys’ education. Majority of these boys are orphans, who have lost their parents and homes in conflict. The people of the area deliberately ignore the necessity of girls’ educational institutions in the presence of these madrassas due to societal pressure amongst other restraints. NGOs are also discouraged from opening any girls’ school, particularly foreign NGOs since there is a perception of distrustfulness attached to them. *Khwendo Kor* NGO became militants’ target allegedly for educating and empowering females through opening community-based girls’ schools. The NGO staff was not only threatened, but was also attacked and even grenades attack with.⁶⁴ This hostile environment finally forced them to close their services in the

⁶¹ UNESCO, ‘Global Monitoring Report’, *Education For All*, <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0023/002325/232565e.pdf>.

⁶² International Crisis Group, “Education Reform in Pakistan,” *Asia Report No. 257*, (Brussels (Belgium): Crisis, June 23, 2014). <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/116000/asa330062002en.pdf>.

⁶³ Alexandra Raphael, “Gender Equality, Education, and Economic Development in Pakistan,” *Journalist’s Resource*, July 22, 2013. <http://journalistsresource.org/studies/international/human-rights/pakistan-women-equality-education-economic-development-research-roundup>.

⁶⁴ Riaz Ahmad, “Aid Workers Targeted?: Armed men Storm Khwendo Kor Office,” *The Tribune*, April 21, 2013. <https://tribune.com.pk/story/538420/aid-workers-targeted-armed-men-storm-khwendo-kor-office/>.

area.⁶⁵ The other NGOs working in the area also faced security threats and hindered from carrying out their task of educating females. Another reason was the uncooperative attitude of tribal elders, which was a continuous source of tension and fear for services and lives of NGO workers.⁶⁶ Mostly these NGOs engaged women either as employees or students to improve their education and economic status. All this was conceived as opposite to prevailing conservative and cultural norms. This attitude does no good and is counterproductive as it slows down women's access to education and work.

Conclusion

Education is the basic need of a civilized society. It is essential for all human beings to acquire it irrespective of gender and identity, but unfortunately, girls' education is the prime target of militants in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The attacks on schools are even destroying the available infrastructure and forcefully depriving girls of education. The process of education has been disrupted by the destruction of schools as reconstruction of buildings takes time and enrolled students rarely return. In the traditional society of KPK, women's education is already a victim of traditional norms and countless issues. The militants are not only discouraging females from getting educated, but also preventing the teachers from educating them. Due to the prevailing environment, NGOs workers engaged in the education sector are facing threats. No doubt, arms make a nation victorious, but they cannot safeguard gender rights. However, force is useful for improving the plight of women. Change in societies occurs with the support of the people and the government, which is often tentative and slow. The tribal values adhered to by the people must maintain the standard of human rights as depriving women of their basic rights is not endorsed by any convention and charter. The traditions which the tribal people hold dear should be held up to the standard of human rights.

The government and the military need to work in a close relationship with tribal leaders to discover a solution to this 'non-negotiable issue.' No doubt, the state is already doing much against militancy and insurgency, but the rights of individuals cannot be sidelined in the interest of the state security. The end goal must be to improve the status of women and education achieved through a peaceful society. To get

⁶⁵ Jocelyn Richard, "Women in Northern Pakistan: Protected by Tribe, Territory or Taliban?," *UCL Human Rights Review* 3, 2010, 242. <http://www.heritage-science.ac.uk/human-rights/research/ucl-hrr/docs/hrreviewissue3/richard>.

⁶⁶ Amnesty International, "Pakistan: Insufficient Protection of Women," April 15, 2002, <https://www.amnesty.org/download/Documents/116000/asa330062002en.pdf>.

rid of terrorism and extremism requires a change in the workings and beliefs of the society, leading to a discourse that works for women's inclusion in decision-making. There is also need to change public and private policies, laws and ideas that affect women's position. A change in those norms that delegate women to a position of inferiority is essential, as moderation and rationality require practical efforts; merely rhetoric cannot dispose of them. Here are a few recommendations to improve the situation:

- Political reforms are required to improve the situation of law and order in the area.
- Education must be a priority of the government and people to change the mindset.
- The allocation of huge funds is required to repair and rebuild the schools, but ensuring their security is more important to avoid further destruction.
- Construction of new schools is the need of the hour and the government should provide a budget for new schools.
- Most of the schools do not have sufficient staff as per the need of students and the government must fulfill this deficiency.
- Female teachers demand to be posted near their home and in case of remote areas; accommodation and transport should be provided.
- Civil society, NGOs and tribal elders should step ahead and contribute to the local administration in their efforts to secure schools from militancy and promote education in tribal areas.
- The role of parents is important and they should be encouraged to send their daughters to school and help them in getting rid of the fear of militancy.

CONTINENTAL DRIFT: TRACING THE “WHY” OF BREXIT IN THE HISTORY OF EUROPEAN INTEGRATION

Muhammad Farouq Khan Lodhi*

Abstract

For the United Kingdom (UK), the rationale for the decision to exit the European Union (EU) may be found in UK's historic rivalry with European powers, Britain's fatigue after having contributed towards the process of European integration for seven decades, and the urgent economic reasons that have overtaken the post-World War II historical causes. This article examines and compares all three perspectives that may explain the phenomenon of the Continental Drift to find a compelling rationale for Brexit Viz. relatively weaker financial performance of Britain vis-à-vis some of the European partners. Imprudent lending compounded by increasing taxation to bail out ailing sectors of the British economy, led to poor financial performance as compared to Germany and France, during the critical years of recession from 2008 to 2010. The crisis worsened because of an imbalance in the net migration within the EU. The migration-related issues embittered the British voters as shown in Brexit polls' results.

Key Words: *European Union, European Integration, Recession, Financial Performance, Brexit.*

Introduction

The relations between the European powers and the United Kingdom (UK) had never been entirely cordial from 17th to mid-20th century. Ever since the end of World War II, Britain had been committed to the security of Europe as a leading member of the North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO). They had been an active partner in the European Union until the conservative government headed by David Cameron decided to hold a referendum in June 2016 and ask the question of Britain leaving or staying in the European Union. The questions that had been paramount in everyone's mind prior the EU referendum had been: (1)

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Does the UK need to enhance control of its sovereignty? (2) Will the UK benefit from leaving EU? (3) Will Britain lose some of the rights and privileges availed now in the European Union? (4) What impact will Brexit have on immigration? (5) Will leaving the EU set-in the break-up of the UK? (6) Will Brexit makes the UK more, or less safe? (7) Will leaving the EU save taxpayers money?

The referendum decided the issue in favour of leaving with 52 percent vote in favour and 47 percent against it. The Brexit question touched a raw nerve in the UK and hot debates ensued. The outcome of the referendum shook British political system to the core with damages to the image of the ruling conservative party. Prime Minister David Cameron had to resign leaving the office to Theresa May who showed a commitment to see the Brexit process through. This divorce is likely to have far-reaching effects on British economy and the society. Its causes must be understood clearly before suggesting the course UK may steer to secure Britain's best interests in future. This paper brings out three different perspectives to determine the most dominant cause of Brexit. The first perspective gauging the succession of the longer-term historic chain of events point to the existence of a permanent fault line that tends towards a Continental Drift. Britain always stayed on the brink of European political system, being barely within, without becoming a part of it. The second perspective, a shorter-term view of history, takes in Britain's behaviour in post-World War II era. It presents Britain as a European actor committed to European integration and offering guaranteed security. It is interesting to note that the movement for post-1945 integration, rather uncharacteristically, occurs in parallel with the phenomenon of perpetual drift. The third perspective, perhaps even more relevant in the present context, places economic performance in focus. This view shows Britain drastically lacking vis-à-vis European partners-cum-competitors in terms of productivity and trade balance. A dispassionate analysis of the probable causes must therefore; shun all rhetoric that merely cloaks facts while exaggerating less significant facets of the problem. There are, to summarize, at least three different perspectives that affect an investigation into the causes of Brexit:

1. Centuries' long disharmony and conflict between Britain and European powers is likely to cause Britain and Europe drift apart when strong integrative forces are not at work or when such forces are weakened by other causes that may be pervasive at the time.
2. The basic trend from Westphalia onwards is one of integration and not that of drifting apart and rivalry. The present state of discord and disharmony is merely a temporary phase. Historically trustworthy integrative forces will prevail and help overcome the 'Continental Drift.'

3. Economic performance is increasingly the real cause of conflict and disharmony. Economic interests exert a determining influence, far greater than that exerted by geostrategic realities or the security situation. Britain, being a poor economic performer vis-à-vis some of the stronger European partners, finds EU membership to be counterproductive, and its commitments onerous. Britain may fare better if it retracts into its former 'splendid isolated'.

Additionally, environmental issues and migration problems add complexity to the question of integration and cooperation.

Continental Drift: The Long-Term Historical Perspective

The British traditionally pursued an isolationist policy intervening in Europe only when their own security was threatened, such as in the case of the sudden expansion of French power under Napoleon, and that of Germany under Kaiser/ Hitler. Britain's maritime insular position proved to be doubly advantageous in geopolitical and marine-mercantile terms. Europe's endless feudal wars, so wasteful in nature, by and large, spared the island nation. The kingdom did not have to keep large standing armies; instead, money was poured into shipbuilding to realize Elizabeth I's obsession – expanding her naval strength beyond that of rival continental powers. Superior naval power meant that British merchant ships could sail round the globe freighting raw materials and merchandize back and forth throughout the world without the fear of being set upon by enemy raiders. This impunity gave a tremendous boost to British trade and that meant surplus wealth, part of which could be spent on improving farming and industrial production and the other part on expanding the naval fleet and raising ever larger overseas armies. Many Englishmen feel that they are always better off when they are left to their own devices rather than being told by the Europeans what to legislate, how to govern and what to trade.

Several European powers bid for supremacy, built large naval fleets, waged wars for colonies and set up a global trade system in 18th and 19th centuries. The geostrategic location, however, especially favored Britain. The island nation rose to become the mightiest power in the world. Britain's position as an island opened sea-lanes and trade routes in all directions and yet the kingdom was militarily more defensible than the continental empires and states. British naval mastery turned London into the world's commodity exchange and insurance headquarters in the 18th and 19th centuries. The surplus from trade and the steady income from colonies bestowed upon the British people unmatched prosperity and a certain enviable quality of life. Britain owed its naval mastery and global trade to its large and efficient industry which had its origin in simple mechanical technologies, notably steam – the lead technology of that era. The steam technology revolutionized propulsion and locomotion. The

speed of the merchant ship increased, and the vessel became independent of the wind. The trend of electrical technologies, towards the end of the 19th Century, however, started to tip the balance of power away from the UK. World leadership rapidly slipped out of British hands as more and more trade got diverted to Germany. World War I became necessary to halt the Germans in their tracks. Sanctions and war reparations imposed by the Allies after WW I were regarded as downright humiliating by German intellectuals and common man alike. Voters were disenchanted with the loyalists and the veterans. They voted the NAZI party into power. Germany resumed its technological surge under Hitler and started re-arming. Another great war became inevitable. The Continental Drift that had set in during the colonial era, intensified and never abated thereafter. The Allies won WWII and U.S. stationed 256,000 soldiers on German soil for next 45 years, adding injury to insult. For almost four decades, the formation of a single European Union helped close the rift, but now it has been widened by Britain's financial woes.

American Admiral Mahan always quoted the rise of Britain as a classic example of sea power and emphasized the role that a powerful navy could play in securing colonies, in protecting commercial trade and in winning wars. The Germans, by comparison had traditionally followed continental strategists such as Hal Mackinder and the advocates of continental expansion such as Karl Haushofer.¹ Mackinder had made his debut when he read his famous paper to the Royal Geographic Society in 1904, titled *The Geographical pivot of History*. He had prophesized:

The successful powers will be those who have the greatest industrial base. It will not matter whether they are in the centre of a continent or an island; those people who have the industrial power and the power of invention and of science will be able to defeat all others.²

Hitler was influenced by Haushofer who frequently visited Hitler when he was writing *Mein Kampf* in detention near Munich after the 1923 Beer Hall Putsch.³ The likeness of the following passages from *Mein Kampf* with Haushofer's writings is rather striking:

¹ Karl Haushofer was the founder, editor and principal contributor to the *Zeitschrift für Geopolitik* (1924) and director of the Institute of Geopolitics at the University of Munich.

² Paul Kennedy, *The Rise and Fall of Great Powers* (London: Vintage, 1989), 493.

³ The Beer Hall Putsch (the *Hitlerputsch* or *Hitler-Ludendorff-Putsch*), was a failed coup attempt by the Nazi Party leader Adolf Hitler to seize power in Munich, Bavaria dating 8-9 November 1923. Hitler and two thousand Nazis confronted the police in Munich. Sixteen Nazis and four policemen were killed. Hitler himself was wounded during the clash, arrested and charged with treason.

The foreign policy of a folkish state is charged with ... establishing between the number and growth of the population, on the one hand, and the size and value of the soil and territory, on the other hand, a viable, natural relationship Only a sufficiently extensive area on this globe guarantees a nation's freedom of existence. (Hitler)⁴

Every nation is primarily concerned with the task of maintaining itself in a hostile environment, and since its very existence depends on the possession of an adequate space, if the space has grown too small, it has to be expanded. (Haushofer)⁵

Germany set itself firmly on the course of expansion into neighbouring territories, supposedly justified by the theory of *Lebensraum*.⁶ The price paid by this proud nation is a lesson in history. Germany still competes for the European "space" but the nature of competition is now economic rather than forceful annexation. German politics is now based on cooperation rather than coercion.

Britain can play the honest broker in European feuds. The classic example of brokering a peace after Napoleonic Wars is the Congress of Vienna, a feather in Britain's cap. Vienna had been a success of intra-European integrative forces at their best. European powers soon entangled themselves in a web of multiple alliance treaties. When these complex 'Balance of Power' treaties failed, the world was pushed into a general war. It can be said that in the *Pax Britannica*⁷ era, Britain had defeated the forces of Continental Drift with skilful international diplomacy, remaining itself secluded from European rifts.

Short-term Historical Perspective

Britain as the Champion of European Integration: The process of European integration had started through a deliberate 'cultivation of harmony' initiated at the Peace of Westphalia in 1648. British Wartime Prime Minister Winston Churchill proposed a "United States of Europe" at an address at the University of Zurich in 1946. The Union was, however,

⁴ W. Haushofer, in E. Earl, *Makers of Modern Strategy* (Princeton: Princeton University Press, 1973), 408.

⁵ *Ibid.*

⁶ The concept of *Lebensraum*—or "living space"—served as a critical component in the Nazi worldview that drove both its military conquests and racial policy.

⁷ *Pax Britannica* (Latin for "British Peace", modelled after *Pax Romana*) was the period of relative peace between the Great Powers during which the British Empire became the global hegemonic power and adopted the role of a global police force.

proposed to be an all-European affair and Britain was not supposed to be a part of it. The European Coal and Steel Community (ECSC) comprising of six European countries was incorporated in 1951. The European Common Market was established on March 25, 1957. The European Community Parliament was set up in 1972. UK had joined in 1973. The dream of unification was finally realized when the European Community was renamed as the "European Union" in 1993 under the *Maastricht Treaty*. In 1999, the EU adopted a single currency – the Euro. The Free trade Agreement allows trade goods to cross the borders throughout Europe without having to pay any custom duties. *Schengen Borders Agreement* allows the residents of Continental Europe to travel to each other country without having to obtain Visa. And then the Champion of European integration, United Kingdom, to everyone's surprise, declared an intention to leave the EU in June 2016. Brexit instantly became a thorny political issue in the UK. The "Why" of Brexit may, thus, be found in the fatigue of having to act as the leader in EU within current financial means available to UK.

Shattered dreams of being number one and basking once again in the radiance of splendid Victorian sun bred disillusionment and bitterness. British politics is tainted by a desire to return to the cosy state of former 'splendid isolation.' The glorious stories of the age of *Pax Britannica* haunt British political leaders but there is little room for political manoeuvre at that grand a scale once again. Monopoly over global trade and steady flow of raw materials from colonies, that had once made British transactions so profitable, are no longer there. Bankers have no easy solutions for non-performance of loans and economic recession that persists. Britain had been a dedicated partner of U.S. in underwriting European security under NATO's emblem, but it seems that they are now treated by European cousins as if they are of no account in the European inner circle. The words of Lloyd George from his address to the bankers on July 21, 1911, haunt them:

But if a situation were forced upon us in which peace could only be preserved... by allowing Britain to be treated as if she were of no account in the Cabinet of nations, then I say emphatically that peace at that price would be a humiliation intolerable for a great country like ours to endure.⁸

This uneasy feeling of being ignored or pushed around in the EU is central to Brexit and there appears to be no therapy at hand to emancipate or placate them.

⁸ J. McCain, *Hard Call: The Art of Great Decisions* (New York: Twelve, 2007), 79.

Perspective of Financial Performance and Social Spending

Europeans, today, regard integration as a cause linked with such issues as trade, standard of life, migration and environment. Rather than talking in vague and less commonly understood terms like geostrategic location, dominance and liberal hegemony, they prefer to place integration in the perspective of resources, production, and trade balance. They measure performance in terms of the work and resources input to realize a dream; and the output received. Performance being the key standard in new Europe, it is important to review how Britain meets European expectations on finance and trade, in tackling sensitive environmental issues, and in handling of migration crisis. British sincerity toward these prime areas of typically European interest may not be doubted but they prefer sentiments to be backed by sound financial performance.

As regards to financial performance when international aid seen as an indicator of integration Maurizio Carbone said in his 2007 publication *The European Union and the International Development: The Politics of Foreign Aid*, assesses the European economies through the lens of aid given by the Member States to the Least Development Countries (LDC). An assessment made under this criteria places France and the United Kingdom in the lead in shaping EU aid policy while it relegates the European Commission to the level of a marginal player. Carbone differs and maintains that the European Commission positively influences outcomes in the EU decision-making process and plays a leadership role in the EU. Carbone, however, finds that the Commission's leadership is bound by three conditions in giving out aid: the presence of an institutional entrepreneur, internal cohesiveness, and the astute use of a repertoire of tactics. His analysis shows that the European Commission combines instrumental and persuasive behaviour, and that development cooperation acquired a greater significance in the 2000s as the Millennium Development Goals (MDGs) were instrumental in increasing the volume of aid as well as Member States' commitment to eradication of poverty. Public sector aid to developing countries significantly increased from US\$ 25 billion (47 percent of the whole world) in 1999 to US\$ 59 billion (57 percent of the world) in 2006.

The funding of global public goods (GPGs) frequently crosses over national frontiers and demands close coordination. He extracts that the efforts at the integration and coordination of aid, however, remained poor. He also laments that the EU still does not 'speak with one voice,' in the international arena. The failure to increase the volume of aid owed itself to absence of concrete planning. Finally, he observes that "the stubborn opposition of the few countries (i.e. not only the US and Japan, but also France and Denmark was blocking the final agreement."⁹

⁹ M. Carbone, *The European Union and the International Development: The Politics of Foreign Aid* (London and New York: Routledge, 2007), 2.

As for the performance in giving foreign aid, France, Germany and the UK are the prominent donors. The UK has “gradually increased its aid volume, has completely untied its aid, avoids project proliferation, transfers a high share of aid to poor recipients with democratic governments, but has small amounts of private charitable giving attributable to tax policies...”¹⁰ While in the case of France, the volume of aid has gradually increased, its aid finds its way to relatively less poor and less democratic governments in pursuance of colonial bonds. Germany has low net aid volume when related to the size of its economy. Carbone extracts that between 2003 and 2006 Denmark, Netherlands and Sweden individually gave more in aid to LDCs than United Kingdom and France individually. The four northern Member States – Denmark, Finland, Sweden, and the Netherlands – are distinctly the top performers in foreign aid. Their policies are not burdened by the colonial legacy. He notes: “The evolution of development policy in France has been driven mainly by its colonial heritage and has been closely linked to its foreign policy.”¹¹ The aid traditionally went to West and East Africa to balance the US influence in the region. France allocates most of its aid to education and culture sectors and it is channelled through the EC. By comparison, the UK aid mostly goes to the members of the Commonwealth of Nations. Since the 1990s, the aid is focused to promote British political and commercial interests. From the mid-2000s, the policy on aid has prioritized Africa as the recipient of aid. After 9/11, the release of funds has been increasingly linked to international security. UK emphasises the need to improve the effectiveness of the international system, in particular the EC. Carbone observes that unlike France and the UK, German aid policy is free of bonds of colonialism. German aid focuses on the middle-income countries. During the 1990s, the high cost of re-unification and shifting of focus to Eastern Europe reduced the volume of aid to traditional recipients. In the 2000s, the volume of aid remained below the EU average. After the September 2005 elections the grand-coalition government led by Chancellor Merkel increased the aid volume from 2006 onwards. Germany prefers to channel its aid through the EC channel.

The Comparative Financial Performance of European Economies:

Cillian Ryan, observes that the 2007-2013 cycle, representing depression and recovery, is marked by a net growth in the volume of exports (goods and services) by 17.2 percent in case of Euro area, and a meagre 1.617 percent in case of the UK (Table 1). The EU also outperformed Japan, whose currency appreciated the most. However, all

¹⁰ Ibid. 42.

¹¹ Ibid. 43.

three blocks *Viz.* the EU, Japan and the US outperformed the United Kingdom over the period even though British currency depreciated significantly relative to all three (cheaper currencies theoretically attract more export orders). Ryan points out that there are other factors that must be considered: (1) the import component of exports, (2) the degree of exchange-rate which impacts the export sector, and (3) the cyclical demand for a country's basket of exported goods and services.¹²

Table 1: Percentage change in volume of exports of goods and services

Country	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	2013
Euro area	6.637	1.238	-12.661	11.099	6.281	2.48	2.126
Japan	8.699	1.417	-24.196	24.362	-0.358	-0.316	1.249
United Kingdom	-2.481	1.205	-8.199	6.377	4.569	-0.325	0.471
United States	9.303	6.102	-9.133	11.137	6.682	3.403	3.332

Source: World Economic outlook database, IMP April 2013, Cillian Ryan in Brennan and Murray 2015: 109

Ryan opines that “there is little evidence that the United Kingdom has to date benefitted from being outside the euro area”¹³ As to the assumption that the United Kingdom would have been better off within the euro zone, Ryan considers that there are vital factors that must be regarded: (1) location decisions of international foreign direct investors, and (2) the trading patterns.

Ryan attributes the United Kingdom's comparatively poorer performance in export of goods and services to its greater vulnerability to the financial crisis than the euro states and not to UK's exclusion from the euro zone. The Euro Zone's degree of exposure to the crisis was not related to EU's internal integration. Likewise, European banks were relatively immune to the upheaval caused by the Anglo-American international financial dealings and it had no relation with the state of EU's internal integration. Hence EU's internal exposure to crisis was distinctly a function of the degree of internal integration of the Euro Zone capital market rather than any external factors:

The crisis in Europe was precipitated by the impact on international interbank markets as US bank losses associated with sub-prime lending led to a crisis in confidence. Arguably most banks did not have a clear understanding of even their primary exposure to the unfolding crisis, and

¹² Cillian Ryan, “The role of crisis as a driver of regional integration: Crisis as opportunity” in Louis Brennan and Philomena Murray, eds. *Drivers of Integration and Regionalism in Europe and Asia: Comparative Perspectives* (London and Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 106-109.

¹³ Ibid. 109.

certainly none had a clear understanding of the exposure of other banks in the system.¹⁴

The collapse of interbank lending lime-lighted major financial institutions' dependence on interbank markets from where they raised the short-term funds to finance long term mortgage lending, a recipe for disaster. Once the interbank market collapsed, they faced a liquidity crisis. Highly speculative and imprudent lending exposed financial institutions such as Merrill Lynch (a division of Bank of America) to public finances for a bail out. It also pushed mortgaged property owners into negative equity. The recession pushed commercial loans into non-performing status. Governments were reluctant in financing debts on the promise of tax revenues to be accrued, supposedly, from future income growth. Some states e.g. Ireland and Spain no longer generated enough revenue to meet their financial obligations or even provide public services. Italy and Greece fared no better.¹⁵ Europe reacted sensibly and protected international banks from dire consequences of recession by running to the IMF, and in partnership with the IMF, forced the tax payers to share the burden placed on their economy by poor lending decisions. Debt to GDP ratio is always a reliable indicator of the health of the economy of a nation. As seen in Table 2 by 2007, Ireland, Greece, Spain and Italy had an adverse ratio viz. 117.6 percent, 156.9 percent, Spain 84.2 percent, and 127 percent respectively.

Table 2:

Debt to GDP ratio

	2001	2002	2003	2004	2005	2006	2007
EU (27 countries)	61.1	62.0	62.8	59.0	62.3	80.0	85.3
Germany	59.1	64.4	68.5	65.2	66.8	82.4	81.9
Ireland	35.2	30.7	27.3	25.1	44.5	92.1	117.6
Greece	103.7	97.4	100.0	107.4	112.9	148.3	156.9
Spain	55.6	48.8	43.2	36.3	40.2	61.5	84.2
France	56.9	62.9	66.4	64.2	68.2	82.4	90.2
Italy	108.3	104.1	105.7	103.3	106.1	119.3	127
Cyprus	61.2	69.7	69.4	58.8	48.9	61.3	85.8
Portugal	53.8	59.4	67.7	68.4	71.7	94.0	123.6
United Kingdom	37.7	39.1	42.2	44.2	52.7	79.4	90.0

Source: World Economic outlook database, IMP April 2013, Cillian Ryan in Brennan and Murray 2015: 115.

UK fared no better whose Debt to GDP ratio had gone up to 90 percent in 2007 from 37.7 in 2001. EU having started at a much higher 61.1 percent in 2001 stood better than the UK at 85.3 percent in 2007

¹⁴ Ibid., 110-111.

¹⁵ Ibid., 111.

which indicates a losing battle on part of the UK and one of the probable reasons to exit from EU. Ryan points out that:

... both the United States and the United Kingdom had solvency problems mitigated by the use of quantitative easing, a legacy that is still likely to come back to haunt them in the form of renewed inflationary pressures as the interbank market recovers. The EU, initially at least, rejected a policy of quantitative easing, essentially opting to commit real future tax income to fund the ESM [European Security Mechanism] (and its predecessors).¹⁶

Impact of Brexit on British Economy: Trade, Security and Migration

Interest Rates: Long-term UK interest rates are determined through the interaction of buyers and sellers in financial markets, the balance of supply and demand for British government bonds from investors, traders' expectations of future GDP growth and prevailing rate of inflation. It is difficult to predict with any certainty how long-term interest rates would be affected by Brexit. As for the property, prices are stable so far except in case of high-priced costly units in Central London which have shown a gone down recently. Again, it is difficult to say whether or not the downward trend is a result of Brexit negotiations as the said property is well beyond the reach of an average buyer.

Economic Impact: The independent economists are unanimous in saying that the economic impact of leaving EU will be negative. The demand for UK government bonds is expected to fall, which would cause the long-term interest rates to rise. Brexit could prompt a "flight to safety" and trigger buying of gold, which are considered safe assets. That would cause gold prices to shoot up and that, in turn, would force long-term interest rates downwards.

Recession: If the pound takes a nose dive, it would generate expectations of higher future inflation which would push interest rates up. Rates could be cut by a fraction by the Bank of England. But if Brexit causes apprehensions of near-term inflation, expectations may shoot up and go out of control. This dangerous trend could lead to a sterling crash. The Bank would be forced to raise short-term rates to restore calm, which, in turn, would probably deepen a recession.

Trade Relations with Europe: Unless EU goes vindictive, it could offer Britain a favourable deal, applying very low tariffs to British exports to EU's 'single market,' and receive reciprocal benefits from UK. This would minimise Brexit damage.

Public Spending: It would not be wise to cut public spending or raise taxes. The UK Government would be wiser to do the opposite – to

¹⁶ Ibid., 121.

increase public spending to help to boost the economy. This would help open more jobs and that would reduce embitterment induced by such demeaning features of the Brexit deal as payment of the 40 billion pounds leaving fee.

European Integration and Environmental Issues: Environmental issues and effort toward this cause serves as another indicator of desire for integration into the European system. Diarmuid Torney reports that in March 1997, at the Kyoto Protocol conference, it was agreed that industrialised nations should reduce their emissions of CO₂, CH₄, and N₂O by 15 percent vis-à-vis 1990 levels by 2010, the European Council introduced the 'burden-sharing' arrangement, which specified different targets for different EU member states. This measure amounted to a total target reduction of 8 percent for the period 2008–2012. The UK had been a 'pioneer' member state together with Germany and the Netherlands. Cooperation on environmental issues promoting the cause of European integration:

Although initially slow to respond to the emergence of the climate issue, in the early 1990s the European Commission came to view climate change as a means to enhance the process of European integration.... The European Commission in particular made the case that, in order to lead internationally, the EU would have to develop strong internal, EU-level climate policies and institutions...¹⁷

However, European Community institutions did not emerge as swiftly as expected. This resulted in inadequate progress on carbon emissions, energy tax proposal and the subsidy arrangements. Torney attributes the constraints in the development of EC institutions to "the limited commitment among member states" to put emission control measures to practice. Torney notices a "dampening of the enthusiasm" after 2010; he concludes: "Since 2010, these drivers have become less salient as the European policy process became increasingly preoccupied with dealing with the economic crisis."¹⁸

Trade and investment as drivers of Integration: International business or trade as performed by both public and private firms, encompasses pooling and management of assets, market expansion, acquiring additional resources and greater efficiency. European states, when integrated into a common trade system, boost both production and sales through international business. Such cooperation promotes regional integration, which may be described as territorial systems that increase

¹⁷ Diarmuid Torney, "Climate Change as a Driver of Regional Integration in Europe," in *Drivers of Integration and Regionalism in Europe and Asia: Comparative Perspectives*, (London and Oxon: Routledge, 2015), 185.

¹⁸ Ibid., 191.

the interactions between their components in creating new forms of organisations. Despite various constraints affecting the progress, Bernadette Andreosso-O'Callaghan opines that:

The experience of the EU epitomizes a level of deep economic integration when compared with other cases.... Trade and investment have undoubtedly been important drivers of the... economic integration in Europe... [Yet] the extant type of economic integration through trade and investment (in particular financial investment) in the EU is far from being robust.¹⁹

The contributor argues that the EU needs to develop a 'sustainable' form of economic integration that can withstand a financial crisis.

Commitment to Security of Europe: From 1949 until now, UK has shouldered the responsibility of European Defence side by side with U.S. U.S. mostly met the expenses, Britain offered the island ports and airbases to execute the 'massive retaliation' in case the Soviets had raided Europe in Cold War era. Britain played a strong role in NATO operations in Libya during the 'Arab Spring.' The times have changed, however. Europeans have started looking at the defence problem somewhat differently. Rather than the size of the military and the contribution of a member state towards NATO task forces, what matters in the prevailing European scheme are economic factors – joint research and development, joint production, global trade, and in particular supporting weaker economies in Europe (e.g. Greece and Italy) financially. The calibre of a nation is no longer judged in Europe by its military muscle or the deployment abroad. It is now judged in terms of the aid given out to the LDCs and the cooperation extended to the European Commission in helping it meet its objectives towards migration and environment.

Migration – a Sore Point in Britain: When the EU adopted a Common European Asylum System, the Member States abolished the intra-European borders. A strong external border management already existed in the UK. Britain has always maintained a distinctive position in the EU when it comes to border controls, opting out of the Schengen arrangements that abolished internal border controls across the EU. However, UK participates selectively in some aspects of EU border policies. While rescue at sea of persons in distress is a major issue in Europe, UK has permanent and effective rescue service which affords a better handling of arriving migrants. A strong UK borders authority precludes illegal entry. British society, however, has to cope racial

¹⁹ B. A. O'Callaghan, "Qualifying the type of Economic Integration in a Historical perspective," in L. Brennan, and P. Murray, eds. *Drivers of Integration and Regionalism in Europe and Asia: Comparative Perspectives*, 215.

diversity on a major scale, which frequently triggers friction, and hate crimes. The native British feel deprived of jobs and opportunities that are taken up by migrants. All the same, handling of migrant issues leaves no cause for complaint and it helps abate hard feelings. Financial assistance from local Council is valuable in setting up arriving families in their opted homeland.

Discussion

The first perspective discussed in the foregoing pages suggests that Brexit is an outcome of the longer-term historical drift that has its origin in traditional rivalry between the 'Continental' and the 'Island' nations. This perspective, with its focus on geostrategic properties of European states vis-à-vis Britain, is readily overtaken by the second perspective generated by the wave of integration in post-WW II era in which Britain not only willingly extended its cooperation but in fact led the movement. The third perspective shows forces of disintegration overtaking the spirit of cooperation in recent years. The analysis presented above shows the real reason of the split to be embedded in poor financial performance of Britain vis-à-vis Europe in the past couple of decades. This third perspective gains further credence from the fact that Britain accepted a humiliating penalty of 40 billion pounds as leaving fee and still considered it a good riddance.

The most important area of concern, however, is prevention of war. The spirit and the process of European integration must be revived to protect the world from another great war. Henry Kissinger reads the principal objective of European unification – end to bloodletting – in the Peace of Westphalia:

A century of sectarian conflict and political upheaval across Central Europe had culminated in the Thirty Years' War of 1618–48—a conflagration in which political and religious disputes commingled, combatants resorted to "total war" against population centres, and nearly a quarter of the population of Central Europe died from combat, disease, or starvation. The exhausted participants met to define a set of arrangements that would stanch the bloodletting.²⁰

Britain also needs to watch out the possibility of Brexit rocking the British Union boat itself. Brexit vote made united Ireland suddenly thinkable. Catholic nationalists are openly campaigning for such an initiative. Brexit vote set off a major upset in global stock markets. Consequently, investors lost \$3 trillion even though they recovered \$2 trillion over the next three days. Barely out of recession, the global

²⁰ Henry Kissinger, *World Order: Reflections on the Character of Nations and the Course of History* (USA: Penguin Books, 2014), 3.

business can hardly afford such traumas. British and European nationals may face problems with their passports, driving licenses, status of European spouses etc. for some time at least, as virtually all existing legislation that existed under the EU would be technically void until new legislation is provided. International students possessing other than British or European nationalities may face visa and travel difficulties in the UK. Europe and UK face racial abuse and hate crimes vis-à-vis blacks, Muslims and Asians. Sentiments run high in England over European immigration problem from Polish and other East European communities. European immigrants may not have to leave but no one can really assure them a residency status. Uncertainty in these matters is extremely painful.

However, the way trade patterns within Europe organized in the past 40 years makes a clean break difficult. There is too much of interdependence between UK and Europe in technological collaboration, joint production, joint financing of projects, research and development, globalized marketing and the way the system of intellectual property rights works. Brexit could have a negative impact on creativity and innovation, more so, in all spheres of industry, trade and the economy. The costs and benefits of shared and stand-alone technology must be re-considered in post-Brexit scenario.

Conclusion

Conservative government headed by Theresa May is facing a 'No Deal' EU stand. Anxiety caused by uncertainty upsets business and hurts citizens' interests. Post-Brexit Britain will, most likely, continue to honour its commitment to the cause of security of Europe as a leading member of the NATO but may not be able to contribute to its defence spending as much as it did before. As an active trading partner, UK seeks a continuation of benefits and privileges so far enjoyed by it as a full member of European Union but as a non-member. This would require new legislation to re-enact provisions of Customs Union without formally being part of it. These include exemption from customs duty and inspection of trade items arriving at UK and European ports. It is difficult to say that leaving EU will enhance British control of its sovereignty. An inward looking UK will have the benefit of consolidating its internal governance the way they like rather than being told by outsiders how to manage their own affairs. Brexit would not necessarily mean that European workers now working in the UK would have to leave. Stringent conditions for issue of work permit or leave to remain indefinitely may, however, induce an exodus as it did recently in the case of German nurses.

Brexit did, however, inspire the Irish to raise the issue of Irish Borders. It may not lead to break-up of the UK but it weakens the fibre of the Union. Brexit will neither make the UK relatively safer nor unsafe internally but native Britons would have a feeling that they are masters of

their own affairs. Tightening of UK Borders Authority rules will dampen unbridled migration trend from EU countries, in particular from Poland, but will probably have no effect on African and Asian migrants. There will be little saving of the taxpayers money while the 40 billion pounds payable to EU as leaving fee will continue to be a thorny issue in Britain. The Brexit episode highlights the need for the UK to re-learn old lessons of financial security. Britain needs to stick to the policy of lending only when prudent. One cannot suggest de-emphasizing welfare spending in the UK but retaining a little surplus of national savings can go a long way in rescuing the state in a crunch. The opinions and the analyses reviewed above can be expressed best in the words of Cillian Ryan, who considers the current crisis to be an opportunity for reform; the only other possibility being a recurrence of the financial crunch: "The best guide to the future, however, is still the past, and it should surprise no one if a similar crisis occurs again, regardless of the degree of regional integration."²¹ Crucial decisions like Brexit should not be made subject of public debate where popular sentiment rules. Ryan considers that politicians know the correct answers but suffer from inertia as they are weighed down by voters' possible reaction.

United Kingdom is still erroneously pursuing inflationary tax policy which, in case of financial crisis results in loss of value to holders of liquid assets and fixed-rate bonds. The UK needs to plan mortgages and loans on the basis of real future tax revenues, particularly, as a means of financing a bailout fund. British government needs to provide a sense of security to immigrants without which the very fibre of the society stands threatened. The Conservative government may hold a second referendum hoping a vote in favour of reversal of Brexit. Alternatively, the government may simply admit that the whole affair was botched and withdraw from Brexit even if it costs the Conservative government another Prime Minister.

²¹ Cillian Ryan, "The Role of Crisis as a Driver of Regional Integration: Crisis as Opportunity", 121.

ROLE OF THE UN AND THE EUROPEAN UNION IN THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

Dr. Fauzia Ghani*

Abstract

A serious humanitarian crisis has erupted in the wake of the Syrian war, which began in March 2011. A pro-democracy protest, which turned into a deep crisis, has taken more than 500,000 Syrians lives. According to a report by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugee (UNHRC), in 2014 about 4.8 million refugees escaped to different countries of the Middle East, especially Jordan, Lebanon and Turkey, as well as Germany followed by Hungary and Sweden in Europe. In total about 1.5 million refugees are living in the 27 member states of the European Union EU). With the evolving refugee crisis worldwide, it has become essential for the two humanitarian agencies, United Nations (UN) and the EU to formulate policies that protect refugees' rights and empower them with the basic provisions of life. This paper examines the role played by UN and EU in managing the Syrian refugee crisis, the policies pursued as a response and the challenges faced in return as well as recommendations for improving frameworks dealing with protection of refugees.

Key Words: Syrian refugees, UNHCR, European Union, Humanitarian crisis, Displacement

Introduction

In the beginning of the 20th century, almost fourteen million people were living as refugees who were forced to live across the international borders. The number kept on increasing because of civil wars, political instability, lack of governance and the absence of human rights within territorial boundaries of states. This drove people to escape their country devastated and desperate.¹ In the 21st century, where the

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¹ Susan F. Martin, New Issues in Refugee Research: Forced Migration and the Evolving Humanitarian Regime, (*Institute For The Study of International Migration*, 2010), <http://www.refworld.org/pdfid/4ff5860e2.pdf>, 2-41.

world is complex and globalized, this category of people has been divided into various other groups such as asylum searchers, internally displaced people, stateless and migrated people. This complexity leads to the question as to what actually qualifies a person to be called a 'refugee'. A refugee is a person who is forced to leave the country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster. He is essentially a protection-seeker in another state. A refugee crisis is a core issue when it comes to serving human rights.

The Syrian refugees, who were forced to flee their country as a result of the Syrian crisis that erupted in 2011, represent the devastating humanitarian crisis of current times. In 2011, the revolutionaries of Syria started to protest against the regime of President Bashar al Assad. The government reacted brutally against the uprising groups. This led to escalation of violence and the situation deteriorated into the civil war by the mid of 2011. Since then, thousands of Syrian people have made their way to Europe by sea or land. Moreover, in the year 2014, the terrorist group Islamic State of Iraq and Syria emerged and spread in a short period of time. This conflict has resulted in a humanitarian crisis and violation of rights of the Syrian people.² During this period, more than five million people were displaced and are now refugees. Further, almost seven and a half million people were internally displaced in Syria who were forced out of their homes and are living without basic necessities.³ Most of the Syrian refugees are women and children as the men are opting to fight for their homes and identity which makes the status of these women and children more susceptible and vulnerable.⁴

With time, the concern for international refugee crisis has drawn attention to the need for an international legal framework that can enable assistance and security for refugees. The role of United Nations as well as European Union has evolved over time. The EU Charter follows the rules of the Geneva Convention 1951 and the protocol of 1967.⁵ The European Union has done an impressive job at responding to the refugee issue; that is why the UN follows EU policies and collaborates with EU institutions on asylum matters. This research analyses the implementation of the UN legal framework for refugees as enshrined in major resolutions and conventions

² BBC, "Syria: The Story of the Conflict", *BBC News*, March 11, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-26116868>.

³ Ibid.

⁴ Thomas Gaist, "UN report: Syria Faces Worst Refugee Crisis in Recent History," 2015, *World Socialist Website*, <https://www.wsws.org/en/articles/2015/07/10/syri-j10.html>.

⁵ The 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees had limited refugee status the ones who suffered any situation before 1 January 1951", moreover, categorizing the situation with territorial boundaries. The 1967 Protocol removed both territorial and time restrictions.

of the organization including those related to the rights of children and women the second is the responses of states in EU towards helping the refugees.

Conceptual Framework

A few researches have been conducted on the role of the UN and the EU with respect to the Syrian refugee crisis in particular. Tsourdi and De Bruycker in *EU Asylum Policy* stated that the asylum system of the EU has some flaws in regulating the distribution of responsibilities among member states on fair grounds.⁶ In an article, '*Is Europe living up to its Obligations to Refugees?*' Geoff Gilbert said that the "EU is a major actor in the European region." The charter of European Union pledges to protect refugees who apply for asylum, but there are many hurdles in the process due to the restrictive policies of member states. The basic problem is the absence of any supervisory body in EU; the member states have pursued independent policies. Geoff criticized many aspects of European Union policies regarding refugees, like the issue of refugee burden sharing, the fusion of immigration and refugee status. It seems that the commitments of the 1951 convention have been left far behind. It was discussed in a conference organized by Amnesty International in 2016 that Canada, United States and Australia have made no prominent pledge to take in refugees from Syria though they highlighted the need for more resettlement programs. Canada is the only country among these three which has contributed more than its reasonable share keeping in view the size of the economy of 26,000 refugees, 9,000 have been hosted through the private sponsorship facilities by the state.⁷

In '*European Integration and Refugee Protection: The Development of Asylum Policy in EU*', Esther Ezra argues that the increasing influx of refuge seekers in Western Europe has motivated the EU members to coordinate and review their policies. She has discussed the ripostes of Germany, Sweden, the United Kingdom and the United States to the Syrian refugee issue. She analysed that these four states have augmented various steps to protect Syrian refugees through resettlement and asylums since 2012.

⁶ Evangelia Tsourdi and Philippe De Bruycker, *EU Asylum Policy: In Search of Solidarity and Access to Protection* (Migration Policy Centre Research Report: May 2015) cadmus.eui.eu/bitstream/handle/1814/35742/MPC_PB_2015_06.pdf?sequence=1.

⁷ Philippe Fargues & Christine Fandrich, *The European Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, What Next?* (Migration Policy Centre Research Report: 2012), <http://www.migrationpolicycentre.eu/docs/MPC%202012%2014.pdf>, 1-13.

The Role of the UN in Protecting Refugees

The United Nation is significantly helping Syrian refugees with the assistance of its organs i.e. UNDP, UNESCO, UNICEF and UNHCR. Among them, UNHCR is playing a key role in managing the issues and conflicts related to refugees. In December 2015, UN Security Council passed a resolution to enhance the role of UN in ensuring peace in Syria while saying that “the UN should establish credible, inclusive and non-sectarian governance in Syria”⁸

It is believed that “Syria is the biggest humanitarian and refugee crisis of our time, a continuing cause of suffering for millions which should garner a groundswell of support around the world.”⁹ The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) was recognized in 1950 for the purpose of protecting refugees. ‘Refugee’ is a legal term used for denoting expatriate people with certain conditions. The main role of this agency is to keep improving the standards of the systems and programs through which they provide assistance. The agency is responsible for designing the solutions and frameworks which facilitate the refugees and ensure long-term solutions by developing long-term settlement and rehabilitation programs.

UNHCR has developed a “cluster approach” which involves many humanitarian agencies united to help the displaced and stateless people around the world, either by helping refugees settle back in their own homeland when the conflict ends or by regulating the assistance activities for the Internally Displaced Persons (IDPs) such as in Syria, Columbia and Iraq. Responding to the crises and conflicts immediately is an important feature of this agency, when displaced people are in dire need of help and security e.g. successive emergency teams were deployed in Syria and Africa in 2013 to ensure the protection of people who were leaving their own homeland.¹⁰ The most eminent role played by the UNHCR is that of “coordination”. It has been able to organize the camps’ administration, shelter facilities, provide food and other related necessities. It has been effectively synchronized with other NGOs and helps aid agencies in relocating programs for durable camp facilities, coordinating with host countries, and developing socio-economic sustainable programs. In this context, a conference was held in March 2016, in Geneva, which aimed at

⁸ BBC, “*Syria War: UN Security Council Unanimously Backs Peace Plan*,” BBC News, December 18, 2015, <https://www.bbc.com/news/world-middle-east-35138011>.

⁹ UN High Commissioner for Refugees, “*Syria conflict at 5 years: the biggest refugee and displacement crisis of our time demands a huge surge in solidarity*,” Refworld, 15 March 2016, <http://www.refworld.org/docid/56e7dc264.html>.

¹⁰ Philippe Fargues & Christine Fandrich, *The European Response to the Syrian Refugee Crisis, What Next?* (Migration Policy Centre: 2012), 1-13.

convincing the international community to increase the programs of resettlement especially for the refugees coming from Syria along with opening the gateways towards legal rehabilitation procedures in order to dissuade the use of dangerous sea routes.

Unfortunately, the responses of the 92 member states were not according to expectations, while a few were discreet by obstructing the goals of the agency for refugees.¹¹ The UNHCR and NGOs like Oxfam tried to push the member states to help the additional 10 percent refugees of Syria along with expanding the resettlement framework with legal facilities of reunion visas, educational scholarships and other labour flexibility schemes.¹² Moreover, it should be noted here that the humanitarian organizations of the United Nations are almost on the threshold of bankruptcy financially and are incapable of meeting the needs of millions of refugees. Of particular concern is the worsening condition of Lebanon and Jordan where the lack of food, shelter and other healthcare facilities have become a problem for the 4 million Syrian refugees. In 2016, the UN and other humanitarian agencies invoked aid of \$8 billion for helping Syrian refugees. In August 2015, due to a shortfall of millions of dollar in United Nations fund, the World Health Organization was obliged to shut down almost 184 health care clinics in many districts of Iraq, due to which many internally displaced people were deprived of basic health facilities.¹³ Moreover, according to the director of the emergency risk management department of World Health Organization, people are not being vaccinated, and are suffering from malnutrition along with mental health problems and permanent health deterioration. The WHO was also forced to cut down the rations of almost 1.6 million Syrian refugees.¹⁴

Many more conferences were held to deal with such refugee crises. The Geneva Conference that took place in March 2016 under UNHCR came up with the proposal of resettlement places for refugees. It also focused on responsibility sharing for refugees by states. UNICEF is providing Syrian refugee children necessities of food, clean water, medicine, schooling, safe places, winter clothing and vaccinations. UNICEF has a six-point agenda for betterment in Syrian refugees' lives which is summed up as follows:

¹¹ Susan F. Martin, *Forced Migration and the Evolving Humanitarian Regime* Working paper no. 20 (Washington DC, July 2000), <https://www.refworld.org/docid/4ff5860e2.html>. 2-41.

¹² Kristy Siegfried, "Rich countries fall way short on Syrian refugee resettlement," *IRIN*, last modified 2016, <http://www.irinnews.org/news/2016/03/30/rich-countries-fall-way-short-syrian-refugee-resettlement>.

¹³ Jhon Psaropoulos, "Greek Asylum System Reaches Breaking Point," *IRIN*, March 31, 2016, <http://www.irinnews.org/news/2016/03/31/greek-asylum-system-reaches-breaking-point>, accessed April, 2016.

¹⁴ Ibid.

- *No trafficking, exploitation and providing protection.*
- *Children should not be locked up in any circumstances.*
- *Family reunification must be ensured for separated children.*¹⁵

UNESCO has noted how Syrian humanitarian crisis has created a huge educational gap in the youth affecting their development in relation to other countries of the region. According to a UNESCO report, there are 8.1 million Syrian children and youngsters with whom UNESCO is working to reduce the educational gap while assisting host countries. Further, UNESCO has been active in protecting the cultural heritage of Syria.¹⁶ Along with other UN agencies, UNDP is also playing a significant role in Syria and its development. In 2013, UNDP spent 3.5 billion US dollars on humanitarian assistance of Syrian refugees. Other humanitarian funding comprised of 1.4 billion US dollars by UNDP.¹⁷ UNDP is working for providing basic health facilities, and arranging jobs. Moreover, it is helping with treatment and prevention of infectious diseases and assisting neighbouring countries to manage refugee related economic and infrastructural needs. Presently, humanitarian agencies are confronted with a huge financial crunch. It is becoming difficult to manage as the refugee crisis is escalates.

The Role of the European Union

In an anarchic world order, which is characterized by rising conflicts, human rights abuses, displacements etc., the European Union has become more significant than ever. The EU charter respects and follows the rules of the Geneva Convention 1951 and the protocol of 1967. The European Union has done an impressive job for refugees. There are an increased number of people migrating and taking asylum in western European countries which has dramatically changed the situation at the European border, putting pressure on the EU member states and motivates the European Union to review and coordinate their refugee and asylum policies.

It is a well understood fact that the influx of refugees is not going to stop in coming years. Attention must be given to the root causes, which have forced such migration. Tackling this issue efficiently and rationally is

¹⁵ "Children Uprooted: UNICEF's Agenda for Action", UNICEF, <https://www.unicef.org/children-uprooted/agenda-for-action>.

¹⁶ Ekaterina Sediakina, *UNESCO's Educational Response to the Syrian Crises: Towards Bridging the Humanitarian Development Divide* (UNESCO 2016), <http://unesdoc.unesco.org/images/0024/002462/246279e.pdf>.

¹⁷ UNDP, *How Humanitarian Funds Syria Crisis Were Spent* (UNDP, 2013), http://www.undp.org/content/dam/rbas/doc/SyriaResponse/KuwaitII/KuwaitII_How_Humanitarian_Funds_Syria_Crisis_Were_Spent_Eng_10Jan%20.pdf.

only possible through a collective effort by all member states. The European Union regardless of being the largest sponsor of humanitarian aid in Syria is showing unwillingness to accept the UNHCR's all-encompassing and extensive proposal for the program of resettlement and rehabilitation. The International Organization for Migration (IOM) estimates that more than 1,011,700 migrants arrived by sea in 2015, and almost 34,900 by land. Almost 218,000 people have fled to the European countries among which 3,500 people have lost their lives because of under-taking the journey on boats.

In 2015, it was reported that a boat carrying about 800 people capsized in the sea off Libya. Currently there is an inadequate arrangement to rescue refugees who have adopted sea route.¹⁸ The European Union initially adopted the policy of maintaining and protecting the refugees of Syria but later in March 2016, the joint plan of Turkey and the European Union to end the migration crisis made these countries a less likely terminus for refugees, along with threats of detention, and deportation especially for those refugees who adopted the illegal sea route.¹⁹ Not only this, even the refugees who do not belong to the state of Syria such as those of Afghanistan and Iraq, are still destitute due to lack of employment rights in Turkey. As stated by the new EU rules regarding refugees, Syrian refugees do not need to have a valid visa but they are still being deprived of basic facilities; they have to pass through stringent procedures in order to get employment and are being given the status of B grade citizens. Presently, Greece is incapable of helping the Syrian refugees mainly because of the poor state of domestic economy. Greece is a prime destination for the Syrian refugees. Applications from almost 3,545 asylum seekers have been registered and more than 31,929 people are still awaiting settlement many of whom are illegal. The illegal route, which the refugees have adopted, is from the shoreline of Turkey to the Islands of Chios, then Lesbos and from Samos to Greece. On this route, many die because of the small, frail boats in the treacherous waves of the Mediterranean Sea. Up until now, 2,500 people have died on this route. According to the IOM, more than 3,770 migrants reportedly died while trying to cross the Mediterranean in 2015. The most treacherous routes are considered North Africa to Italy, and the Aegean crossing from Turkey to Greece.

¹⁸ "UNHCR Urges Beefed up Search and Rescue Capacity as at Least 29 Die off Italy", UNHCR, February 10, 2015, <http://www.unhcr.org/54d9e9e46.html>.

¹⁹ European Commission, *Addressing the Refugee Crisis in Europe: The Role of EU External Action* (Joint communication to the European Parliament and the council, 2015), https://ec.europa.eu/home-affairs/sites/homeaffairs/files/what-we-do/policies/european-agenda-migration/proposal-implementation-package/docs/communication_on_addressing_the_external_dimension_of_the_refugee_crisis_en.pdf.

Many additional problems have arisen due to the economic crisis in Greece with an unemployment rate of 55 percent and more than \$320 billion of debt; hence, there is almost no chance for those penurious refugees to support their families with the necessities of housing, food or clothing anymore. According to the analysis of UNHCR, many refugees have chosen Greece because it serves as a gateway to the rest of the European countries.²⁰

Article '18' of the European Union charter of fundamental rights states that "the right to asylum shall be guaranteed with due respect for the rules of the Geneva Convention 1951 and the protocol of 1967, relating to the status of refugees and in accordance with the treaty of European Union and the treaty on the functioning of European Union."²¹ The European Union has done an impressive job regarding the refugee's issue. It has committed to work for a common European asylum system, based on the UN refugee convention. The EU laws and mechanism with respect to asylum and refugees have had a visible influence on the policies of other countries as well.

The European Union institutions i.e. European Commission, European Council, European Court of Justice and European Parliament have considerable power in legislative, executive and judicial areas, directly relevant to UN mandate for refugees. That's why the UN follows EU policies and collaborates with EU institutions.²² Thus, the continuing and swelling waves of refugees at the European border has sparked discussion on how to deal with this issue and what will be the impact on the European economies and societies. It is a fact that the refugee population leaves a severe impact on the host country. The host country experiences long-term economic, political and social impacts due to refugees.

The economic impact is most visible and in the case of the EU, the swelling wave of refugees is surely a burden on European economies. Refugees also on occasion have a potential social impact, in the form of social tensions, ethnic imbalance and other social conflicts. The refugee often feels isolated in the foreign land, and finds it difficult to assimilate in the host society. Furthermore, refugees affect public finance, the labour market, and health care system while increasing security risks as well.²³

²⁰ Samuel Davidoff-Gore, *Compliance without obligation: Examining the state responses to the Syrian Refugee Crisis* (Brown University, 2015), https://watson.brown.edu/ir/files/ir/imce/honors/Davidoff-Gore_Final2015.pdf.

²¹ ECRE Weekly, "Refugees in the EU," EREC, 2014, <http://www.ecre.org>.

²² "Working with the European Union," UNHCR, <http://www.unhcr.org/working-with-the-european-institutions.html>.

²³ UNHCR Standing Committee, "Social And Economic Impact of Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries Social And Economic Impact of

A wave of refugees from the war-torn areas of Middle East is making its way in different states of the European Union. In 2015, about 1.2 million migrants took asylum in Europe while their number is continuously increasing. This grave issue forced European leaders to sit together and decide how to face this challenge. Many conferences were held in Brussels, to discuss how to stop the continual influx of asylum seekers. Although, German Chancellor Angela Merkel raised her voice for the sake of refugees and offered to open the doors of Germany for asylum seekers, but the situation got worse due to many tragic events and all efforts failed.²⁴ The issue of refugees is still unresolved in the European Union. The member states of the European Union are divided on this matter and altogether following independent policies. However, in the present deplorable situation, the European Union's initiative to make a deal with Turkey to resolve this crisis is a ray of hope. The expectation that the integrated Europe will give more liberalized policies for refugees proved to be wrong and more restrictive policies turned out to be more politically correct. The EU member states, instead of bearing the burden of refugees, focused more on their national interests; therefore, restrictive policies regarding refugees are more popular. For the EU, to resolve this issue peacefully, more humanitarian and harmonized policies are needed.

European Union's Contributions for the Protection of Refugees

The years following 2011 were tough for Europe as refugees from Syria fled to European states and 2014 experienced the largest number of migrations to Europe.

The European Union, up till now has spent 4.2 billion Euros on the welfare of Syrian refugees in different aspects, which includes relief and recovery assistance to Syria. It has a fully established Common European Asylum System and has made UNHCR the supervisory body. It effectively deals with the refugees' issue inside and outside the union and other states have followed EU steps regarding refugee protection mechanisms. Various European Union institutions have powers directly relevant to the mandate of UNHCR. The European Union's response to the Syrian conflict and refugees can be divided into three categories. First is the liberal response to reflect in immigrants open-door policies. Second is the moderate one that believes in assistance of refugees but with the help of the EU as a

Large Refugee Populations on Host Developing Countries," January 6, 1997, <http://www.unhcr.org/excom/standcom/3ae68d0e10/social-economic-impact-large-refugee-populations-host-developing-countries.html>.

²⁴ Charles Lane, "Angela Merkel Tried to help Syrian Refugees — and it Cost her", *Chicago Tribune*, <https://www.chicagotribune.com/news/opinion/commentary/ct-angela-merkel-germany-refugees-20161208-story.html>.

whole organization and the third response is restrictive, introducing anti-immigration policies for the refugees.²⁵

The European Union proved to be an influential actor in the management of refugee crisis. The European Commission has evolved a comprehensive approach to deal with the Syrian refugee crisis under the European Agenda for Migration. It introduces a framework of different policies such as reducing the incentives for irregular migration, saving lives, securing external borders and a strong asylum policy.

UNHRC and the EU are working together on various projects to improve asylum related policies to improve the quality of asylum opportunities. Both of these actors are coordinating to resolve the issues of stateless people. The UNHRC, as well as the EU are also coordinating through their judicial involvement. UNHRC as a competent body assists to interpret legislations in accordance with international asylum law. The European Council on Refugees and Exiles (ECRE) promotes the European asylum policies. This body started working in 1974 with the purpose of increasing cooperation among member states to ensure the protection of refugees. The European Union has established the Common European Asylum System (CEAS), which aims to provide protection to persons seeking asylum. ECRE supports the project of CEAS on the ground that this step will help to improve asylum laws and policies, the refugees will be treated humanely and in this way good practices will be shared among states.

The European Union is also working for refugees outside the sphere of the Union in the form of material aid for the refugees. The EU provided humanitarian aid to the World Food Program (WFP) to assist refugees and has become the largest donor to the organization. The European Union has given 1 billion Euros to WFP in order to facilitate host countries to manage their refugee communities. The EU has spent many years to build institutions like CEAS, which aims to ensure the protection of refugees residing in its member states' in line with international law. The system set out a procedure to process asylum applications. The European Union has revised the European Agenda on migration, in order to improve the condition of refugees seeking protection in Europe.²⁶ The European Commission has also launched an inquiry system against its member states who failed to abide by the laws of granting decent environment to refugees and asylum seekers.

²⁵ Maria Hoel, *The European Union's Response to the Syrian Refugee crisis*, European Studies (Thesis, Trondheim NTNU, November, 2015), <https://brage.bibsys.no/xmlui/bitstream/handle/11250/2388042/Hoel%2c%20Maria.pdf?sequence=1&isAllowed=y>.

²⁶ Magyar, "Understanding Migration and Asylum in the European Union," Open Society Foundations, June 2015. <https://www.opensocietyfoundations.org/explainers/>.

The refugee crisis is addressed by the Europeans Commission's humanitarian aid and civil protection program in various ways; urgent material aid to the refugee influx or by acting as a global donor for refugees. The European Union's humanitarian aid assists directly the affected refugees irrespective of their race, nationality, gender, religion, political affiliation or ethnicity. The emergency assistance is used within the EU to provide faster and more responsive help to member states to address the issue.

Criticism of European Union's Response to the Refugee Crisis

There is also a wide range of criticism on many aspects of the European Union's policies for refugees. Firstly, it is said that the European Union has clubbed immigration with asylum. Immigration law is all about check and control on entry while refugee law is related to providing shelter. There is a greater restriction on the external border of European Union due to the EU's border policy which is internal and applicable among member states; this affects the status of refugees who are applying from outside the European Union sphere.

It is also said that the EU pursues a cherry picking policy while granting refugee status to asylum seekers and prefers qualified and skilled persons. However, refugee status should be assigned to individuals irrespective of their qualification, as its major purpose is to provide protection to humanity. There is no harmonization of refugee law among member states due to the absence of any supervisory tribunal. The EU is trying hard to harmonize refugee policies amongst the member states, but the target is hard to achieve with 28 member states when every state has its own judiciary and police force. All states have developed the interpretation of laws independently. Therefore, there is a need of a common asylum policy.

The European court of justice had no jurisdiction with respect to the refugee issue, prior to the Treaty of Amsterdam. Later, the EU established a tribunal for refugees but still it did not treat the cases of refugees like other the EU cases. The EU henceforth restricts the protection provided to asylum seekers or refugees under the Convention of 1959. The European Union sparingly issues humanitarian visas; there is no EU scheme for issuing these visas and the provisions in EU visa code are very ambiguous. ECHR does provide international security to individuals of the member states, but when it comes to individuals outside the union, they do not enjoy the same security net.²⁷

²⁷ Geoff Gilbert, "Is Europe Living Up to its Obligations to Refugees," *The European Journal of International Law*, 2004, <http://ejil.org/pdfs/15/5/399.pdf>.

In the current gloomy economic climate, where many Europeans are unemployed, there is a divide amongst member states on the issue of how to share the refugee burden. The burden sharing has emerged as a big issue within Union. The refugee burden is shared unequally by member states. Moreover, if we take into account the refugees absorption capacities of the member states and compare it with the refugee influx in EU states, we will find it disproportionate and highly unjust. The comprehensive burden sharing approach will benefit both the member states and refugees as well. The policy harmonization²⁸ and quota-based approach can give satisfactory results.²⁹ One of the major hurdles and flaws in pursuing an effective refugee policy is that the member states of the European Union view every matter with a nationalist lens.

Though the EU claims liberal policies and it has moved on from the traditional model of nation state, but it still has not been able to escape from the pressures of nation states. Europe has become more sensitive and concerned about the influx of foreigners. That's why non-European migrants and refugees face restrictions from entering the EU and enjoying the same rights.

The EU members' interior ministers have failed to bring all member states to common agenda, regarding the distribution of refugees. Thus, the EU is still at odds over the quota of refugees. Some countries are planning to fence their borders against refugees. The demand to shut doors on refugees is inhumane. The EU member states are pursuing individual actions, such as erecting fences along borders. At first, such countries were criticized for imposing border control but later other countries also followed suit. The European Union should rethink its policies for refugees, however, the political leaders of the member states of the EU have continued to adopt a hard-line approach when it comes to asylum policy. There are not enough provisions in the EU to accept and receive refugees on an immediate basis. There is also a lack of awareness among the EU public about the necessity to take in refugees.

Thus, the EU faces many problems such as reception and distribution of refugees, division of funds and many more.³⁰ In initial phases the EU made effort to focus on asylum seekers inside the EU, the

²⁸ With regards to European Union, Policy Harmonization is to create similar and common standards across the whole market.

²⁹ Eiko R. Thielemann, *Towards A Common EU Asylum Policy: The Political Economy of Refugee Burden-Sharing* (California: University of California, San Diego, 2004), https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/564e/fad51ecb17402a8d660a51c9ae1abd673fb3.pdf?_ga=2.23274172.744726270.1541399870-1856485809.1541399870.

³⁰ Jochen Oltmer, "EU needs to rethink its refugee policy," *DW*, last modified 2014, <https://www.dw.com/en/eu-needs-to-rethink-its-refugee-policy/a-17188912>.

focus of attention has now shifted to a default position where efforts are directed at discouraging people from entering the EU, and the EU started deporting people who do not have a legal asylum status.³¹ The heads of EU states and governments discussed this issue but talks proved to be unproductive. It seems that overcoming differences among member states and achieving a consensus in views has become difficult in the EU. The asymmetrical impact of this refugee crisis on member states of EU is itself a big hurdle in achieving a coherent and collective response. It is clear from the recent refugee influx from the Middle East and Africa to European states, that the European Union made very little effort for asylum seekers. A great number of casualties occurred as a result of European refusal to receive refugees. It is politically a very sensitive issue and the EU failure to handle the situation may further exacerbate the influx of refugees in the coming years. Currently, the EU is in dire need of a comprehensive solution.

Conclusion

The Syrian civil war indeed represents the worst humanitarian refugee crisis and requires a common EU and UN response. The United Nations and the EU member states need to work in close collaboration in order to protect the rights of refugees and every state should prioritize assisting their basic needs especially for the resettlement programs so that they would not feel alienated in the host country. This can only be done if a non-discriminatory approach is followed in providing education, employment and health facilities to the refugees, without any delay or restrictions. There is also a need to develop a standardized legal framework, which can permit them to work freely and to move freely on the occasions of reunion.

The United Nations and the European Union should utilize this opportunity to create an all-inclusive and harmonious legislation for refugees. Many Middle Eastern states have been ravaged by war since 2011 resulting in a massive influx of refugees seeking asylum in the European continent. The EU states initially committed to address this refugee crisis and pledged to work for achieving a common asylum policy. In view of a massive refugee influx, they struggled to give an effective and coordinated response. There is no doubt that EU has generously spent on the refugee but there are still many gaps in the system. Countries like Germany, France and Sweden opened their borders for refugees; contrarily, Britain and Hungary refused to welcome any refugees. Similarly, states like Ukraine and Slovakia did not openly welcome all the refugees; they just allowed entry to Christian refugees. Thus, we see that

³¹ Stefan Lehne, "How the Refugee Crisis Will Reshape the EU," *Carnegie Europe*, 2016, <http://carnegieeurope.eu/2016/02/04/how-refugee-crisis-will-reshape-eu-pub-62650>.

due to political divisions and internal dynamics, the EU and its member states have struggled to find a solution to this grave crisis.

The policies adopted in response seem unclear. Although, the EU portrays its liberal policies and claims that it has evolved from the traditional model of nation states, yet it couldn't escapes from pressures of nation state and Europe has become even more sensitive and concerned about the influx of refugees. European Union harbors some concerns regarding the Syrian refugees such as radicalization and a threat to the socio-political fabric of Europe. The current debate in the western public sphere shows that stereotypical perceptions of Muslims are still pervasive in Europe. The crisis calls for a coordinated global response and contribution. The basic question is what action should be taken to protect human lives? To answer this question, all states must join hands, find out the root causes of the crisis, solve the issues, which led to immigrants' influx and states must take off their nationalist lens. This is about formulating a genuine policy to address the very causes of population movements, displacements. It is about resolving crises and ensuring development.

Recommendations

There should be a continuous evaluation of the frameworks for the protection of refugees, which will maintain regulatory procedures for ensuring proper assistance to the refugees. This can happen through friendly collaboration with the help of host government and other organized programs introduced by UNICEF (United Nations Children's Emergency Fund) and WFP (World Food Program) for achieving shared goals.

The UN agencies should maintain a systematic communication channel with the refugees so that there would be no room for misunderstandings while ensuring the rights of refugees and their future. There should be an effective dialogue with the refugees in order to better understand their problems and provide improved solutions.

Apart from the solution of Cluster Approach, there is another concept known as 'One United Nations concept', which should be implemented effectively. According to this concept, the United Nations is liable to work in a more cohesive manner at the individual, regional and global level with a standard assistance framework. According to the Amnesty International conference proceedings, there should be a paradigm of protection for the refugees including actions and implementations by the developed countries. The role of the international society in sharing the responsibility of helping the increasing number of refugees is essential.

The foremost concern is the ratification of the present conventions regarding refugees, as there is insufficient aid, especially for the asylum

seekers. There is a need for states to develop impartial domestic measures in order to provide refugees with fundamental rights and long-term settlement commitments. States should also offer protection to refugees who are victims of human trafficking and ensure their appropriate legal status as well. States should not penalize the asylum seeker for their domestic economic or social problems. In order to cope with this situation, they should develop rehabilitation programs and a separate financial framework for long-term humanitarian relief.

Moreover, the EU should ensure effective protection of the asylum seekers, guarantee respect for the rights of refugee on the EU territory and border. There is a need for a quota system among members to share the financial burden of refugees equally, as coherent policies and stronger institutions demand additional finance. Efforts should be made to normalize the conditions for refugees in their home states, and they should be sent back with the proper arrangements for their protection.

In this regard, intensive engagement and collaboration is needed with the transit countries to ensure the safe arrival of asylum seekers and to control the inflow of migrants. For the sake of harmonized migration policies, there is a need for well-resourced institutions. EU should grant freedom of travel and open well-managed channels to ensure legal migration of refugees and develop some more robust policies in order to counter illegal migration. To overcome xenophobic and more extreme nationalist tendencies, a very sensitive and cautious approach is needed and for this, political leadership should play their part.

To respond to the migration challenge, there is a need to develop a credible strategy, mobilize necessary resources, and create appropriate instruments and all this demands resolute political will and continued efforts. The EU must ensure efficient asylum-seeking procedure and guarantee adequate conditions for reception. The asylum laws must be strictly followed and must be supervised by European Court of Justice (ECJ). Lives should be saved through rescue and search operations along the transit route, measures should be adopted for transparent proceedings and backlogs prevented as well as the delays in the relocation or rehabilitation mechanism for refugees. The EU must encourage increased refugee resettlement, family reunification and provide safe channels to discourage dangerous and illegal routes. Cooperation should be strengthened with security, police force and other governments too, to avoid any kind of mishap or human rights violation. Humanitarian visas must be issued on an urgent basis to individuals whose lives are at stake or vulnerable. Foremost attention must be given to tackle the root causes, which have forced the migration or seeking asylum. If these suggestions are followed then these combined efforts could give impetus to the UN and the EU for securing the lives of Syrian refugees.

DIGITAL PAYMENTS: PROSPECTS FOR SOUTH ASIA AND PAKISTAN

Dr. Muhammad Zia-Ur-Rehman
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Abstract

The study focuses on the prevailing digital payment patterns across South Asia and the trends and challenges emerging in Pakistan. Some of the crucial digital payment instruments and devices in relation to the e-commerce, m-commerce environment are analysed. The ways in which South Asian businesspersons, customers and employers are replacing hard cash with digital payments are examined. Based on such analysis of trends and patterns widespread in today's world, the article also discusses the advantages of various devices of digital payments. The paper underscores the prospects and policy recommendations of digital payment trends in Pakistan.

Key Words: *Digital Payments, Mobile Payments, QR Codes, Point of Sales, NFC, South Asian Trends*

Introduction

In early 2000s, digital payments became a global phenomenon. In developing countries of South Asia digital payments within the realm of Mobile Banking has recently caught more attention.¹ With the help of digital payments, consumers pay bills for products and enterprises operate with them at the core of their business models, utilizing various smart phones, gadgets and tablets. The benefits of digital payments are

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¹ Tomi Dahlberg, Niina Mallat, and Anssi Öörni, *Trust Enhanced Technology Acceptance Model-Consumer Acceptance of Mobile Payment Solutions, the Stockholm Mobility Roundtable 2003* (Finland, 2003), <https://pdfs.semanticscholar.org/d6b6/7e730218100e82c70525249462b024515d0b.pdf>.

vast, when businesses and governments currently pay the cost of cash management; the benefits of going digital could save costs. A tremendous scope is seen for digital payments with the introduction of smart phones especially when tapping into the youth's consumption patterns, phenomenon such as online buying patterns: ringtones, logos, news, music, recreational endeavours, gigs flight tickets, travel expenses. In mobile payments, the gadget executes verification, approval and affirmation procedure to complete an entire transaction where two parties are involved.²

In the world, the payments landscape has changed vastly and we are looking at many more companies providing various modes of digital payments. At the same time the consumers now expect fast and secure payments, no risk and no charges.

This new payments landscape has been driven by e-commerce and m-commerce, of which most retailers have been a part. PayPal and digital wallets are the most obvious developments here, spawning a whole range of copycat services, and generally opened people's eyes to alternative payment methods.³ Digital payment is a payment which is made through digital modes. In digital payments, payer and payee both use digital modes to send and receive money. No hard cash is involved in the digital payments. It is an instant and convenient way to make payments. With cash payments, you have to first withdraw cash from your account. Then you use this cash to pay at shops. Shopkeeper goes to the bank to deposit the cash which he got from you. This process is time-consuming for both parties. But in digital payments, the money transfers from the account to the shopkeeper's account are immediate. Hence the future is with digital payments.

Among the many instruments of digital payments we have Apple Pay in 2014; it is integrated into the new era of iPhone. Google Wallet as a versatile alternative accompanies it.⁴ There are other contending methods such as the trending app 'Venmo' introduced in 2009. The idea of Venmo came from an incident when one consumer forgot his wallet at home and thought why not transfer money through his mobile phone as a substitute of money, cash, or a cheque and establishing the market for paperless

² Antovski, and M. Gusev, "M-payments," *Proceedings of the 25th International Conference on Information Technology Interfaces*, https://ieeexplore.ieee.org/xpl/mostRecentIssue.jsp?punumber=8683&filter%3DAND%28p_IS_Number%3A27508%29&pageNumber=4.

³ Richard Loh, "Digital Payments and the Retailer," *Mobile Payments Today*, <https://www.mobilepaymentstoday.com/blogs/digital-payments-and-the-retailer/>.

⁴ Press Release, "Apple Announces Apple Pay" *Apple*, September 9, 2014.

transactions.⁵ In 2014, there were around 4.23 billion cell phone buyers in the world, and roughly 80 percent of the people will rely upon their cell phones by 2020.⁶ In the United States, 87 percent population utilizes cell phones and 71 percent of these cell phones are Smartphones. Asia is a massive cell phone market with 2.5 billion customers in 2013.⁷ Among Asian nations, China has the biggest number of cell phone dissemination with around 1.29 billion proprietors in 2016,⁸ and 1 billion cell phone clients in India.

Pakistan has also put forth its first major digital policy aimed towards creating more job opportunities and accelerating economic growth, as predicted by Visa's study of 'cashless cities'. As smartphone penetration in Pakistan increases and e-commerce is projected to be worth \$ 1 billion by 2020, the role of digital payment methods is expected to increase immensely.⁹

Understanding Digital Payments

Digital or electronic payments both are generally used to mean the same thing transfers of value, which are initiated and/or received using electronic devices and channels to transmit the instructions. Digital payments are not one instrument but rather an umbrella term applied to a range of different instruments used in different ways. With digital payments, there are two key dimensions of categorization that are most important: firstly, through which means—paper or digital—are the payment instructions carried; and secondly, whether the payer, payee, or both use an electronic medium in a payment transaction.¹⁰

The most common digital payment instruments are credit transfers which may also be called internet or wire transfers or SMS

⁵ Felix Gillette, "Cash is for Losers!," Bloomberg, <http://www.bloomberg.com/bw/articles/2014-11-20/mobilepayment-startup-venmo-is-killing-cash>.

⁶ "Number of Mobile Payment Users from 2009 to 2016 by Region | Statista," Statista, <https://www.statista.com/statistics/279957/number-of-mobile-payment-users-by-region/>.

⁷ Dave Chaffey, Paul Russell Smith, *EMarketing Excellence: Planning and Optimizing Your Digital Marketing* (London: Routledge, 2013), http://charsoomarketing.com/wp-content/uploads/downloads/2016/02/Dave_Chaffey_PR_Smith_Emarketing_Excellence_Pl.pdf.

⁸ Albert GZ Hu, Gary H. Jefferson, and Qian Jinchang, "R&D and technology transfer: firm-level evidence from Chinese industry," *Review of Economics and Statistics*, 87, no. 4 (Beijing, 2005), 780-786.

⁹ Staff Reporter, "Karachi Offers Huge Potential for Digital Payment Systems: Study," *Dawn*, August 7, 2018.

¹⁰ "How to Define Digital Payments?" *Better than Cash*, <https://www.betterthancash.org/tools-research/toolkits/payments-measurement/focusing-your-measurement/introduction>.

banking, mobile banking. Then there are direct debits, pre-authorized debit on the payer's bank account initiated by the payee and are a pull instrument. Lastly, card payments involving plastic cards which are often (although not always) branded with the names of the international card associations such as MasterCard or Visa, as well as the issuing financial institution. These payments usually involve the payer presenting his card at a device, such as a point of sale (POS) machine or an ATM, and entering a PIN number to authorize a payment transaction via that device.¹¹ And finally e-wallet or mobile wallet is a digital version of your wallet but it far more functional in today's world. E-wallets can be used to recharge a phone, pay at various places and send money to friends. With a smartphone and a stable internet connection, E-wallets can be used to make payments. These E-Wallets also give additional cashback offers. Some of the most used E-wallets are State bank buddy, ICICI Pockets, Freecharge, Paytm etc.

E-Wallets still have some limitations. These apps are good if you send money to a wallet to another. These apps are not safe to send money to a bank account. These apps have a PIN or password. If the phone is unlocked, anyone can use the money in the wallet.¹² Up until this point, all versatile instalment applications have concentrated on purchaser as opposed to businesses. Be that as it may, numerous instalment guarantors, cost administration professional vendors and different organizations that have some expertise in corporate travel are creating items such as corporate apps, one example is AirPlus International.

Various studies show that digital payments for business management and organizational management with mobile phone can be easier as compared to other tools as even paying off and dealing with financial transactions.¹³ For instance, mobile phones are available at remote areas and be utilized in different types of monetary trade.¹⁴

After gaining an understanding of digital payments, digital payment device is a device that uses the payment instrument and information from the recipient to complete a transaction, e.g. point of sale device, PC and mobile phones. These devices use traditional Electronic Funds Transfer Point of Sale (EFTPOS) terminal, yet due to the

¹¹ Ibid.

¹² Prabhat Panday, "Digital Payments in India 2016-2017: Definition, Types, Comparison and Apps", *Upi Payments*, <https://upipayments.co.in/digital-payment/>.

¹³ Tomi Dahlberg, Niina Mallat, Jan Ondrus, and Agnieszka Zmijewska, "Past, Present and Future of Mobile Payments Research: A Literature Review," *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications* 7, no. 2 (2008): 165-181.

¹⁴ Jun Liu, Robert J. Kauffman, and Dan Ma, "Competition, Cooperation, and Regulation: Understanding the Evolution of the Mobile Payments Technology Ecosystem," *Electronic Commerce Research and Applications* 14, no. 5 (2015): 372-391.

propagation of QR (Quick Response) codes, taking the China scenario as proof, and the increasing Indian acceptance points, the latest trends in digital payments require a technology comparison between the latest two: NFC (Near Field Communication) and QR (Quick Response). Traditional terminals will still play a significant part, but the form of payment terminal will change. Both NFC and QR are the underlying infrastructure on which contactless payment and QR-code payment are based on, and have a huge future market potential. Supporters of NFC think it is faster, easier, and more secure whereas the exponents of QR Code claim it reaches a wider market since smartphones can read them, far more than NFC readers that can read NFC tags.

QR code in view of two-dimensional scanner tag, which is right off the bat, designed for the car business. These codes incorporate substantially more noteworthy information and it put away a tremendous measure of information. NFC is considered a digital sort of instalment without any connection for cell phones utilizing radio signs. By waving a cell phone over a NFC-good, payment can at the same time be shared and transmitted one way while information is transmitted to another place. The required hardware for NFC is an initiator and a target and software to process the data. While for QR Code, a camera or scanner has to capture the QR Code image and software decodes it. In terms of reach, NFC users must have new hardware which supports the tech. While QR users already have the hardware (smartphone) to support the technology, the ease of use with NFC requires a wave tag near the reader, and then the tag and reader communicate with each other. While for the QR code, just open a scanner app on smartphone, hover over the QR code, and wait for the phone to analyse it. In relation to security, NFC must use encrypted connection and Code is threatening on URL addresses. When it comes to points of acceptance, NFC is a contactless standalone reader or an embedded contactless reader into existing equipment, such as EFTPOS, ATM etc.

With QR Code, there are many options: customer scan business (Push), QR code sticker, smartphone, business scans customer (Pull), POS with QR Scanner, Electronic Funds Transfer Point Of Sale (EFTPOS) with QR Scanner (accessory or embedded), Smartphone, and any device with camera/QR scanner. As regards to the market growth of digital payments the matured bankcard market NFC will continue strong growth whereas with QR Codes: the matured Bankcard market will grow moderately along NFC due to proliferation of new e-wallet schemes by Fintech companies mushrooming. The future of digital payment suggests a matured Bankcard market: NFC will grow strong with QR Code nipping away at the

peripherals with Chinese tourist markets and fintech companies launching new QR Code e-wallets targeting specific vertical markets.¹⁵

Digital Payments for South Asia

Asia's emerging markets, in particular Southeast Asia with its 73 percent unbanked population has an enormous potential for the adoption of mobile solutions as an alternative to traditional payment options. Based on an increased ownership of smartphones as well as an improved internet access, digital payments are growing as shown by one in five smartphone users in Asia shopping with a digital wallet. Still Asia has heterogeneity in economic development and infrastructure accessibility, creating different levels of readiness for the digital payments trend. Where all these ground realities make a difference to digital payment providers, sometimes paying attention to cultural inclinations really pays off, best illustrated by how WeChat Pay became Alipay's biggest competitor in China by utilizing a common giving habit in the Chinese society, that of giving money in red envelopes. And as digital wallets catch on, Chinese companies are looking to expand to South Asia.¹⁶ In Southeast Asia, the response to digital payments from banks and governments are encouraging.

India, China and the Philippines are the three largest recipients of remittances globally, which makes Asia a vast opportunity for payment solution providers. With policy shifts like Malaysia, Thailand and Singapore government is supporting e-transaction systems and Thailand and Singapore also developing systems such as PayNow and PromptPay, allowing peer-to-peer transfer of funds using only identification numbers and mobile phone numbers. The number of non-cash transactions in the region is expected to hit 276.8 billion by 2020, according to the recent World Payments Report, non-cash transactions in the region are expected to hit 276.8 billion by 2020 which represents an almost three-fold increase since 2015, an unprecedented growth in the space of only five years.¹⁷

India is one of the biggest markets open for advanced instalments. With a populace of 1.25 billion, India represents around 18 percent of the worldwide populace and the Indian digital payment trends are shown below.¹⁸

¹⁵ Alex Tay, "NFC vs QR Code Payment," *LinkedIn*, <https://www.linkedin.com/pulse/nfc-vs-qr-code-payment-alex-tay>.

¹⁶ "A fresh look at Asia's payment landscape," *Payments Cards and Mobile*, <https://www.paymentscardsandmobile.com/fresh-look-asias-payment-landscape/>.

¹⁷ Ibid.

¹⁸ "Digital Payments Landscape in India 2017: Trends and Future," *Dehli School of Internet Marketing*, <http://dsim.in/blog/2017/04/14/case-study-digital-payments-landscape-in-india-2017-trends-future/>.

E-Wallets, Paytm, Free charge

- ✓ UPI-Unified Interface Apps
- ✓ Plastic Money-Debit Card
- ✓ Net Banking-Online fund transfer
- ✓ Aadhaar Card-Aadhaar Enabled Payment System
- ✓ Approximately 88 percent individuals incline toward cashless instalment over money instalment, with 48 percent utilizing computerized instalment for over 75 percent of their exchange.¹⁹
- ✓ 50 percent of India's web clients will receive computerized instalments by 2020, with the main 100 million clients driving 70 percent of the advanced instalments Gross Merchandise esteem (GMV).²⁰
- ✓ Ease of doing instalment is one of the key variables of clients to move towards computerized instalment.

Based on the present scenario, it can be expected that there would be various different digital payment trends in future. Future of Digital Payments in India is good to go to witness a huge surge in the reception of advanced instalments in the coming years.

- ✓ The accompanying patterns are set to change advanced instalment scene in the coming years.
- ✓ Technology will make advanced instalments simpler.
- ✓ Merchant acknowledgment system to advance 10X by 2020.
- ✓ Payments will drive utilization, not the different way.
- ✓ Merging will drive pervasiveness.
- ✓ Modified UPI will be a distinct advantage.
- ✓ Digital personality to quicken client securing.
- ✓ Cash to Non-money proportion will turn around more than 10 year.

Sri Lanka is one of the important countries and it recently overcame its peace process. Digital payment systems are considered significant in this country and people of Sri Lanka are ready to accept new trends as well. Some of the trends in the market include:

- ✓ Sri Lanka Interbank Payment System (SLIPS)
- ✓ Payment Cards
- ✓ Debit Cards
- ✓ Automated Teller Machine (ATM)
- ✓ Electronic Fund Transfer at Point of Sale (EFTPOS)
- ✓ Phone/Mobile/Tele Banking/Internet Banking

¹⁹ Ibid.

²⁰ Ibid.

Recent Developments in Payment & Settlement Systems

- ✓ Adoption of Line Encryption technology for payment cards.
- ✓ Revising the regulations
- ✓ Implementation of the Common ATM Switch
- ✓ Facilitating the transport card system

Future Prospects

- ✓ Common Card & Payment Switch (CCAPS)
- ✓ Lanka Clear (Pvt.) Ltd will be the operator of the switch

Bangladesh is another important country moving towards digitization and digital payment systems.²¹ Some of the digital payment trends prevailing in the country include;

- ✓ BKash
- ✓ National Payment Switch
- ✓ Online or internet banking
- ✓ SMS Banking
- ✓ E-Wallet

Emerging Digital Payment Trends and Challenges in Pakistan

It is crucial for Pakistan to have digital payment system with fool proof security for being in the market of digitization. In this competitive world of business, the fast as well as secure transactions systems have become need of the hour. Digital payment trends help the people to buy or sell or even do transactions through easy, faster, secure and effective ways. In Pakistan, the mobile technology and its utility emerged and spread quickly. The first mobile POS (point of sale) was launched with the collaboration of Habib Bank and Monet. The number of issued debit cards crossed the 25 million mark in 2014-2015 and this trend continues to be promising. On the contrary, the number of credit cards stands at just under 1.5 million. The figure of EFT POS (point of sale) machines has gone up by 40,000. Interestingly, the volume of paper-based transactions has dropped by 0.12percent in 2015.²²

The use of smartphones in the country is encouraging for the development of ecommerce and the new mediums of payment. Currently, 80 percent of the Pakistani people own a mobile phone, and the figure is

²¹ Mohammad Salah Uddin, and Afroza Yesmin Akhi, "E-wallet System for Bangladesh an Electronic Payment System," *International Journal of Modeling and Optimization* 4, no. 3 2014, <http://www.ijmo.org/papers/376-A1015.pdf>, 216.

²² Jamal Ahsan, "Digital Payments in Pakistan," *Keenu*, <https://www.keenu.pk/Merchant/introduce-digital-payments-in-pakistan>.

rising. The potential of NFC payments and other digital platforms becomes reliable given the inclination of a contemporary customer towards smartphones. The immense security, availability on-the-go, and convenience, makes it fascinating for customers. There is a rise in the number of customers opting for digital payments, rather than conventional means, creating a new trend, yet for this effect to be large scale, implementing it in the right manner will be the game changer. There are players who intend to deliver comprehensive end-to-end payment solutions is Keenu. The service is tailored to facilitate connectivity between stakeholders, such as banks, customers, telcos, and businessmen.²³ Customers do not need paper money every time.²⁴

Pakistan's ATM cards account for 64percent of entire E-banking financial transactions, real-time online banking (RTOB) percentage is 24 percent, carried out by the core banking system. The E-banking financial transactions have seen a considerable rise in the last 5 years, as²⁵ the volume of e-banking has increased from 22.1 trillion to Rs.35.8 trillion between 2010 and 2015, according to SBP 2014 and 2015 reports.

The digital finance potential of Pakistan is projected at about \$36 billion by 2025; with a 7 percent boost to the GDP, 4 million new jobs and \$263 billion new deposits, according to "How digital finance could boost growth in emerging economies", a McKinsey Global Institute report. While there are immense opportunities for collaboration between e-commerce players and mobile money providers, the challenges faced by e-commerce players in the Southeast Asian region are also plenty according to a GSMA report. In the context of end to end digitization, for Pakistan cash remains a major hurdle in the marketplace. It is reported that more than 90 per cent of e-commerce purchases still paid for through cash on delivery (COD). Cash upon delivery creates a challenge for merchants who struggle to manage their cash and costs as customers derive more trust and comfort in paying. At the same time operators are playing a remarkable role in taking the e-commerce industry forward. Telenor Group's Telenor Microfinance Bank, for instance, is already serving more than 20 million active customers through Easypaisa. Operators are investing in the infrastructure to make mobile broadband accessible to more than 50 per cent of the population by 2020.

In 2015, Easypaisa launched its online payment gateway, allowing e-commerce platforms to accept digital payments and easily integrate with their systems. In 2016, JazzCash also launched its own payment gateway

²³ Ibid.

²⁴ "Digital Payments, Cashless, Secure, Cashbacks, Rewards, Retail, Food & Online Offers," *Keenu*, <http://www.keenu.pk/>

²⁵ Indrastra, "A Brief note on Digital Payment Systems," *Medium*, <https://medium.com/indrastra/a-brief-note-on-digital-payment-systems-in-pakistan-1959dd95a94c>.

with innovative features and ensured a smooth, secure and expedited onboarding experience for the merchants. These ways improve the value proposition for merchant's acceptance of online payments, and create a new business line, wallet offerings. On the market level, this curbs the culture of COD, as providers are providing multiple options to customers to settle their online purchase.

To address the inherent lack of trust in online payments, mobile operators have introduced purchase protection programs for customers whereby a buyer is guaranteed a refund if their merchant fails to deliver the goods. Easypaisa was the first in the market to provide 'Buyer Protection'. JazzCash also followed. Such steps aim build safety and trust in the customer, encouraging them to transact online.²⁶

Now a day's, three instalment techniques are utilized as a part of Pakistan, for example, money, charge/Visa, and digital payments framework. Advanced instalment strategy is the most protected and constructive techniques in which the client turns out to be more secure. In hard cash, there is likewise a risk of fake or produced cash. Credit/Debit card may lessen this risk. An NFC charge card is more secure than these two cards.

Another captivating improvement is the likes of PayPal and AliPay by the State Bank of Pakistan (SBP). PayPal speaks to 16 percent of all overall electronic trades. In 2014, PayPal moved \$228 billion across more than 190 countries. AliPay spoke to appropriate around half of all China based trades, signifying nearly \$300 billion. A captivating component about AliPay is that they don't charge a trade cost. Between these two phases Pakistan's online business has had a good response for online customers. Similarly, Bitcoins are highly developed monetary standards that are not on paper, are increasingly being utilized by organizations and individuals, and are decentralized, which implies that no foundation controls it. It was made by a product designer Satoshi Nakamoto who built up an electronic instalment framework in view of numerical confirmation. The thought was to create money sovereign of any specialist, transferable electronically and with low exchange charges. The way that it can be stimulated right away is an immensely imperative feature of Bitcoins. Another is Blockchain which is a constantly rising shabby of records, called squares which are connected and secured utilizing cryptography. Each square is connected to the past piece, has timestamp and exchange information. It can be seen as an arrangement of code that conveys information in squares (characterized amounts) that are then put away in a succession called the blockchain on an appropriated set of worldwide PCs.

²⁶ Jan Stryjak, "Unlocking digital potential Pakistan's e commerce industry," *Gsma*, <https://www.gsma.com/mobilefordevelopment/programme/mobile-money/unlocking-digital-potential-pakistans-e-commerce-industry/>.

Then comes Google Wallet which is essentially Google's option of PayPal, complete with money trades and a Google Wallet Card. Google moreover announced a physical card related to customers' records so they can utilize Google Wallet at retail associations. Then there is Amazon Payments which is a protected, easy and supportive method for customers to get money by using Amazon's API. Then QR Code based instalment is anticipation for the business. After the We-Chat instalments in view of QR code in China and Paytm achievement in India, the Pakistani business is making its wager on QR to lead approach to truly necessary leap forward in advanced instalments.

With all these progressive avenues come a couple of challenges that need to be sorted out first before we start seeing results. Firstly taxes: Merchants are incredibly scared of falling into the documented banking net. That's because the Government will come knocking to collect taxes. We must delve into the reasons as to why every merchant accepts cash readily. The only solution to this problem is for the policy makers to realize that they have to start collecting taxes in ways that don't scare people away from digital money. Unless we have laws (and the implementation of those laws) that encourage merchants to start accepting digital payments, we will see limited progress.

Secondly, opening an account; State Bank wants every Payment Merchant to open a Bank Account, which means tons of documentation. Not only does the Merchant get scared, it easily takes days to collect all the documents, before the Merchant can even do their first transaction. All types of Merchants need to be able to sign up quickly, seamlessly to accept digital payments.

Thirdly interoperability; a merchant will only change the particular payment method, if every customer walking in can be served with that payment method. A merchant doesn't want to accept digital payments from a small segment of customers only. Well, there is a Functional Banking Switch (1-Link), but even 1-Link has its problems. Slow development, extremely bureaucratic, and governed by some of the Banks who are completely complacent and happy with their handful of card customers. The only good thing in 1-Link in the past 5 years is the domestic payment scheme-PayPak. Issuers shall no longer be dependent on expensive International Payment schemes like Visa and MasterCard.

We all need to understand the benefits of Digital Payments in Pakistan. Digital Payments would lead to more money in the formal banking system, convenient, secure and fast, documented transactions for customers, and a faster cash flow for merchants to make B2B payments for their business. More taxes for the Government, better documentation of the economy, less cash outside the formal banking system.

E-commerce in Pakistan is on the right path yet it still requires meaningful collaborations to hit the milestone by 2020. The players and

mobile money operators together should develop an ecosystem to propel the growth of e-commerce while being mutually beneficial.

By 2021 for example e-wallets will become the top payment method globally with a usage rate of 46 percent as informed by the Global Payments Report by payment technology provider Worldpay by 2021 as in the Asia Pacific; it is expected to reach 51 percent. Earlier this year, Alipay launched its smartphone-based QR-code payment service in Japan, and WeChat Pay made its foray into Singapore. So in the future more countries and companies will opt for QR code payment and so should Pakistan.

The QR code could help developing countries skip over the credit cards and cheques and enter the era of mobile payments—similar to the phenomenon experienced by Chinese consumers a few years ago. Nevertheless, it will take time for some markets to catch up. Based on the above analytical scenarios, it's concluded that advancement in the digital trends in payment is the need of the hour and Pakistan already is lacking behind in the trend but after the initiation of China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), it has become crucial need of the hour to adapt and adopt secure digital payment systems.

Future Prospects

With the advent of mobile broadband technology, Pakistan has had an increase in the digital adoption with a number of ecommerce businesses as well as online methods of payments leading to immense benefit. In an otherwise cash-based society internet and mobile banking emerged on the horizon while ATM machines remained king of the ring.

To conclude up the present situation and future bearings about digital payments it is seen that the trends seem to shift towards digital globe based transactions. For digital payments, some instruments remain attractive as NFC, QR-code, and Online Bank. With NFC which requires a technical device that corresponds within 4 inches to complete a transaction. The QR-code contains more critical information than the past customary scanner labels. And both contend for reigning as the leading device. QR codes are seeing rising popularity in Southeast Asia because it is relatively cheap and easy to adopt comparing to NFC-based Apply Pay, Android Pay or Samsung Pay. Plus it does not require an internet connection to work. E-cash is a newer trend, and endeavours to copy the traits of the trade for online trading.

The future of business is based on digital, mobile and online payment processes. The advantages of this trend are vast and compounding. With digital payments, the pros and cons and the benefits of going cashless can be summarized plenty. There is less chance of fraud and robbery, as no cash held on the premise. It requires no cash handling fees from the bank, no trips to the bank to pay it in. Hence, quicker transactions, better for the retailer and the customer, shorter queues,

better marketing opportunities by collecting customer data for future use. And lastly the average spend tends to increase when cards or contactless are used.²⁷

Being mobile comes in many different forms. It can be people shopping from their mobile devices, checking and comparing product details while out and about. It can be paying from a digital wallet (for example, settling the bill in a restaurant), in-app or social media payments, or can be mobile POS, taking the till in the form of a tablet or smartphone to the customer for customer assisted selling.

As the innovation continues, contactless payments are now evolving thanks to NFC enabled smartphones and the digitizing of cards. Physical contactless cards are no longer needed. This is significant for a few reasons for retailers. The customer has the mobile phone which provides additional authentication via fingerprint or other verification/biometric method, so the risk to the card issuer is much lower. As this becomes more commonly known, so transactions values and volumes are likely to increase even further.

Another important benefit of mobile digital payments is the ability to collect customer data, for marketing use, and to send online receipts. This enables retailers to build a relationship with the customer after they have left the store or made their online purchase. Digital payments need to sit alongside loyalty and reward programs in order to drive customer acquisition and retention.

Prepaid and gift cards are also an alternative to cash that continue to gain in popularity. These are used online as well as in-store and are available in digital format as well as plastic cards. Digitization can unlock huge social and economic benefits for Asian countries and help our government in particular tackle some of the challenges. Therefore the importance of Pakistan's Vision 2025 aims to create a globally competitive and prosperous country. The mobile industry can support objectives outlined in the Vision: both those that are specifically focused on Information and Communication Technologies (ICT) policy and those related to wider economic and social developments. The Pakistani government has demonstrated its commitment to revolutionizing ICT usage across the country. In particular, it aims to complete Pakistan's transition to a knowledge-based economy through innovation, education and value addition, while promoting efficient, sustainable and effective ICT initiatives through the development of both industrial and academic resources. The government has also recognized the importance of young people in facilitating further uptake of ICT and in fostering innovation and entrepreneurship within the sector.

²⁷ "Digital Payments and the Retailer," *Mobile Payments Today*, <https://www.mobilepaymentstoday.com/blogs/digital-payments-and-the-retailer/>.

Conclusion

Businesses and consumers are interested in faster, safer, and more convenient payment methods. Mobile and social payment options could be the future of digital-driven purchasing. The QR, SMS and NFC payment methods are possible, but soon enough the growing demands of millennials for an easier, faster, and safer way to pay via mobile will prevail. Opening up smartphones as a POS method of payment; a mobile device being a smartphone credit card reader would enable anyone with a smartphone to complete transactions. Many consumers are turning towards these methods as each transaction has its own unique code hence is quicker and easier than waiting in lines. Users can simply pay for items found in the physical store via apps on their mobile phones. Digital currencies will become more popular to buy all commodities that virtual money offers. Digital currencies are instantaneous and border-less nature of the transactions, a payment method that can be used anywhere, and isn't regulated yet.

Most people these days connect to companies through a social media network, and also take their friends' recommendations as the most reliable accreditation. Social payments are of two categories: on-site purchases and peer-to-peer money transfer services. SnapChat released SnapCash, a quick money transfer channel that lets users exchange cash from one account holder to another instantly. Pinterest utilizes "Action buttons" within their platform to allow users to add items to their Amazon Wish List or to complete a purchase directly. In conclusion, progress on digital tools is needed, to help regulators do their job. Pakistan should move forward with several specific aims to promote the adoption of these technologies: increase the flow of knowledge and ideas through wider broadband internet access, particularly through 3G and 4G/LTE networks. It should introduce m-education, m-commerce, m-health and m-government, aimed to increase the adoption and promotion of technology in the public sector. Pakistan should reduce tariffs and taxes on R&D equipment, fostering innovation in new technologies. And also improve the flow of knowledge across sectors, with a particular aim of improving agricultural productivity.

As digital innovation is redefining what it is to be a service provider, financial regulators have to take a more proactive, data-driven approach to engagement with the industry. Indeed supervising digital financial service providers calls for more sophisticated and automated systems which provide real-time monitoring and analysis. Promoting interoperable, open technology platforms for digital financial services will help establish a broad-based ecosystem for private and Government entities. As digital identity forms an important foundation of public digital infrastructure and opens the door for access to services across the

economy – the government needs to prioritize availability of robust and easily verifiable digital IDs, to facilitate access to digital financial services.

BURHANISATION OF SOCIAL MEDIA AND THE RESISTANCE MOVEMENT IN KASHMIR

Sheikh Gh. Waleed Rasool
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Abstract

This study is an impact assessment of Burhan Wani, a freedom fighter from Kashmir who was killed by Indian security forces in July 2016. Wani, through use of social media, gave a new outlook to the Kashmiri struggle for freedom, which is completely indigenous and involves new generation of Kashmiri youth. The soft images diluted the negative image created by state controlled Indian media about Kashmiri struggle and gave birth to a new phenomenon i.e. interplay of message, images and sentiment called "Burhanisation." These images did not pass through routine media gate-keeping; therefore, they triggered a mass resistance against the Indian rule in occupied Kashmir and Burhan Wani was glorified as a freedom fighter. The study explores how these images through the use of social media promote a soft image of resistance by giving it an indigenous outlook which is more effective than the symbol of 'Kalashnikov' in catching the attention of the international community.

Key Words: Social media, Kashmir, Kalashnikov, Burhanisation, Conflict, Mass-uprising, AFSPA, POTA

Introduction

Kashmiris started their freedom struggle in the 1930s when this region was a part of the British Indian empire. Following the partition of the sub-continent and the emergence of Pakistan and India as independent states, Kashmir went through a *de facto* partition with India occupying a major chunk of the Muslim majority areas against the aspirations of the people. This movement went through several

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phases, where the latest phase started in 2016 after the killing of a young freedom fighter, Burhan Wani, at the hands of Indian security forces. Burhan Wani was a young Kashmiri who joined the resistance against Indian occupation at the age of 15 after being beaten up along with his brother at a military check post by Indian army men. However, contrary to the previous trends in Kashmiri freedom struggle, this time use of modern communication technologies ensured that the narrative of liberation from illegal occupation of Kashmir by Indian forces would reach to the maximum number of people. Burhan Wani, 'the Poster Boy' of *Hizbul Mujahidin*, became a social media sensation of his own kind. He started uploading his selfies and video messages on the famous social media platform Facebook, which were shared and liked by thousands. In his messages, he would criticize the Indian government for their unlawful occupation of Kashmir. He also targeted the Indian army and the local police for committing atrocities in Kashmir. After the killing of Burhan, a reaction erupted which was probably not anticipated by the Indian government. The protests spread across Kashmir, where most of the participants were young boys and girls. It forced the Indian authorities to impose a two months long curfew, stop the publication of newspapers, close down schools and suspend internet and telephone services.¹ When the images of Burhan's dead body were shared on social media, the reaction became severe. Kashmiris flooded the roads and their protests were met with the use of brute force by the Indian authorities. Over 30 people were killed and hundreds were injured in mere three days following Burhan's killing.² The role played by Burhan Wani and the impact of his killing is a unique episode in the history of Kashmiri freedom struggle. Burhan never travelled outside of India and had no linkage with any foreign element, thus reflecting a purely indigenous struggle against the Indian occupation. Secondly, he used an innovative tool to spread his message to the people of Kashmir and his charisma helped his message being widely accepted. Collectively, these impacts can be called Burhanisation a phenomenon created through the interplay of images and sentiments.

Genesis of the Kashmir Struggle

Kashmiris started their freedom struggle when the people of the sub-continent were struggling to get independence from British

¹ "Why Kashmiri Youth Supported Militant Burhan Wani", *BBC News*, July 28, 2016, <https://www.bbc.com/news/av/world-asia-india-36866126/why-kashmiri-youth-supported-militant-burhan-wani>.

² Riaz Masroor, "پوگہ 30 تہ ہلاک توں بہ رقرار، یک شہیدگ میں ک شہیر", *BBC News*, July 11, 2016, https://www.bbc.com/urdu/regional/2016/07/160711_kashmir_tesnse_death_toll_rise_mb.

colonialism. As the region was ruled by a Hindu Maharaja, a gulf between the Muslim majority and the ruler became visible in the 1930s, following a series of events sparked by interference by the government in religious affair of the people.³ In the days to come, All India Muslim League and Indian National Congress created their separate areas of influence in the region. However, a majority of the Muslim population was more inclined towards the narrative of All India Muslim League, owing to close religious, cultural, historical and geographical connections with the envisioned state of Pakistan. However, the boundary award announced by the commission led by Cyril John Radcliffe contentiously divided the Gurdaspur district of Punjab between two new states of the sub-continent; providing India geographical connectivity with the valley of Kashmir.⁴ Meanwhile, the Kashmiris started resisting against Maharaja's autocratic and repressive rule.⁵

The situation became grim when the newly independent states got engaged in hostilities and fought a war in 1948. At the end of the war, Kashmiris found themselves divided between two states. During the war, Kashmir's Hindu ruler signed a controversial instrument of accession with India. The war ended with a UN Security Council Resolution promising the right of self-determination for Kashmiris, though later developments proved that India never wanted to give Kashmiris their legitimate rights. Earlier, the Indian religious and political leader M. K. C. Gandhi, while visiting Srinagar, declared the will of Kashmiris as the supreme law in Jammu and Kashmir.⁶ Indian Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru in his parliamentary speeches, letters and telegrams also repeatedly avowed about Kashmiris' right of self-determination and showed willingness to solve the Kashmir dispute as per the will and aspirations of the Kashmiri people.⁷ India accorded a special status to Kashmir under Article 370 of its Constitution but gradually many of its clauses were amended. In the coming years, India and Pakistan fought two more wars and engaged in several limited conflicts but the status quo over Kashmir remained intact. After Indo-Pak war in 1971 Indira Gandhi and Sheikh Abdullah signed an accord in 1974. Though, the Indian government had already made several amendments in the Constitution to fully integrate Kashmir into the Indian Union, this accord further enabled India to erode the special status of Kashmir under Indian constitution.⁸

³ G. M. Lone, "13 July 1931: A Chapter of Kashmir," *Kashmir Life*, July 13, 2014, <https://kashmirilife.net/13-july-1931-a-chapter-of-kashmir-61908/>.

⁴ Stanley Wolpert, *Shameful Flight* (Karachi: Oxford, 2009), 157.

⁵ A. G. Noorani, *The Kashmir Dispute 1947-2012* (New Delhi: Oxford, 2014), 227.

⁶ Arundhati Roy, "Nehru on Kashmir" *MR Online*, November 29, 2010, <https://mronline.org/2010/11/29/nehru-on-kashmir/>.

⁷ Sumantra Bose, *Kashmir: Roots of Conflict, Paths to Peace* (Harvard University Press: 2009), 88.

1987 elections proved hollow for Kashmir and turned out to be a mockery of democracy, which triggered an armed resistance against India. The leaders who are leading the present uprising contested 1987 assembly elections from the platform of Muslim United Front (MUF).⁸ Syed Salahuddin, the Supreme Commander of Hizbul Mujahideen (HM)⁹ and Chairman of United Jihad Council (UJC),¹⁰ contested from Amira Kadal constituency of Srinagar. He is considered a top ranking "terrorist" by India now. The MUF leadership comprised of peaceful actors of democracy who were disheartened by the manipulation of 1987 elections results by the Indian establishment. This paved the way for armed struggle in Kashmir which continued throughout the 1990s in which Kalashnikov became symbol of resistance. 9/11 adversely affected the resistance movement and forced the freedom aspirants to opt for political struggle. However, by 2007-2008 a strong wave of protests emerged in Kashmir over the 'Amarnath Yatra land controversy generated by the Indian government's decision to transfer 800 kanals forest land to Shri Amarnath Shrine Board.¹¹ The latest wave of resistance was triggered in the wake of brutal extra-judicial killing of Burhan Wani by the Indian security forces.

Traditional Media and the Kashmir Resistance Movement

The Kashmir resistance is an indigenous political movement to liberate the people from an illegal Indian occupation. The killings and the mass uprising in Kashmir are not objectively reported by the traditional Indian media. The Kashmiris have kept the political movement alive; initially, the medium of communication available to freedom leaders was speeches during small meetings and gatherings, mosques and public places, educational institutions. In addition, wall chalking, pamphlets and then print media such as the "*Azaan*", a prominent weekly published by an official organ of *Jamaati Islaami*, were other tools used by the leaders of the movement. The *Azaan* was later banned permanently in 1987 by the Indian government. Robbing the pro-freedom Kashmiri leaders of their

⁸ Muslim United Front was amalgamation of seven parties of Jammu and Kashmir which contested election against National Conference and Congress in 1987. Syed Ali Geelani, APHC Chairman, Syed Salahudin Chief Commander HM, Yaseen Malik, Chairman Liberation Front, Prof. A.G Butt, Abbas Ansari etc were part of the elections.

⁹ Hizbul Mujahideen is the largest indigenous militant organization having a fighting cadre. Burhan Muzaffar Wani was District Commander of HM from South Kashmir district of Islamabad.

¹⁰ UJC is amalgamation of various militant outfits who are involved in armed struggle against Indian rule in Kashmir.

¹¹ "Chronology of Amarnath Agitation in J&K," *Hindustan Times*, August 31, 2008. <https://www.hindustantimes.com/india/chronology-of-amarnath-agitation-in-j-k/story-IHBhzF5VQAy1cfptDl1svL.html>.

mandate in the 1987 elections triggered the armed resistance against India yet again. Syed Salahuddin Chairman United Jihad Council (MJC) and All Parties Hurriyat Conference (APHC) leaders Syed Ali Geelani, Mohammad Yaseen Malik, Abbas Ansari, Prof. A. G. Bhat were the first casualties of the Indian media and its negative framing.

Radio Kashmir was another main propagating tool, controlled by the All India Radio and it remained a mouthpiece of the establishment promoting only one-sided framing. Hence, BBC Radio was more popular than other media in the region. However, due to its own limitations, it could not serve the purpose of spreading the message of freedom to the people of Kashmir. Radio Darjeeling (RD) and the Voice of America (VOA) also had a presence. As far as Television is concerned, there was only one Indian TV channel, “*Doordarshan*” available in Kashmir up till 2002.

As analyzed by Teresa Joseph, the coverage of the news by Indian newspapers dominated the media narrative of the state.¹² Sreedharan concludes on the basis of content analysis that the press and electronic media in Indian occupied Kashmir is “vigorously government-led” and intensively “negative”.¹³ The coverage given to Kashmiri freedom struggle was “ethnocentric” and mostly relied on Government sources. Tavleen Singh, in her book, *Tragedy of Errors*, says that it is misguided patriotism.¹⁴ The coverage of Kashmir by Indian media has been merely sensational and antagonistic in nature. The sufferings of Kashmiris and their struggle gets distorted coverage in the Indian media. The journalists reporting on Kashmir have always relied on biased reporting.¹⁵ The quantitative analysis conducted by Akshay Tarfe holds that 78 percent of news across mediums belongs to the Indian military.¹⁶ The prime-time news channels are projecting lies about Kashmir to the rest of India. It was the impact of this inability of Indian media to give due coverage to the Kashmiri struggle that led to the emergence of social media as an actor in 2016 after the killing of Burhan Wani.

Conventional media in Indian occupied Kashmir (IOK) is controlled and used to project Indian stance in the name of national interest. The

¹² Teresa Joseph, “Kashmir, Human Rights and the Indian Press,” *Contemporary South Asia*, 9:1, 2000, 41-55.

¹³ Chindu Sreedharan, *Reporting Kashmir: An Analysis of the Conflict Coverage in Indian and Pakistani Newspapers* (Bournemouth University, 2009).

¹⁴ Talveen Singh, “*Kashmir: A Tragedy of Errors*,” (New Delhi: Penguin Books, 1996), 39.

¹⁵ Raqib Hameed Naik, “Biased coverage of Kashmir unrest in mainstream media leading to attacks on local journalists in Valley,” *TwoCircles.net*, August 1, 2016, <http://twocircles.net/2016aug01/1470036251.html>.

¹⁶ Akshay Tarfe, “A Content Analysis of news related to Jammu and Kashmir,” Academia, http://www.academia.edu/28529213/Content_Analysis_of_News_Related_to_Jammu_and_Kashmir_in_The_National_Newspaper_Daily.

local media of Kashmir is forced to comply with the rules and regulations laid down by Delhi which also controls accreditation, resources and advertisements that ensures the survival of any publication. This control is also used by the Indian government to keep media in Kashmir under tight control. Freedom of the press is always suppressed and every piece of information has to pass through stringent censoring according to the benchmarks set by the Indian authorities. If there is any news story against the role of the armed forces or any analysis that questions the role of the armed forces, it cannot pass through the spokesperson of the 15th corps stationed in Srinagar.

Private media channels and newspapers based in IOK are under severe stress. The writers and journalists who dare to write against the government face grave consequences. Ghulam Mohammad Lone, a freelance print reporter, who also wrote for the English newspaper *Greater Kashmir*, was killed by unidentified gunmen at his residence in August 1994.¹⁷ Ghulam Rasool Sheikh, the editor of Urdu daily *Rehnuma-e-Kashmir* was killed by Indian security forces in April 1996.¹⁸ Javed Ahmed Mir working for Channel 9 was killed by security forces in April 2008 while on assignment to cover a protest in Srinagar.¹⁹ There is a controlled presence of international media in Kashmir; however, some media houses are still present there with their offices outside the Kashmir region. BBC and Voice of America (VOA) have extended their bureau offices to Kashmir but remain threatened by both the security forces and the militants. The international media also has little access to the areas which are in turmoil so correspondents avoid covering a story on the spot. Rather, they often rely on government news agencies or press releases issued by resistance groups. Pakistani press or electronic media has neither direct access to Indian occupied Kashmir nor has any correspondent there.

Evolution of Social Media in Kashmir

Unlike people in many other parts of the world, Kashmiris were deprived of the privilege of using internet and social media by the Indian government until 2014. Initially, people were able to have a limited access to social media sites in 2014 through official internet. It was only after the introduction of 3G and 4G cellular networks in Kashmir in 2015 that social media started acting as a catalyst for the cultural connectivity.²⁰ Masses,

¹⁷ *Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)*, <https://cpj.org/data/people/ghulam-muhammad-lone/index.php>.

¹⁸ *Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)*, <https://cpj.org/data/people/ghulam-rasool-sheikh/>.

¹⁹ *Committee to Protect Journalists (CPJ)*, <https://cpj.org/data/people/javed-ahmed-mir/index.php>.

²⁰ Caleb Chen, "It's been over a Month Since the Indian Government Shut Down Internet Access in Jammu and Kashmir," August 10, 2016.

who were isolated by the prejudices of mainstream media, resorted to the use of social media to communicate with each other. This communication also included messages against the atrocities being committed by Indian forces in Kashmir and the illegal occupation of Kashmir by India.

Earlier, Indian military stationed in Kashmir robbed the state assembly elections of 1987, strictly controlling the information in and out from Kashmir. Radio Kashmir was used as the primary weapon for information management purposes. Radio Kashmir announced the results of assembly elections against the winning candidates of Muslim United Front (MUF). This was followed by the arrest of the MUF candidates and the counting agents directly from counting halls. The announcement of the results against the MUF was the time when the democratic and political struggle finally changed into an armed resistance within two years. This not only depleted Kashmiri confidence in Indian state institutions but also dashed any hopes of truthful coverage by Indian media. With the negative role being played by Indian media at the occasion and in the following years, a vacuum was created and the voice of Kashmiris remained suppressed. For next two and a half decades, the Kashmiris had only pamphlets, small journals and magazines to spread their message. However, this void was filled by the emergence of social media in Kashmir which proved to be oxygen for the victimized after the journalistic apartheid.

Thus, with the spread of 3G and 4G technologies, social media provided a platform for the provision of information to and from the IOK and filled the vacuum. This further contributed to the emergence of another wave of agitation against Indian occupation of Kashmir. Social media also provided the much-needed home-grown outlook to the Kashmiri struggle and effectively undermined Indian portrayal of the movement as being sponsored by Pakistan. As the youngsters are the primary users of social media, so it revolutionized the whole landscape of the society. To gauge the control of Indian army on the news coming out from Kashmir, one can refer to a report by Khalid Waseem written in the wake of floods in Kashmir. The report shows how mainstream Indian national media always propagates the Indian military's narrative on IOK and demeans freedom struggle of Kashmir.²¹ In these circumstances of extreme censorship and suppression of truth, social media becomes the only space available to bring out sentiments in the open. The content analysis of two major dailies of the Indian press carried out by Danish Nabi

<https://www.privateinternetaccess.com/blog/2016/08/month-since-indian-government-shut-internet-access-jammu-kashmir/>.

²¹ Waseem Khaild, "Media Propaganda and the Kashmir Dispute: A Case Study of the Kashmir Floods," *Reuters Institute for the Study of Journalism*, August 2016. <https://reutersinstitute.politics.ox.ac.uk>.

Gadda²² concludes that the Indian media ignores the voice of dissent in Kashmir and mostly favours Indian nationalistic narrative and official policy.

Aspirations of the common masses of IOK have been a victim of partial, distorted and controlled journalism by the self-proclaimed liberal press of India since 1947. Social media not only proved to be an alternative and filled the gap, but also brought the suffering of Kashmiris to the forefront. Thus, the popularity of social media increased multi-folds as an alternative to represent the aspirations of the majority. Social media gave a public face to those far-flung areas which were never covered by conventional media.

In view of the qualitative and quantitative analysis of media content published in India and abroad, it is concluded that Kashmiris are becoming increasingly dependent on social media because conventional media in IOK is marginalised while mainstream Indian media has been discredited. In 2016, there were 22 reported instances of internet shutdown in India that were mainly imposed to suppress the resistance movement in Kashmir.²³ Internet shutdowns in India occurred more than those in Syria, Turkey and Iraq. Social media has greatly influenced the Kashmir conflict and made people aware of the ground situation there. Social media is a game changer as it has brought about a paradigm shift in narrative about the Kashmir conflict because 'offline democracy' did not work. Choking social media hatches rumours and it has not helped the Indians while the mainstream media is highly discredited. Amnesty International too, in a report in 2016 expressed serious reservations over blockade of internet in Indian Occupied Kashmir.²⁴

Burhanisation of Social Media

As a picture speaks a thousand words, so did the images of atrocities committed by Indian forces in Kashmir when they were uploaded on social media. These images represented a scenario contrary to the one portrayed by the Indian media through edited pictures and manipulated information. Timing is also a decisive factor for the consumption of the content to affect a group's thinking. Social media

²² D. N. Gadda, " 'Partial Journalism'—A study of national media of India and Kashmir conflict," *Trends in Information Management*, March 2014. 10 (1) 13-23. https://www.researchgate.net/publication/280087371_'Partial_Journalism'-A_study_of_national_media_of_India_and_Kashmir_conflict.

²³ Devanik Saha, "India Faces Greatest Global Loss From Internet Shutdowns," October 26, 2016, <http://archive.indiaspend.com/cover-story/india-faces-greatest-global-loss-from-internet-shutdowns-93575>.

²⁴ *Amnesty International Report 2015/16*, https://www.amnesty.org.au/wp-content/uploads/2016/09/Amnesty_International_Australia_Report_2015_16.pdf.

helped its Kashmiri users to convey their message promptly as it is free from the barriers of gatekeeping and editing. Imaging and framing through social media is cheap, instant and readily available to freedom aspirant Kashmiris. The time constraint also does not provide room to edit the images before sharing on social media. It also made it possible for the content to reach to various viewers from remote areas where conventional media has little reach, or where access of conventional media has been deliberately choked or where the content had to pass through gate-keeping of regulatory authorities. The self-loaded images of 22 years old young, unmasked, smiling, Burhan Wani, on social media posing with a Kalashnikov has introduced a unique phenomenon in the resistance against India. It created a mass following of Burhan Wani on social media and most of those following him were young educated Kashmiris. It provided a boost to Kashmiris freedom movement.

The killing of freedom fighters by the Indian forces in disputed area is a routine practice in Kashmir, licensed by Armed Forces Special Powers Ac.²⁵ Indian troops in Kashmir use the sub-conventional operations tactics with an aim to neutralise all the opposing elements in the conflict zone that can transform the will and attitudes of the people.²⁶ However, the assassination of Burhan Wani gave birth to a mega cycle of locally-driven resistance. Images of his dead body shattered the conventional framing of Indian media and gave birth to a new phenomenon i.e. the interplay of images and sentiments called Burhanisation. Pictures of the bullet-ridden perforated body of Burhan Wani were uploaded on Facebook by villagers from the vicinity on the site of the targeted killing, creating a “magic bullet” effect among the social media users of Kashmir. Indian media, backed by the military establishment, geared all its resources to sell the routine cover-up stories to the Kashmiris, Indian civil society and the international community that the young man killed was a “wanted terrorist”, therefore his killing was justified. However, this time, the Kashmiris were not ready to accept any story broadcasted by mainstream Indian media and pro-freedom narrative widely prevailed. The message and ideology of Burhan Wani spread to the Kashmiri people through social media, who hailed him as a hero. Meanwhile, this Burhanisation made it difficult for Indian media to mislead Indian civil society and international community.

²⁵ Armed Forces Special Powers Act (AFSPA) that gives special powers to Indian Armed forces is applied in IoK since 1990, *Human Rights Watch*, 16th March 2015.

²⁶ “Alleged Perpetrators - Stories of Impunity in Jammu and Kashmir,” *International Peoples’ Tribunal for Human Rights and Justice in Indian-Administered Kashmir, and Association of Parents of Disappeared Persons*, December 2012. http://kashmirprocess.org/reports/alleged_Perpetrators.Pdf.

The routine manoeuvring and managing of content in occupied Kashmir by Indian mainstream media not only backfired after Wani's killing but worked as a catalyst to cement the sentiment of the masses resisting Indian rule. It also discredited the conventional Indian media and the mainstream leadership's efforts to de-escalate the situation. As a reaction, India choked the social media, cell phone services and local media and imposed curfew to control the damage done by the unjustified killing of Burhan Wani. Though Indian army has killed tens of thousands of people since 1989, but after the killing of Burhan Wani, the protests triggered a long cycle of resistance, which beats all records of previous shutter-down strikes and human and property losses. Kashmiri masses rejected Indian media's framing of Wani as a terrorist and made it clear that killing of freedom fighters can no more be justified by simply tagging them as 'terrorists'.

Burhanization of Kashmir struggle internationalised the Kashmir issue in favour of Kashmiris to utter disdain of India. Social media has now emerged as a vibrant tool in the Kashmir conflict in both the presence or absence of conventional media. Burhanization triggered mass mobilization against the Indian atrocities, though there were certain other factors too that contributed to the intensification of the resistance. These included the extreme right-wing politics of BJP government and its attempts to undermine article 370 of the Indian Constitution that gives special status to Jammu & Kashmir, the lethal use of force in post-Wani protests and economic decline of Kashmir.

Social Media: Catalyst for the Kashmiri Resistance

Social Media is a modern platform of communication and poses a mega challenge to some conventional theories about the role of print and electronic media during a conflict. Social media proved to be more reliable in the conflict ridden IOK. The authenticity of content being shared by the government controlled electronic media is challenged easily by the social media users. The state usually justifies the killings of its opponents by manipulating the media content so as to control the masses. Social media has emerged as a major actor both in presence and in absence of conventional media, and is used as an effective tool of communication. Killing of Burhan Wani, 'the poster boy of Kashmir struggle' created a unique impact. It has been observed that Facebook pictures uploaded by Burhan Wani constructed his soft image in the people even though he was posing with a Kalashnikov. When he was killed by the Indian army, the masses of Kashmir rejected every manipulation by India to tag him as a terrorist and justify his killing. The killing of Wani brought the masses out on the roads and to control the mob, the military killed more than 101 people, blinding another 550 by indiscriminate showering of pellets

through animal hunting guns. India locked down the social media and imposed curfew which continued for three months.

Burhan was educated young Kashmiri boy who was fond of using internet, social media through his cell phone. He was keen to use social media to fight against Indian occupation of Kashmir and never crossed over to Azad Jammu & Kashmir. Before the emergence of Burhan Wani and his use of social media, the Indian conventional media used to label indigenous Kashmiri freedom movement as Pakistan sponsored terrorism. This manipulation of facts was neutralized in the wake of Burhanisation of social media. This change has not only had a local impact but also a global one. Social media has emerged as a potent instrument of press as a two-sided persuasion tool. Anyone possessing a cell phone and having access to telecommunication networks can share one's messages in multimedia formats. The power of social media is its availability and accessibility to every individual, as conventional media does not have that level of outreach to remote areas.

The statement of Omar Abdullah²⁷ is an eye opener when he said, "Mark my words - Burhan's ability to recruit in to militancy from the grave far outstrips anything he could have done on social media". This statement of the ex-Chief minister accepts that the political system had failed and the youth was inclined towards antagonism. He confessed to the failure of Indian policies in Kashmir by saying, the killing of Burhan Wani had revived and legitimized the armed struggle. Similarly, the Lt. Gen of 15th Corps Satish Dua stationed in Srinagar says that 60 percent of the population of the valley is below 30 years of age and admits, "We have to ensure engagement with the youth. The youth is hypersensitive on social media. The youth is brave not to conceal their identity."²⁸ The Superintendent of Police of district Pulwama, the place where Burhan Wani's village is located, said, "The videos uploaded on Facebook have affected the psychology of youth. He is considered as a role model."²⁹ These confessions support the argument that social media has had an influence in presenting the real story of Kashmir to the world. Ironically, many hurdles have been put in place by Delhi such as blocking the internet and social media services to keep the outside world in the dark about the reality in Kashmir.

²⁷ Omar Abdullah is former Chief Minister of IoK and former Minister for State on External Affairs of India, twitter, July 9, 2016 @abdullah_omar.

²⁸ Harinder Baweja, "Kashmir's Disturbing New Reality", *Hindustan Times*, <https://www.hindustantimes.com/static/the-young-militants-of-kashmir/>.

²⁹ "Facebook for Search Burhan Wani", <https://goo.gl/b1K7Lo>.

Social Media and Kashmiri Sentiments

Indian government has been providing the legal cover to the killings by Indian army in Kashmir through various laws which are in conflict with global human right values. Thousands of young and educated Kashmiris have been killed in the name of terrorism since 1990. However, in case of Burhan Wani, Indian narrative was completely rejected by the Kashmiris and world at large. It gave a new outlook and lease of life to the Kashmir resistance. The images uploaded by Burhan Wani were available on his Facebook page and were overwhelmingly liked by the Kashmiri youth. His image was uploaded by 1,300 Facebook friends and shared by 83,892 ID's within three days after his killing and before the suspension of communication services by Indian establishment controlling Kashmir.³⁰ Facebook authorities blocked dozens of accounts, pages and posts carrying the image of Burhan Wani,³¹ apparently on the request of Indian army. The images shared by Burhan Wani penetrated the minds of youth who were emotionally connected and ideologically associated with him.

Social media eroded the agenda setting of mainstream Indian media therefore bringing the resistance at an all-time high despite lock-down of the Indian occupied Kashmir's mainstream media for three months. The impact of social media proved more potent than the conventional weapon Kalashnikov that was allegedly recovered from Burhani Wani by the Indian army (RR) contingent who raided his hide out at midnight and killed him on the spot. Social media in the conflict zone of IOK transcended the physical and psychological hurdles laid by powerful state controlled media and Indian military.

Indian military establishment failed to sustain its interpretation and to push Indian agenda on the psychological warfare front in IOK. Excessive use of force by Indian security forces backfired and triggered a mass resistance led by Kashmiri youth in IOK. Indian propaganda failed to portray Burhan Wani negatively and justify his murder which has had remained a general practice of the Indian war machine since 1990.

Breaking the Myth

Burhan Wani represents the fifth generation of Kashmiris but the first one to start using Facebook influencing the opinions, emotions, attitudes and behaviours of the Kashmiri people. A prompt impact of the use of Facebook after the killing of Wani was to challenge the findings of various theories of conventional media. The manipulation of Indian media to frame the freedom fighters as terrorists utterly failed to sell

³⁰ Compiled by Sheikh G Rasool, one of the author of this article.

³¹ The Guardian, Facebook Under Fire for 'Censoring' Kashmir-related Posts and Accounts, <https://www.theguardian.com/technology/2016/jul/19/facebook-under-fire-censoring-kashmir-posts-accounts>.

domestically or globally. The collapse of propaganda war machinery diluted other prominent negative projections created by Indian media, which include:

- Kashmir's freedom struggle is foreign sponsored rebellion
- Resistance doesn't enjoy the support of the masses
- Freedom camp voice is fractured
- Resistance leadership are not on the same page
- Kashmiris have accepted the Indian role after mass participation in assembly elections of 2013
- Elected candidates are representatives of the disputed state of Jammu and Kashmir
- Killing thousands of Kashmiris and use of military might have crushed the resistance
- People are tired and only a small percent of the masses are demanding the right to self-determination.

The Indian media failed to apply the tactic of propaganda warfare to further the efforts of political, economic and military actions. Innocent killings backfired in the shape of massive mass resistance against India. The death of Burhan Wani proved costlier for Indian establishment in suppressing the right to self-determination than armed Burhan Wani. Social media furthered the agenda of the masses of Kashmir more effectively than lethal weapons. Social media challenged the negative projections of the conventional media and turned out to be more credible in the given condition. The Indian civil society was evoked for the first time in favour of the right to self-determination and generated a debate on Kashmir at various forums, civil society organizations, Indian mainstream political parties and universities among which Jawahar Lal University (JNU) in New-Delhi played a vital role.

Social media is a force multiplier. Generally, a single Facebook ID can keep 5,000 people connected. It simply means that one can send a message and an image or both, with a single click to 5000 people at a time. It is a two-way means of persuasion as one can receive feedback, which was not possible in the realm of print or electronic media. One can choose, select and delete the persons of one's choice and remain connected with them round the clock. A person can tag a huge number of individuals at a time and the message can reach a multitude of people with a single click. The social networking platform has the capacity to reach an entire state population that has access to cell phone, with a mere click.

Conclusion

The multiplication of the message of resistance reached the masses of Kashmir through Burhan could not have predicted his social media

campaign working more after his death. The images uploaded by the masses reached the target, even the remote ones and gave birth to a new phenomenon i.e. the renewed sentiment which was dormant triggered after the killing by the Indian forces and gave birth to the longest cycle of the resistance. The circulation of his images multiplied after his death through social media neutralized the negative projections of the Indian state media during conflict. The internationalization of the issue was due to the images of those pellets, which were showered by occupational forces to halt Burhanisation with little success. Those images reached some sections of the Indian civil society and across the borders via conventional media of Pakistan.

Burhanisation has raised the level of resistance and sensitised but world community about the plight of the Kashmiris. Social media is an alternative means to raise one's voice more effectively than lethal weapons, but it needs the partnership of conventional media which can use the information of social media as primary content. Social media has significance in conflict zones but it is effective locally, until and unless it is not integrated with conventional media as an indigenous content. The mode and method of the resistance can be transformed accordingly in the era of globalization where borders cannot cease the flow of information.

Book Reviews

Title: **The Third Option for the South China Sea: The Political Economy of Regional Conflict and Cooperation**
Author: David Jay Green
Publisher: Palgrave Macmillan: Austin, USA, 2016, 138.

The book under review, “The Third Option for the South China Sea: The Political Economy of Regional Conflict and Cooperation” (2016) by David Jay Green, is a remarkable piece of literature that primarily addresses the behaviour of states in South China Sea area. Green a banker by profession and served, along with Arjun Thapan, in the Asian Development Bank for almost twenty years. It is obvious that due to his career in banking, he understands the monetary system and the importance of currency; however, it is hard for a banker to explicate the connection of economy with that of politics.

Green opens his book by introducing the South China Sea and the stakes of countries like Brunei, China, Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Taiwan and Vietnam in the South China Sea. The author takes an early position that all the parties involved primarily sought mineral and hydrocarbon resources that turned the sea into a military hotspot. The second chapter “Low-Level Simmering Disputes” mainly discusses little disputes in the South China Sea, including the building of naval assets and naval platforms in the region. The author discusses the role of Vietnam, Malaysia, China and Philippines and their respective aggressive behaviours. The third chapter “A Model from Game Theory” employs the perspective of economics drawing upon the author’s experience in the banking profession. Green discusses the ‘Chicken Dilemma’ faced by China in the following words: “*But I can't back down now because I pushed the other guys too far,*” (p. 30) which refers to political face-saving.

The fourth chapter “The Economic Context: Costs and Vulnerability to Conflict” sheds light on the cost of the conflict. Green asserts that the price of these conflicts in the South China Sea is beyond the perceptions of the policymakers and decision makers. The fifth chapter “Hypothetical Rewards, Resources in the South China Sea” argues that China and other parties are misperceiving the amounts of oil and gas reserves present in South China Sea. Green’s analysis is purely hypothetical since the estimates made by the Chinese and other parties surpass the estimates made by Green – fundamentally due to geopolitical and geostrategic grounds.

The sixth chapter, “Broader Issues in the West Pacific”, discusses the non-traditional threats to security in the Pacific region. Green talks about the spread of various diseases, piracy and natural disasters and directs criticism on the policies of countries lying in the Pacific region for not paying much attention to these threats. Green criticizes these states for neglecting these imperative security threats. The seventh chapter, “Regional Cooperation as the Third Option: A Modified Game”, explains the whole scenario through the lens

of 'Complex Interdependence' which may not work as China is engaged in strategic competition and is building aircraft carriers, its warships armed with electromagnetic rail-guns and the construction of airstrips in East and South China Sea. It can be seen that a coalition exists against China when it comes to South China Sea and in this situation cooperation seems nothing more than a fairy tale.

The eighth chapter "The Experiences of Existing Regional Cooperation Initiatives" talks about the regional organizations and institutions, which are intended to create cooperation among the countries involved in the South China Sea dispute. These include Brunei Darussalam-Indonesia-Malaysia-Philippines East ASEAN Growth Area (BIMP-EAGA), Greater Mekong Sub-region (GMS), Indonesia-Malaysia-Thailand Growth Triangle (IMT-GT), Pan-Beibu Gulf Economic Cooperation (PBG), and Singapore-Johor-Riau Growth Triangle/Indonesia-Malaysia- Singapore Growth Triangle (SIJORI/IMS-GT). Despite these organizations, the author acknowledges that tensions in the South China Sea are high. The ninth chapter, "South China Sea Regional Cooperation: A Tentative Exercise," provides eight possible options to move ahead in the South China Sea to minimize hostilities and political tensions. The eight recommendations, whose linchpin remains cooperation, are mostly based on idealism. Admittedly, the author, David Green, explains all the eight possible options and policy recommendations in a brief and precise manner; nevertheless, the ground realities are quite the contrary. Green's recommendations of using international and regional organizations as a means of creating cooperation is debatable, since Mearsheimer argued that states tend to use these organizations not for cooperative purposes but to increase, improve and even enhance their relative power position.

While concluding, David Green admits that the chances of hostile engagements and conflicts are high in the South China Sea, but the author adds that these can be contained. It can be said with confidence that the author took the liberal perspective while conceptualizing this topic. Green's idealism or probably utopian assertions regarding South China Sea might not work in the face of on political realities on ground and the current situation in the region is solid evidence to that effect.

Apart from the various strengths of the book, it has a number of weaknesses. Due to the author's banking profession, his emphasis remains largely on economics or perhaps geo-economics and he does not pay much attention to strategic implications of South China Sea conflict. It is one's understanding that the author does not discuss America's assertive and aggressive role in the areas contiguous to China under the pretext of Freedom of Navigation Operation (FONOP), flanked by Air-Sea Battle Doctrine or Joint Operational Access Concept (JOAC). China's actions are essentially reactionary and it is fearful of America and its allies in the region. Chinese anti-access and area denial (A2/AD) capabilities, with artificial and natural islands as military bases for power projection - the latter was referred to as "giant aircraft carriers" by Mearsheimer - are adding impetus to existing hostilities.

Geopolitics is now and has always been the driving force in international relations – ostensibly, Green missed this very notion in his analysis. Quite interestingly, what Green refers to as “small rocky outcroppings”, are perceived by Mearsheimer as “giant aircraft carriers” for power projection.

Green talks about the possible role of international organizations in relation to South China Sea; nevertheless, realists believe that international organizations are the instruments by which states increase, improve and sometimes maintain their relative power position in the international system. The author, perhaps due to his profession, is forgetting one basic thing that states do everything they can do to augment and retain their power and prestige in the international relations. Sometimes price and cost do not matter when it comes to power and prestige. It is pretty much understandable that states intend to pursue cooperation or move towards conflict in order to achieve their desired objectives. The history of the world is a witness to the fact that states are inherently rational and take calculated decisions based upon cost and benefit analysis. In the presence of advanced and sophisticated weapons and weapon delivery platforms on both sides, with new modes of warfare to paralyze the enemy using non-kinetic means of cyber and electronic– and most importantly, synergy-oriented war waging doctrines with clear intentions of a military response, it is hard to imagine peace. A hostile or at least stressful future is more probable.

Reviewed by Muhammad Ali Baig, M.Phil Scholar at the Department of IR, NDU, Islamabad.

Title: Counter Insurgency and Counter Terrorism: A Prism of Stabilization and Peace Building Efforts

Authors: Beenish Sultan and Gareth Boyd

Publisher: NDU Islamabad and British High Commission: Islamabad, 2017. 244.

The book evokes particular interest as a compilation of various intellectual accounts from Islamabad and London on the contemporary counter radicalization drive. It is a dedicated effort and a brilliant expose of the underlying issues by Beenish Sultan and Gareth Boyd. Book is one of the finest works brought out by the National Defence University, Islamabad and the intellectual wing of the Royal British Forces through the British mission in Islamabad. It is indeed an impressive addition in the politico-military literature in the contemporary arena and a reference book for researchers taking up more specialized studies in this field.

The researchers, Gareth Boyd and Beenish Sultan, have attained a high graph of engagement in research on the non-traditional challenges to social stabilization. Gareth Boyd is a Lieutenant Colonel in the Royal Regiment of Fusilier, having the exposure to security-specific studies in a variety of settings abroad. Beenish Sultan, a Research Associate at the Institute for Strategic Studies, Research and Analysis, has a wide-ranging expertise on strategic studies, both region-specific and related to the global commons.

The study is structured around three thematic referral points: the counterinsurgency and counterterrorism experiences of UK and Pakistan armies' the stabilization efforts of both in their respective settings' and the interconnected challenges such as the refugee crisis and border management from a politico-legal prism.

Theme one is critical in character, as it defines the concept of enemy for both the armies and illustrates the subsequent methods adopted to counter them. For the UK, the recent challenge was to fight a war in Afghanistan on a foreign land with a coalition of forces against a local enemy. However, it maintains a critical difference between classical COIN and stabilization operations. In the UK post-WWII COIN ops' of Malaya, Kenya and Cyprus are good examples, political primacy was acknowledged and which governance in place was based upon British colonial rule. In other words, these were not failed states. Interventions in the 21st century, from the Balkans to Iraq and Afghanistan were not the same. The UK was faced with an intervention where a political infrastructure did not exist in any form that could support development in citizen-state relations. Understanding the paradigm shift from post-colonial era COIN to interventions in failed states is hence paramount to understanding the differences between COIN and stabilization.

For Pakistan, the challenge was to win a 'crucial' war against militants and terrorist factions on its own soil alongside the brunt of a major war across the border in Afghanistan within the ambit of the 'Global War on Terror'. At the tactical level, Pakistan's struggle, on one hand was a kinetic endeavour to pacify 'militancy' generating violent opposition to the State through terrorism; while on the other hand, there was also an urgency to bring back the conflict-prone areas to normalcy. In other words, the aim was swiftly streamlining these two efforts for achieving successes in the overall 'counter-militancy cum terrorism' campaign under the ambit of sub-conventional warfare. Generally, the idea has rested on the notion of launching stabilization efforts sometimes even amid a military operation. Like in the New World Alliance (NWA), sequencing of operations was done as part of strategy, which included the clearing-up of periphery areas first and gradually moving towards the core; while as part of the stabilization efforts, capacity building of civilian institutions was the priority.

The second theme is reflective of stabilization efforts employed by both the UK and Pakistan armies in conflict-prone areas in their own settings. The UK approach to stabilization is show-cased via the NATO campaign in Kosovo from June 1999 and the UK's role within it, specifically from a military perspective. It illustrates that there are key differences between COIN and stabilization as two approaches to conflict resolution. It suggests that the military is but one element of the process and military action is not an end in itself. A military action can create a short-term period of security to enable other actors — be that political, humanitarian or judicial — to deliver results as part of an overall approach that is underpinned by the need for an enduring political settlement.

For Pakistan, each kinetic operation brought with it challenges, particularly for bringing an area, either densely populated or otherwise, to normalcy. Pakistan has managed to prevail because of deliberating upon the stabilization methods before the initiation of the kinetic operation, especially in South and North Waziristan. In this regard, the three most critical endeavours were: first, crafting the usually termed 'World's most dangerous place' into the 'safest place', through both kinetic operations and peace building efforts. Second, revitalizing the administrative setup of FATA by bringing back the law and order of political machinery — of which FATA reforms is a glaring example and reinstating the Temporarily Displaced People (TDPs) for which there is no precedent in the world. Third, the swift and extraordinary development in FATA.

The third main theme, discusses the issue of border management and refugee crisis in conflict prone areas, particularly through the legal and political prism. For Pakistan, managing the Pak-Afghan border is a complex phenomenon, given the nature of its terrain and the influx of Afghan refugees. Recently, Pakistan has started working on the plan to

fence up most of the frontier. However, the complexities that lie ahead with respect to movement across the border may not be denied. This is true because in the legal domain, intricacies of the Pak- Afghan border are immense. It is not as simple as people crossing border every day. Meanwhile, the issue of refugees remains on the forefront and their repatriation is questioned. As per international law, when the danger or instability in the country of origin minimizes, refugees are to be repatriated from the host country as its obligation ends. However, in the situation where the refugees prolong their stay and engage in economic ventures in the host state, then visa and immigration laws are applicable as they acquire the status of an economic migrant.

In addition, the management of the Pak-Afghan international border and reflections of the British army depicts complexity of the terrain that challenges surveillance, and a resource intensive politically complex scenario. In Northern Ireland, the continued presence of British Army in border areas was a cause of great resentment within the nationalist communities of the area. In the case of the Pak-Afghan border, the need for exploring technical solutions was felt, which would not totally replace the military, but reduce its number in the region. This is also where cross-border cooperation and trust-building in the local community becomes inevitable.

In our appraisal of the joint research work, we understand that while exposed to diverse experiences, the true states continue to learn from their diverse settings and thus refine their response to the challenges. No doubt; militancy, terrorism and insurgency have transgressed international borders. Similarly, lessons learnt in campaigns by individual states to confront these challenges and later on employment of stabilization efforts, also have an international character. Hence, in order to examine evolution establishment sustainable peace in a conflict-prone environment, we need to develop personal relationships. This is what the UK learnt in both its classic and recent COIN and stabilization efforts, and also what Pakistan inferred from its 'counter militancy cum terrorism' campaign alongside the stabilization processes.

To recall, the UK COIN doctrine has evolved over the past 70 years by considering varying intervening factors. It is a decades old doctrine with evolution in strategy and tactic through of various case studies including Malaya, Cyprus and most recently, Afghanistan. It has been learned that COIN and stabilization are two distinct yet intertwined processes. On the other hand, Pakistan's counter terrorism experiences are reflected in a war on its own soil, instigated by backlash of instability in the neighbourhood, particularly Afghanistan. As a result, the campaign initially established security centric approach with primacy of stabilization efforts focused on political well-being.

There is a noticeable difference between the British and Pakistani approaches to the matter at hand: Pakistan defines its on-going operations

as counter-terrorism/counter-militancy operations, an element of which is stabilization. The focus of these operations was, by their nature, military centred and aimed to eliminate elements of instability while concurrently providing space to stabilization; the challenge has been to ensure security simultaneously. Although now, with the FATA Reforms Package approved, there is clearly a political emphasis brought forward. On the other hand, both Malaya and Cyprus were ultimately successful examples of post WWII British COIN operations. Critical to each was the identification of the root causes of the insurgency and the means of addressing these politically. The military was needed throughout the campaigns to engender an environment through which the political end state could be achieved; ultimately, it was primarily the political and not the military means through which success was delivered. Perhaps the clearest example of this in British COIN history is Op BANNER in Northern Ireland.

Lastly, stabilization is indeed a means of establishing enduring legitimate political authority. Contrary to popular belief, it is not a series of activities with a set template. It is different from stability, which is a transitional process and is threatened by conflicting interests of various actors. At the local level, stabilization is a problem solving and community driven approach' embedded in a strategic context of the society. Hence, it should be dynamic and adaptive to expectations of the local populace.

Nonetheless, understanding such elements and defining them based on their intricacies is a considerable challenge in itself. Where one man's terrorist is another man's freedom fighter, bifurcations based on motives, means and methods adopted by such entities pose a serious question on their nature as a militant, insurgent or terrorist. Simultaneously, the issues of countering these entities, reducing their impact and restricting them from widely spreading their tentacles remain pertinent. The core issue is ensuring sustained stability which later on facilitates the stabilization efforts of a government and military in a conflict-prone area.

The way forward rests in understanding that it is our duty as countries engrossed in dealing with a menace that transgresses borders, to shun differences and build on the similarities. This research based publication is an illustration of how much room is available for joint, brainstorming on issues of critical nature to the peace and stability of not only individual countries, but also to the region and the globe at large and in that process we should not fear to fail but fear not to try again!

Reviewed by Ambassador (rtd) Arif Kamal based in Islamabad.

DOCUMENTS

Document: 1

President Donald J. Trump's Inaugural Address, January 20, 2017.

Washington, D.C.

Issued on: January 20, 2017

Chief Justice Roberts, President Carter, President Clinton, President Bush, President Obama, fellow Americans and people of the world, thank you.

We, the citizens of America, are now joined in a great national effort to rebuild our country and restore its promise for all of our people.

Together, we will determine the course of America and the world for many, many years to come. We will face challenges. We will confront hardships. But we will get the job done.

Every four years we gather on these steps to carry out the orderly and peaceful transfer of power.

And we are grateful to President Obama and first lady Michelle Obama for their gracious aid throughout this transition.

They have been magnificent.

Thank you.

Today's ceremony, however, has a very special meaning because today we are not merely transferring power from one administration to another or from one party to another, but we are transferring power from Washington, D.C., and giving it back to you, the people.

For too long, a small group in our nation's capital has reaped the rewards of government while the people have borne the cost. Washington flourished, but the people did not share in its wealth. Politicians prospered but the jobs left and the factories closed.

The establishment protected itself, but not the citizens of our country. Their victories have not been your victories. Their triumphs have not been your triumphs. And while they celebrated in our nation's capital, there was little to celebrate for struggling families all across our land.

That all changes starting right here and right now, because this moment is your moment.

It belongs to you.

It belongs to everyone gathered here today and everyone watching all across America.

This is your day.

This is your celebration.

And this, the United States of America, is your country.

What truly matters is not which party controls our government, but whether our government is controlled by the people.

January 20th, 2017, will be remembered as the day the people became the rulers of this nation again.

The forgotten men and women of our country will be forgotten no longer. Everyone is listening to you now. You came by the tens of millions to become part of a historic movement, the likes of which the world has never seen before.

At the center of this movement is a crucial conviction that a nation exists to serve its citizens. Americans want great schools for their children, safe neighborhoods for their families and good jobs for themselves.

These are just and reasonable demands of righteous people and a righteous public.

But for too many of our citizens, a different reality exists.

Mothers and children trapped in poverty in our inner cities, rusted out factories scattered like tombstones across the landscape of our nation.

An education system flush with cash but which leaves our young and beautiful students deprived of all knowledge.

And the crime and the gangs and the drugs that have stolen too many lives and robbed our country of so much unrealized potential. This American carnage stops right here and stops right now.

We are one nation, and their pain is our pain.

Their dreams are our dreams, and their success will be our success. We share one heart, one home and one glorious destiny.

The oath of office I take today is an oath of allegiance to all Americans.

For many decades we've enriched foreign industry at the expense of American industry, subsidized the armies of other countries while allowing for the very sad depletion of our military.

We've defended other nations' borders while refusing to defend our own. And we've spent trillions and trillions of dollars overseas while America's infrastructure has fallen into disrepair and decay.

We've made other countries rich while the wealth, strength and confidence of our country has dissipated over the horizon.

One by one, the factories shuttered and left our shores with not even a thought about the millions and millions of American workers that were left behind.

The wealth of our middle class has been ripped from their homes and then redistributed all across the world. But that is the past, and now we are looking only to the future.

We assembled here today are issuing a new decree to be heard in every city, in every foreign capital and in every hall of power. From this day forward, a new vision will govern our land.

From this day forward, it's going to be only America first, America first. Every decision on trade, on taxes, on immigration, on foreign affairs will be made to benefit American workers and American families. We must protect our borders from the ravages of other countries making our product, stealing our companies and destroying our jobs.

Protection will lead to great prosperity and strength. I will fight for you with every breath in my body, and I will never ever let you down.

America will start winning again, winning like never before.

We will bring back our jobs.

We will bring back our borders.

We will bring back our wealth, and we will bring back our dreams.

We will build new roads and highways and bridges and airports and tunnels and railways all across our wonderful nation.

We will get our people off of welfare and back to work, rebuilding our country with American hands and American labor.

We will follow two simple rules: Buy American and hire American.

We will seek friendship and goodwill with the nations of the world, but we do so with the understanding that it is the right of all nations to put their own interests first.

We do not seek to impose our way of life on anyone, but rather to let it shine as an example.

We will shine for everyone to follow.

We will re-enforce old alliances and form new ones and unite the civilized world against radical Islamic terrorism, which we will eradicate completely from the face of the earth.

At the bedrock of our politics will be a total allegiance to the United States of America, and through our loyalty to our country we will rediscover our loyalty to each other.

When you open your heart to patriotism, there is no room for prejudice.

The Bible tells us how good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity. We must speak our minds openly, debate our disagreements honestly, but always pursue solidarity. When America is united, America is totally unstoppable. There should be no fear. We are protected and we will always be protected. We will be protected by the great men and women of our military and law enforcement. And most importantly, we will be protected by God.

Finally, we must think big and dream even bigger. In America, we understand that a nation is only living as long as it is striving. We will no longer accept politicians who are all talk and no action, constantly complaining but never doing anything about it.

The time for empty talk is over. Now arrives the hour of action.

Do not allow anyone to tell you that it cannot be done. No challenge can match the heart and fight and spirit of America. We will not fail. Our country will thrive and prosper again.

We stand at the birth of a new millennium, ready to unlock the mysteries of space, to free the earth from the miseries of disease, and to harness the energies, industries and technologies of tomorrow.

A new national pride will stir ourselves, lift our sights and heal our divisions. It's time to remember that old wisdom our soldiers will never

forget, that whether we are black or brown or white, we all bleed the same red blood of patriots.

We all enjoy the same glorious freedoms and we all salute the same great American flag.

And whether a child is born in the urban sprawl of Detroit or the windswept plains of Nebraska, they look up at the same night sky, they fill their heart with the same dreams and they are infused with the breath of life by the same almighty creator.

So to all Americans in every city near and far, small and large, from mountain to mountain, from ocean to ocean, hear these words: You will never be ignored again. Your voice, your hopes and your dreams will define our American destiny. And your courage and goodness and love will forever guide us along the way.

Together we will make America strong again, we will make America wealthy again, we will make America proud again, we will make America safe again.

And, yes, together we will make America great again.

Thank you.

God bless you.

And God bless America."

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefings-statements/the-inaugural-address/>

Document: 2**Foreign Minister Sergey Lavrov's Address at the 53rd Munich Security Conference, February 18, 2017.**

Ladies and gentlemen,

Ten years ago, President of Russia Vladimir Putin addressed this conference with a speech that many in the West saw as a challenge and even a threat, although what his message emphasised above all was the need to renounce unilateral action in favour of honest cooperation based on mutual respect, international law, joint assessment of global problems and collective decision-making. Unfortunately, the warnings he sounded then about the negative consequences of attempting to obstruct the emergence of a multipolar world have become reality.

Humanity stands at a crossroads today. The historic era that could be called the post-Cold War order has come to an end. Its main result, as we see it, was the complete failure of the Cold War institutions to adapt to new realities. The world has become neither 'Western-centric', nor a safer and more stable place. This is evident in the results of 'democratisation' in the Middle East and North Africa, and in other places too.

NATO expansion has created a level of tension in Europe unseen in the last thirty years. Yet this year marks the 20th anniversary of the signing of the Russia-NATO Founding Act in Paris, and 15 years since the Rome Declaration on a new quality of Russia-NATO relations was adopted. These documents' basic premise was that Russia and the West took on a joint commitment to guarantee security on the basis of respect for each other's interests, to strengthen mutual trust, prevent a Euro-Atlantic split and erase dividing lines. This did not happen, above all because NATO remained a Cold War institution. It is said that wars start in people's heads, but according to this logic, it is also in people's heads that they should end. This is not the case yet with the Cold War. Some statements by politicians in Europe and the United States seem to confirm this particularly clearly, including statements made here yesterday and today during this conference.

I mentioned NATO expansion just now. We categorically reject the allegations of those who accuse Russia and the new centres of global influence of attempting to undermine the so-called 'liberal world order'. This global model was pre-programmed for crisis right from the time when this vision of economic and political globalisation was conceived primarily as an instrument for ensuring the growth of an elite club of countries and its domination over everyone else. It is clear that such a system could not last forever. Leaders with a sense of responsibility must now make their choice. I hope that this choice will be made in favour of building a democratic and fair world order, a post-West world order, if you will, in which each country develops its own sovereignty within the

framework of international law, and will strive to balance their own national interests with those of their partners, with respect for each country's cultural, historical and civilisational identity.

Russia has never hidden its views, and has always been sincere in advocating work based on equal footing in order to create a common space of security, good-neighbourliness and development from Vancouver to Vladivostok. The tensions of recent years between North America, Europe and Russia are unnatural; I would even say they go against nature.

Russia is a Eurasian state with a variety of cultures and ethnicities. Predictability and goodwill in relations with all countries, primarily, its neighbours, have always been inherent to our policies. This line of thinking underlies our close work within the CIS, the Eurasian Economic Union, the CSTO, the SCO, and BRICS.

Good-neighbourliness and mutual benefits underlie our relations with Europe as well. We are part of the same continent, we wrote our history together, and we were successful when we worked hand-in-hand to achieve prosperity for our peoples.

Many millions of Soviet people gave up their lives for the freedom of Europe. We want to see Europe strong, independent in international affairs and taking good care of our common past and future, while staying open to the world around it. We are appalled by the fact that the EU is unable to muster enough strength and give up its Russian policy based on the least denominator principle where fundamental and pragmatic interests of its member states are being sacrificed to Russophobic speculations out of sheer "solidarity." We look forward to seeing common sense take the upper hand.

What kind of relationship do we want to establish with the United States? We want relations based on pragmatism, mutual respect, and understanding of our special responsibility for global stability. Our two countries have never been in direct confrontation with each other. Our history is steeped in friendliness more than confrontation. Russia did a lot to support the independence of the United States as it proceeded to become a united powerful state. Constructive Russia-US relations are in our common interest. Moreover, America is our close neighbour, just like the European Union. We are divided by just 4 km of the Bering Strait. The potential of our cooperation in politics, the economy, and the humanitarian sphere is enormous. But, of course, it has to be tapped. We are willing to go ahead and do so inasmuch as the United States is prepared to do so on its part.

Today there is no shortage in evaluations of the genesis of global challenges such as terrorism, drug trafficking, or the crises that engulfed territories from Libya to Afghanistan, leaving countries such as Syria, Iraq, Libya and Yemen bleeding. Certainly, the Munich debate will provide an opportunity to review in detail all these issues, as well as the continuing

conflicts in Europe. Most importantly, a settlement cannot be achieved by military means.

This fully applies to the internal Ukrainian conflict. There's no alternative to complying with the Minsk Package of Measures through a direct dialogue between Kiev, Donetsk and Lugansk. This is a firm position adopted by Russia, the West and the UN Security Council. Importantly, the Kiev authorities should embark on that path and honour their obligations.

Today, more than ever, we need a dialogue on all complex issues in order to find mutually acceptable compromises. Actions based on confrontation and the zero-sum-game approach will not cut any ice. Russia is not looking for conflicts with anyone, but it will always be in a position to uphold its interests.

Our absolute priority is to use dialogue to achieve our goals and mutually beneficial consensus. It is appropriate to quote a directive which Chancellor Gorchakov, back in the times of imperial Russia, sent to Russian Envoy in the United States Eduard von Stoeckle in July 1861: "there are no such divergent interests that cannot be reconciled through zealous and hard work ... in the spirit of fairness and moderation."

If everyone could subscribe to such an approach, we'd be able to quickly overcome the post-truth period, to reject hysterical information wars imposed on the international community and to proceed to keep up the honest work without being distracted by lies and falsehoods. Let this be a post-fake era.

Thank you.

Question: I have a concrete question about military exercises. Why are Russian military exercises held without prior announcement, and why are they so non-transparent? This year you will hold the largest Zapad (West) exercises in 20 years, which have alarmed your neighbours. What should be done to build up confidence regarding this issue?

Sergey Lavrov: As you know, Russia-NATO relations and the Russia-NATO Council have been suspended at the bloc's initiative, although after the 2008 Caucasus crisis our American colleagues, including then US Secretary of State Condoleezza Rice, admitted that the suspension of the Russia-NATO Council was a mistake and that it should be more active especially in times of trouble. However, they continue to step on the same rake. NATO has decided to suspend all practical contacts with Russia, as NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told me yesterday. He said they would maintain contact at the level of ambassadors at the Russia-NATO Council and between himself and me, but that they had curtailed all practical contacts.

At some stage, Sauli Niinisto, the President of Finland which is not a NATO member, expressed concern that not just Russian aircraft but also the planes of NATO states fly over the Baltic with their transponders switched off. He mentioned his concern at a meeting with President Putin

during his visit to Russia. Following that, President Putin instructed the Russian military to prepare proposals to settle the issues of transponders and aviation security over the Baltic. Our military experts brought detailed proposals to Brussels in July 2016, when the Russia-NATO Council held a meeting there. We believed that these concrete proposals would prompt a response, and that experts would get together to coordinate security enhancement methods. This did not happen. We still cannot start working on this issue. NATO Secretary General Jens Stoltenberg told me yesterday that an expert meeting might hopefully convene in March. It is taking too long, of course, but we are not to blame for the delay.

He also mentioned the issue of military exercises yesterday and expressed satisfaction that the Russian military held a briefing on the exercises held last autumn. He also expressed hope that special briefings would be held on the exercises we plan for this year.

As for the surprise factor, I am not a military man, but I know that military attachés working in Moscow, including from NATO countries, are invited to such military exercises. But the best answer to this question, as I told Mr Stoltenberg yesterday, is that we should resume military cooperation to remove all these concerns and suspicions. The NATO Secretary General, who was accompanied by his deputies, could not say that NATO is ready to do this, which is a pity, because without military cooperation our diplomats' meetings will be of little importance for security issues.

As for our relations with NATO, we proposed resuming them long ago. Instead of accusing each other and discussing and implementing plans to deploy NATO combat capabilities on the border with Russia for the first time in a decade, we should sit down to discuss the situation. We proposed looking at the maps to see how many weapons and military personnel NATO and Russia have, and where. After we collect this data, we will be able to gauge the real measures of military security in Europe. And then we will be able to use this information to consider arms control agreements and additional security measures.

Once again, it was not Russia who suspended practical cooperation in the framework of the Russia-NATO Council.

Question: Russia has submitted the first three provisions of Minsk-2 for discussion by the UN Security Council: the cease-fire, the withdrawal of heavy weapons and admission of the OSCE observers to all the Ukrainian regions. Why doesn't Russia find it possible to meet these obligations and thereby send a message about an increased level of confidence and improved overall situation?

Closer to the end of your remarks, you mentioned the post-fake era. Russia's interference in the US election campaign was mentioned while it was underway. An election campaign is underway in France, and one of the candidates complained of Russia's interference as well. French

President Hollande even convened an extraordinary meeting of the Security Council to discuss this.

Sergey Lavrov: Regarding your first question, I'm pleased that you are familiar with the Minsk agreements, though it's a pity you didn't read them to the end, apparently. Indeed, the first item is the withdrawal of heavy weapons, but then it says that on the 30th day after the start of such withdrawal, which began in April 2014, the Kiev authorities will prepare a draft law on elections and begin consultations thereon with Donetsk and Lugansk. You can ask all kinds of questions about the timeframe of a particular item in the Minsk arrangements - they don't always offer fixed dates. However, this date is specified and it's 30 days. The withdrawal has begun. The beginning of consultations with Donetsk and Lugansk did not hinge on the completion of this process. As you may be aware, a lot has changed since then: the weapons were first withdrawn and then disappeared from the warehouses. The OSCE Special Monitoring Mission, which worked in very difficult conditions - and whose work we highly appreciate and hope that the mission will represent more OSCE members, not just NATO and EU member countries - repeatedly noted violations on both sides with regard to the ceasefire, and the presence of heavy weapons in the security zone. However, the Ukrainian armed forces have always been the champion when it came to heavy weapons missing from warehouses. Again, other kinds of violations happen on both sides.

There have been repeated accusations (interviews with several Ukrainian political pundits have been published recently) that President Putin uses women and children in Donbass as human shields and tries to convince the Ukrainians living to the left of the contact line that people in Donbass hate them, while people in Donbass are being told that the Ukrainian government wants to destroy them. These arguments are false and hold no water. They also wrote that Donbass self-defense forces and unnamed Russian troops shell Donetsk in order to blame everything on Ukraine.

Getting back to your question, I have many times mentioned how to make a ceasefire stick. No matter what you think about the Russian media, we can see our reporters doing their jobs along the contact line in Donetsk and Lugansk on a daily basis. They run their stories live showing us destroyed residential areas and social infrastructure buildings, including children's homes, schools, outpatient clinics, and civilian casualties. I became interested in what's happening to the west of the contact line and started watching CNN, Fox News, Euronews, and BBC. I haven't seen anything like that done by Western reporters on the western side of the contact line. They don't run live reports, which our reporters do, risking their lives and getting wounded and even killed in the process. I asked my Western colleagues whether Western reporters are instructed to stay away from the other side of the contact line for security reasons. There's no answer. Then we asked the OSCE SMM to focus, in their reports,

on the destruction of civilian infrastructure to the left and to the right of the contact line. So far, we haven't received exhaustive information. This may give an idea of why Western reporters, who are so bent on bringing the truth about the events in Ukraine to the world, do not show what's happening in the areas to the west of the contact line, which are controlled by the armed forces of Ukraine. Are they discouraged from going there for safety reasons or are they doing some self-censorship? I would like to figure that out.

Our stats show that there are many times more destroyed social infrastructure buildings on the side controlled by Donbass as compared with the situation on the left side of the contact line. In most cases, fire is aimed at the positions controlled by the Ukrainian armed forces. Nonetheless, some members of the media make it into the war zone.

Not long ago, I saw a report by the Washington office of the International Institute for Strategic Studies and Washington Post articles by journalists who have been on the line of contact. They wrote that volunteer battalions are the ones provoking violence in Donbass. These forces do not obey anyone, they do not take orders from Ukraine's Armed Forces and act solely at their own discretion. The journalists wrote that thousands of ultra-nationalists from the Right Sector are fighting there and are not controlled by Kiev in any way whatsoever. The reporters concluded that Kiev may be interested in armed and angry radicals staying on the line of contact in Donbass instead of staging another Maidan uprising in the capital. These articles also mentioned neo-Nazi foreigners who are fighting in Donbass, while others tend to turn a blind eye to their presence there.

We discuss these issues in the Normandy format. Today, a meeting of French, German, Ukrainian and Russian foreign ministers will take place. The question remains: why is there so little information about what is going on to the west of the line of contact? It is key to answering your question about why so little progress has been achieved in terms of security. However, making progress on security issues is not a goal in itself. Our common aim is to ensure full implementation of the Minsk agreements that provide for security on the line of contact (and I mentioned why it has not been achieved so far), constitutional reform to introduce a constitutional provision on the special status, amnesty for all who took part in hostilities in Donbass (just as all those who took part in what happened during Maidan uprisings benefited from amnesty), and the holding of elections. Under the Minsk agreements, the Ukrainian government can restore full control of the border with the Russian Federation only when these provisions are implemented. As I have already said, we are not there yet.

As for what our European partners are saying regarding sanctions, I have already commented on the illogical and artificial nature of the formula whereby the EU lifts sanctions once Russia implements the Minsk

agreements. Russia also wants the Minsk agreements to be implemented, and will not lift its sanctions against the European Union until the Minsk agreements are implemented. There has to be clarity on this issue. Paris, Berlin and hopefully Washington and other capitals, including NATO headquarters, know all too well what is really happening in Ukraine and why the Minsk agreements are not working properly. But they are unable to recognise it in public due to a distorted sense of solidarity with those who decided to bring freedom and European values to Ukraine. When our good friend, the EU High Representative for Foreign Affairs and Security Federica Mogherini says that sanctions are a tool for ensuring implementation of the second Minsk agreements, I see this as a way to use sanctions for regulating the crisis in Ukraine, since sanctions unambiguously shift the blame on Russia. As Federica Mogherini said, maybe it was a Freudian slip, 'We will wait until Russia concedes and departs from Minsk-2 by undertaking something unilaterally and forcing Donbass fighters to take unilateral action.' The hidden message behind this position is that there is no need to work with Kiev, Kiev is doing everything right. That said, I strongly believe that the key capitals know the truth. I do hope that they send signals to this effect to the Ukrainian government during their contacts, if not publicly. Not only do I hope but I know that this is the case. It is hard to tell whether these signals come across.

Regarding the second question, on Russia's alleged interference in election campaigns and other events in countries abroad, if you recall, when Donald Trump said that the election was not very honest and that the Democrats got votes from 'dead souls', the Democratic Party demanded to see the facts, but for some reason, when it comes to us, no one demands to see the facts. I have not seen any evidence regarding our alleged hacking of Democratic Party sites, or of whatever we are alleged to have done in France, Germany or Italy. We know that there were facts several years ago in Germany, when the eavesdropping on the entire German senior leadership was revealed. Leaks emerged a few days ago, suggesting that the CIA engaged in cyber-espionage throughout the entirety of France's 2012 presidential race. A CIA representative told a journalist today that he had no comment on this subject. But my good friend, French Foreign Minister Jean-Marc Ayrault, speaking in parliament after the information came out about suspicions that the CIA had meddled in the 2012 election (though, as I understand it, there are not just suspicions but also concrete facts), said that they oppose all cyber-espionage, no matter whether it comes from Russia or any other country. Modesty is always a fine thing, of course, but in this case, once again, I ask to see the evidence.

Let me remind you that Russia was the first country to initiate work in the UN many years ago on coordinating our positions on international information and cyber-security. Our Western partners

evaded tackling these issues for a very long time. Finally, a couple of years ago, we adopted a resolution by consensus and a group of government experts was established, which produced a good report, which formed the foundation for a new resolution. Another expert group has been set up and will continue working on this matter now. We proposed long ago that our colleagues work more actively on the professional, technical and technology aspects of cyber-security issues. When the USA, during Barack Obama's presidency, started hunting down our citizens in violation of the agreement our countries have, and did not inform us that they were catching these people on suspicion that they were involved in cybercrime, we proposed that both sides sit down together and settle all these issues. We have absolutely no desire to see our citizens involved in these illegal cyber activities. In November 2015, we proposed to the Obama administration that we meet and begin bilateral work on cyber-espionage, cyber-security and other cyber-related areas. A year went by without a response, even though I mentioned the matter to John Kerry every time we met. In the end, they proposed meeting in December 2016, but then said that everything would have to be postponed because of the new administration coming in.

Federal Chancellor Angela Merkel, when she spoke about cyber-security today, put forward the interesting idea that the Russia-NATO Council should address this issue. Let me return to my answer to the first question. We always wanted to see the Russia-NATO Council work on real substantive issues. We were not the ones who broke off practical cooperation. If the Federal Chancellor of Germany, one of the main NATO member countries, wants the Russia-NATO Council to work on cyber-security, we see this as a signal that Berlin, at least, wants the Russia-NATO Council to resume real work and not just limit itself to discussions.

http://www.mid.ru/en/press_service/minister_speeches/-/asset_publisher/7OvQR5KJWVmR/content/id/2648249

Document: 3**Prime Minister Modi's Address to the Nation from the ramparts of Red Fort on 70th Independence Day**

15 August 2016

My beloved countrymen, on this auspicious occasion of our festival of freedom; I extend lots of greetings to the one hundred and twenty five crores fellow nationals and also to entire Indian diaspora spread all over the world, from this rampart of the Red Fort. This festival of our freedom, these 70 years of our Independence, is the festival for our resolution to take the nation to new heights with a new resolve and a new fervour and new energy. We are able to breathe in a free air as the result of the sacrifices, renunciation and penance of our millions of great forefathers. We are also reminded of the youths who kissed the gallows. We also remember Mahatma Gandhi, Sardar Patel, Pandit Nehru and countless great persons, who fought ceaselessly for the freedom of our nation. It is the result of their struggles that we are now fortunate enough to breathe as a free citizen. India is a very ancient nation. We have a history of thousands of years and our cultural heritage is also millennia old. Right from the Vedas to Vivekananda, from the Upanishads to the satellites, the Sudarshan Chakradhari Mohan to Charkhadhari Mohan, from the Bhim of Mahabharat to the Bhimrao; we have a long historical journey and heritage. Our land has seen many historical ups and downs and our generations have waged many struggles and observed penance to bequeath great values to the humanity. India's age is not just seventy years. But having won freedom after a period of subjugation; we have made efforts to take the nation forward in this journey of seventy years. Sardar Vallabh Bhai Patel united the nation. Now, it is the responsibility of all of us to make this nation better. We all have to work ceaselessly for the realization of the dream of 'One India, great India'. (Ek Bharat, Shreshtha Bharat).

Brothers and Sisters, We have not attained freedom for free of cost. Innumerable were the atrocities, but undeterred were our resolves also. Every Indian was a soldier in the battle for freedom. Each one of them dreamt of an independent India. May be every one of them was not fortunate enough to sacrifice, may be each of them was not fortunate enough to go to prison; but every Indian had a resolve and the leadership of Mahatma ji and also the inspiration of countless revolutionaries who had sacrificed everything. All these movements contributed to our attainment of Independence. But, now we have to convert this freedom into 'the real freedom'. Now, this is the resolve of the one hundred and twenty five crores of Indians. So, just as we did not attain our freedom without sacrifices; we would not be able to attain 'the real freedom' without renunciation, without human endeavour (Purusharth), without

bravery, without dedication and discipline. So, in order to take ahead this resolution of one hundred and twenty five crore Indians; all of us will have to move ahead with our specific responsibilities in a most committed manner. Be it a Panchayat or the Parliament, be it a village headman or the Prime minister; every one of us as well as every democratic institution will have to shoulder their responsibilities completely and perfectly. Only then we will be able to realize the dream of our the real freedom as soon as possible. This is correct to say that our nation is beset with many problems now- a- days. But, we should never forget that if we have the problems, then we also have all the capacities to solve them. So, if we move ahead with all our capabilities, we will find the ways and mean to solve all these problems. So, brothers and Sisters, if we have lakhs of problems, then we also have one hundred and twenty five crore brains also which are all capable to solve these problems.

Dear Brothers & Sisters, there was a time when Government used to be surrounded by aspersions. But now time has changed. At present, no aspersions are being levelled on the Government. Rather, people have great expectations from it. When the Government is engulfed in expectations then it signifies hope and trust, which in turn generates those expectations. Expectations give pace towards good governance, invigorates and so the pledges are implemented ad continuum. My Brothers & Sisters, today when I am addressing you from the rampart of the Red Fort, it is, therefore, but natural that we should discuss the journey of good governance, the work done by the Government and work being done and should be done for the country. I can present before you a very detailed account of work done and also multiple issues regarding the performance of the Government. During the tenure of two years, the Government has taken innumerable initiatives and multiple tasks have been done. If I start giving details about them, I am afraid I will have to talk about it for a week from this very rampart of the Red Fort. So instead of that temptation, I would like to draw your attention towards the work culture of the Government. Sometimes, it is easier to present the account of work done. But, it is not easy for a common man to comprehend, understand and identify the work culture without dwelling deep into the work culture. My Brothers & Sisters, My Countrymen, I would not talk solely about the policy, but also the intention and decisions of the Government.

Dear brothers & sisters, it is just not an issue of direction and outline, rather it is about holistic approach and a resolve for transformation. It is confluence of trinity of expectation of people, democracy and support of people. It is both wisdom and consent. It is also pace and realisation of progress. Therefore, My Countrymen, when I talk about the Good Governance, it does imply bringing in transformation in the life of common man of my country. Good governance means that the government should be sensitive, responsive and dedicated to the common

man. Then only good governance gets the emphasis. Responsibility and accountability should be at the root of it and it should draw its vital energy from there only for the government to be sensitive, dear Brothers and Sisters. We remember the days when there used to be a very long wait to go to any big hospital. People used to come to AIIMS, spend two three days and then only it would be decided what diagnostic tests were to be done. Now we have been able to change this system. Registration is done online and the doctor's appointment is also given online. The processes start on arrival of the patient at the appointed hour itself. Not only this but all his medical records are also available online. And we wish to develop it as a countywide culture in the field of medical treatment. Today this system has been put in place in 40 big hospitals of the country. Its basic premise is that the government has to be sensitive.

Dear brothers and sisters, the government should be accountable. If it be not so then the problems of the common man are kept pending for solutions. How does the change come? Now technology is there, but there was a time when the railway ticket in the railways, concerning the common man and the poor was available only two thousand tickets per minute. Those who might have seen it, would know how the buffering used to be there, nobody knew when the website would be operational again, but today I have to say with satisfaction that now it is possible to have fifteen thousand tickets per minute. The government should be accountable, it should take steps according to the necessities and expectations of the people. There is a class across the country, particularly the middle class, higher middle class whom you see troubled more at the hands of the income tax officials rather than the police at times. I have to change the situation and I am trying and I will certainly change it.

There was a time when a common and honest citizen used to give two rupees extra as a measure of caution at the time of paying his income tax. He used to think that he might not be harassed, but once the money was deposited to the government exchequer, he had to run from pillar to post and seek recommendations for getting the refund. It took months together before the rightful money of the citizen was returned to him from the government exchequer. Today, we have made a system of issuing online refund. Today, refunds are given in one, two say or three weeks. Those who are hearing me today on TV, they would also be realising that they had not given any application, yet they had got refund directly into their account. So, this responsibility and accountability are the results of these efforts.

It is equally important to lay emphasis on the transparency for good governance. You know that a global relationship has already started to become a common thing in the society today. A middle class man wants to have his passport- there was a time when about 40 lakh, 50lakh applications were received for getting passport. Today, approximately 2 crore people apply for the passport. Brothers and Sisters, earlier 4-6

months were taken for scrutiny of applications if one did not have recommendations. We changed that situation and today, I can say with pride that passports are issued to the citizens with all genuine details, in about one or two weeks and there is transparency no recommendation is required and there is no dilly-dallying. Today, I can say, we have issued 1.75 crores passports (in 2015-16 itself.)

In Surajya there must be efficiency in governance and therefore, earlier, if a company had to set up a factory or desiring to do business in our country, applications were submitted. There was a task of registration only, one wanted to do something for the country, but almost 6 months passed in normal course. Brothers and Sisters, if efficiency is brought, then the same government, same rules, same officials have got geared up to perform the same task of company registration within 24 hours and they are virtually doing it. In the last July itself, they performed the task of more than 900 such registrations.

Brothers and Sisters, good governance is also necessary for Surajya and the steps we have taken towards this good governance are that, as I had said last year from the Red Fort that we would exempt group 'C' and group 'D' posts from interviews, they might get job on the basis of merit. We have detected almost 9,000 posts for which thousands and lakhs of people need to be recruited. Now, there would not be any interview process for these 9,000 posts, my young men would not need to spend any money for interviews. Recommendations would not be needed, roads for corruption and agents will be shut and this work has been implemented.

Brothers and Sisters, there was a time when a common man got satisfied if the government announced any plan or merely announced that this would be done, he used to think that something concrete would happen now. Then, a time came when people asked for the plan unless the drawing of the plan came. Then, there was a time when people asked for the budget. Today, the mood of the country has changed in 70 years. It does not get satisfied with the announcement, it is not satisfied by seeing the plan, if a budget provision is made, it is not ready to accept this. It is accepted when things get implemented on ground and we cannot bring things on ground with the old pace. We have to speed up our work, increase the pace further and then we can say that we have done something.

Rural roads are a perpetual issue in our country. Each rural citizen craves for pakka roads. It's a huge task. Atal Bihari Vajpayee Ji took this task specifically. Even succeeding governments continued this and the work continued. We have made efforts to fast track it. Earlier 70-75 Km of rural roads were completed in a day. Now we have increased that pace up to 100KM a day. This pace will fulfil the aspirations of common man in the days to come.

We have aid emphasis on energy, specifically renewable energy in our country. That was a time, when after so many years of independence,

we started working on wind energy. Within a period of last one year, we have increased it up to 40%. So, this is the scale of up acceleration. Whole world is focussing on solar energy. We have increased it approximately 116%-118%. This is not only a substantial incremental change; it's a huge leap forward. We intend to enhance the things in quantum way.

In our country, even before forming of our government, we had the power production. But to reach the power, you need transmission lines and the good transmission infrastructure. Two years preceding the formation of our government, 30-35 thousand kilometres of transmission lines were being laid annually. Today I wish to submit this with satisfaction that we have raised this to 50,000 Kilometres. So we have increased the pace here. If we take the commissioning of railway lines in previous 10 years, where commissioning means capacity to ply the trains and to finish all the trials, so earlier it was at the rate of 1500 kilometre in 10 years . But we have made it up to 3500 kilometre in last 2 years. We are to increase this pace even further.

Brothers and sisters, now we are connecting government schemes to Aadhaar Card, focussing on stopping the leakages through direct benefit transfer. Previous government had connected four crore people to government schemes via Aadhaar Card. Today I can say this with satisfaction that in place of that work of four crore, we have completed the task of connecting 70 crore people to government schemes via Aadhaar card. The remaining will also be taken into the fold.

Today, for middle class or for common people the ownership of a car is a matter of pride. There was a time when gas stove at home was deemed as a standard and as a symbol of social status. During the last 60 years of independence, 14 crore LPG gas connections were given. Brothers and Sisters, it is a great satisfaction to me that on one side, 14 crore gas connections were given in 60 years, while on the other side, we have given 4 crore gas connections in just 60 weeks. Please compare the two figures – 14 crore in 60 years and 4 crore in 60 weeks. This is the speed, by which a change has become possible in the quality of life of common men. We have also started the task of eradicating obsolete laws. The burden of unnecessary laws has been creating hindrance in the functioning of the government, the judiciary and the public. We have identified 1700 such laws, out of which 1175 laws have already been repealed by the Parliament and several other such laws are in the process of repealing.

Brothers and Sisters, it had become a tendency among the people to say that certain work can be done and certain other work cannot be done, certain work cannot be done now and certain work cannot be done ever. A kind of negativity was prevalent in the minds of people. Now, a clear breakthrough is visible in the mind-set, a new synergy is seen in the functioning of the government. When an accomplishment is achieved, it stimulates dynamism, which sharpens our determination and then, the end result is not far away.

Brothers and Sisters, when we had launched “Prime Minister Jan-Dhan Yojana”, it was almost an impossible task. There were banks and the governments, nationalisation had already taken place, but the common man of the country was not able to be a part of the mainstream of national economy.

Brothers and Sisters, we have attained this impossible task through inclusion of 21 crore persons under “Jan-Dhan Yojana”. This is not a matter of taking credit by the Government, it is really an achievement of 125 crore countrymen of the country, for which I salute them. The campaign for women pride in villages of the country is an important issue of today. The practice of open defecation should be stopped; toilets should be built in villages. When I had got the first opportunity to address from the ramparts of the Red Fort, I had expressed my feelings about it. Now, I can claim that more than 2 crore toilets have already been built in villages of the country within such a short period. More than 70 thousand villages are now free from the practice of open defecation. We are working towards bringing change in the lives of common man.

I had earlier announced from the ramparts of the Red Fort that we would electrify those 18 thousand villages, which are still without electricity. We are going to complete 70 years of independence, but they had not seen electricity. They were forced to live in the 18th century. We undertook this task of making possible the impossible and today I am glad to say that, though we have not been able to complete even half the task within a thousand days, we are still away from the half-mark, out of the 18 thousand, electricity has reached ten thousand villages. I have been told that there are many among those villages who are watching Independence Day celebrations for the first time today on television in their homes. Today, from here I extend special greetings to those villages.

Brothers and sisters, you will be surprised to know that at merely three hours journey from Delhi, there is a village called Nagla Fatela in Hathras region. It takes only three hours to reach this Nagla Fatela. But it took 70 years for electricity to reach there. 70 years, my brothers and sisters! Therefore, I am introducing you to the work culture that we are following.

Brothers and Sisters, the LED bulbs were developed by the science and the researchers for welfare of every citizen. But in India it used to cost 350 Rupees. Who would buy it? And even the government would think, “It’s alright. The work is done. Someone must be using it.” But this should not be the attitude. If LED bulbs can bring about a change in the life of a common man, if it can ameliorate the environment, if it can improve India’s economy, then the government must make efforts in this direction. It is the nature of the government that it intervenes where it is not required and shies away from intervening where it is needed. We tried to change this situation, this work culture. And therefore, the bulb which used to be sold at 350 Rupees, it is now being sold at 50 Rupees because of

governmental intervention. See the difference! 350 Rupees on one hand and 50 Rupees on the other. I do not want to ask where all this money used to go, however, thirteen crore bulbs have been distributed till date.

The politics of our country has become populist; the economic policies have become populist. If three hundred Rupees subsidy for each bulb had been given from public exchequer, the Prime Minister would have been applauded for doling out five hundred crore to the people. But we have ensured that they save thousands of crores by providing bulbs at only fifty Rupees. We have already distributed thirteen crore bulbs and we have resolved to distribute 77 crores and I would like to appeal to my countrymen to use LED bulbs in their homes and save 200, 300, 500 Rupees in a year and save energy and save our environment. The day we achieve the target of 77 crore bulbs, we would be saving 20 thousand Mega Watt of electricity. When we save 20000 Megawatt electricity, it means we save around 125000 crores rupees. Brothers and Sisters, you can save 125000 crore rupees of the country by using a LED bulb at your home. We can fight against global warming by saving 20000 Megawatt electricity and contribute a lot towards the efforts aimed at the protection of environment and a common man can also contribute to it. So, brothers and Sisters, we have worked in that direction, making the impossible possible.

You know that we depend on other countries of the world for energy and petroleum products and for that we have signed long term agreements with them so that we could get these products at fixed prices for a long period. We have entered into an agreement with Qatar for buying gas till 2024 but the prices are so high that it is costly for our economy. It was a result of our foreign policy relationship that we were able to renegotiate with Qatar, and the agreement which was the right of Qatar, and we were bound to buy gas from it till 2024, we negotiated with them and today, I can say with satisfaction that we made an impossible task possible, they renegotiated their prices and it will save 2000 crore rupees of the exchequer of India. They were entitled to get these 20000 crore rupees but the nature of relationship that we have with them and our policies have made it possible. The negotiations have been going on during the tenure of all the Governments and efforts were also made for Chabahar Port, which is an important link for connecting us with Central Asia, but today I feel satisfied to see an impossible task becoming possible. When Iran, Afghanistan and India collectively march ahead in a planned way for the construction of Chabahar Port, an impossible task becomes possible.

My brothers and sisters, one thing, I want to talk about and which concerns the common man is inflation. It is true that the inflation rate had crossed 10% mark during the tenure of previous government. Due to our sustained efforts we were able to keep it below 6 percent. Not only this, we have, recently, made an agreement with the Reserve Bank of India that the

RBI should take steps to control the inflation at the level of 4 percent with allowance of plus minus 2. We should leave behind the talks of balance between inflation and growth and work for moving ahead. But the country witnessed drought during last two years and the effect of drought are readily seen on the prices of vegetables and the outcomes of sluggishness of market have resulted in some problems. The decline in the production of pulses due to drought during last two years was also a cause of concern. But, Brothers and Sisters, if the inflation would have increased at the same pace as it had previously increased, I don't know how the poor of my country would have survived? We have tried our best to keep it under check, but still people have lot of expectations from this government and dear countrymen your expectations are natural and I will not leave no stone unturned in achieving them. Whatever best I can do, I shall do that and keep the price of poor man's meal under check.

My dear Brothers and Sisters, country is going to celebrate the 350th anniversary of Guru Gobind Singhji. How can the country forget the saga of sacrifice, which has been the tradition of Sikh Gurus? Today, when we are celebrating the 350th anniversary of Guru Gobind Singhji, I recall one best thought expressed by Guruji. Guru Gobind Singhji use to say, how can I consider those hands pure which have not done any service, hands which have not strengthened by labour and have not developed any blisters by toiling hard? Guru Gobind Singhji use to say this. Today, when we are celebrating the 350th anniversary of Guru Gobind Singhji I remember our farmers. Whose hands are more pure than theirs? Whose hearts are more pious than their? Whose intentions can be more pure than theirs? I thanks our farmers that despite two years of drought, they consistently endeavoured to fill our granaries, I greet them for this. Drought situation has changed and this time we are witnessing good monsoon. Heavy rains have also created problems at some places. Government of India stood with those states and citizen who suffered due to heavy rains. Today, I specially want to thank our farmers, because, when we are facing shortage of pulses and our farmers have shifted to other crops, and rise in demand of pulses by common man, I have to say this with content that this time our farmers have increased the sowing by one and half times. I want to thank our farmers because they have come forward to solve the problem of the crisis of pulses and find its solution. We have decided the MSP for pulses and declared a bonus on it. We have streamlined the process of purchase of pulses and promoting the farmers for cultivation of pulses. This will benefit us in a big way.

Brothers and Sisters, when I was talking about work culture, one thing was clear that I do not look at the issues in isolation but as a whole. Let us see it as integrated and just take agriculture under integrated things, we have developed such work culture with lot of hard work, the complete chain of which can produce a great result. First of all we focussed upon- the wellness of this soil, wellness of this land, soil health card,

macro-nutrition, concern for micro-nutrition and made the farmers understand that this is lacuna in your soil, these are the good qualities, your soil is good for this crop, this is not suitable for this crop and gradually the farmers started their planning according to this soil health card. The people, who have planned, tell me, sir our expenditure has been reduced up to 25 percent and 30 percent increase is being visible our production. This number is less at present, but in future as soon as this may pass on, this concept will gain momentum. The farmers have land and if they get water, then the farmer of my country has the power to produce gold out of the soil. The farmer of my country has this power and that is why we have emphasized upon water-management, emphasized upon water-irrigation, emphasized upon water-conservation. We are emphasizing upon how every drop of water may be utilised by the farmer, how to increase the importance of water, and get per drop more crop, micro irrigation. More than 90 percent irrigation projects were lying incomplete and stalled. We have taken up the responsibility to complete those projects first of all and will work in the direction that lakh of hectares of land may get the benefit of irrigation. We have taken a big leap towards solar pump so that the input cost of the farmers may be lessened because nowadays the farmers require electricity also, they require water, they need electricity, and electricity costs dearer. On account of it, the input cost of the farmer is going to be less, the recurring expenditure is going to be less and due to owning solar pump at home will result in owning electricity, owning the sun, owning the field, owning the barn and thus our farmer would be happy. We have succeeded in distributing 77 thousands solar pumps till now.

Brothers and Sisters, I would like to congratulate the scientists of our country. Good quality seeds are also required along with soil, water and solar pumps. The scientists of our country have developed more than 131 new farmable seeds compatible to the climate and nature of India, which have the capacity to enhance our per hectare production. The values they retain are also being increased. I heartily congratulate these scientists also. The farmers require urea as well as fertilisers. There was time when black marketing was in practice to get the fertilisers, there was time when the police had to lathi-charge for fertilisers. There was time when the farmer used to watch his crop being damaged in the absence of fertilisers before his very eyes. Brothers and Sisters, Fertiliser shortages are a thing of the past; they are now history. We have recorded the highest-ever production of fertilisers. This is likely to ensure timely availability of fertilisers to farmers.

Similarly, we conceptualized "Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana". Its insurance cover includes maximum protection to farmer's land and his agro-produce at a comparatively much lower premium, and that too with a guaranteed cover. We have constructed new warehouses to preserve 15 lakhs tons of food grains. Our country's farmers will benefit only when we

move towards value addition, and for this We have laid special emphasis on food processing for the first time. We have encouraged cent percent Foreign Direct Investment which would augment agro-based industries, and Consequentially, my brothers and Sisters, I believe it would help me and our farmers realize our dream of doubling latter's income by 2022. These efforts would make it possible and for realizing the same, We have taken steps one after another.

Brothers and Sisters, Our country has a fancy for a trend. And the Governments, with an aim to leave an impression, have done a lot, and to fill the bill in this country, People go for some populist things and empty the exchequer. Governments have a trend of establishing an identity. Brothers and Sisters, I have tried my best to stay away from this allurements, and while doing so, I have tried to do several things in every range with the mantra of Total transformation, Transformation with transparency, Reform, Perform and Transform.

Brothers and Sisters, We are far more committed to build the image of Hindustan than that of our Government. Regardless of party's identity, the Country's identity holds primacy. For, If the Country moves on, it will yield dividends for the coming generations, for centuries, and exactly, for this reason, We have accorded primacy to the country's identity and not to our party. Now a days, You must have observed the scope of our work in Railways. While we are talking about having Bio-toilets in train, we also cherish the dream of Bullet train. While We talk about "Soil Health Card" for farmers, we also want to march ahead in the direction of satellite and space technology. While talking about "Stand-Up India", we are also taking steps towards "Start-Up India". We are laying emphasis on Substance than on Symbolism. We are stressing on integrated development than on isolated development. Leaving aside entitlement, we are focused and emphatic on Empowerment because an empowering country, my brothers and Sisters, provides an identity to the Government through the prism of the newly declared schemes. But sometimes the old schemes just tumble down. Nevertheless, the government is a continuity. If the earlier governments have done some work; then it is in the national interest that the next Government rectifies their shortcomings and gives a go ahead to these schemes. The arrogance that this was the work of your Government and this is my government; hence we would not do this work; is not in the fitness of the things in a democracy. This is why, with all humility, we have given similar importance to the schemes of the previous governments. This is the hallmark of our work culture as our nation is a continuous and a ceaseless system and we wish to retain that system. This is why, I have a project called PRAGATI. Under this project, every month, I myself sit and review all the on-going projects. You would be amazed to know that almost 119 projects worth Rs. seven and a half lakh crores started by various previous Governments were lying pending. I got all of them going. I said, so much of money have been spent on them, so, all

these projects should be completed. Now they are all on the way to completion. We created a project-monitoring group. I asked them to look into all such projects and find out as to when were they started. I came to know that some of them were started 20 years ago, the other were started somewhere between twenty five to thirty, to fifteen years earlier. The people living in the areas of these projects know all. We identified such two hundred and seventy projects worth Rs. 10 Lakhs crores which were inaugurated by some earlier governments and some crores of rupees were spent on all of them; but all that money was going down the drain. We started all such stuck up projects once again. Brothers and sisters, such holding up and delaying of the schemes after having spent crores of rupees on them is a criminal negligence and we have tried to tide over such things.

Brothers and sisters, earlier railway projects took at least two years in getting sanctions. A train is passing from somewhere, road have also been made on the both side; a rail over bridge is to be constructed. But the approval took two years. We have speeded up the approval process and have been able to shorten the approval time to three or four months, or maximum to six months.

Brothers and sisters, however fast we may work, whatsoever may be the number of the schemes started by us; the touchstone of good administration of any Government lies in the last man delivery or the benefits accrued to that person. So, this has to be taken care off. Brothers and Sisters, when policies are clear, intentions are clear; then the sentiments behind the decisions are also a class apart and the decisions can be taken unhesitantly. So, due to the correct policies and the correct intentions our Government is taking unhesitant decisions and giving emphasis on the last man delivery.

We have seen and if you also go through the newspapers of Uttar Pradesh, every year there were stories about the outstanding balance of Sugar Cane farmers. Every year, there was news that this is not being done by the sugar mill owners, that was not being done by the state Govt, that sugar cane farmers are in distress. Thousands of crores of the rupees was outstanding. So, we made schemes in this regard and tired to ensure the last man delivery and also ensured that the amount should reach to the farmers. Brothers and Sisters, out of the total old outstanding balance of the thousands of crores of rupees, I would like to inform you with a lot of satisfaction that almost 99.5% has been settled. It has happened for the first time after many years. I can point out in solace that all the sugarcane which was procured and which came for marketing this time for that almost 95 per cent of farmers have got the price of sugarcane produced and I am sure and I believe that the remaining 5 percent of farmers will also be paid in the coming days.

Brothers & sisters, we have initiated a mission to provide LPG Connections to the poor families. We have launched a dynamic mission

under “Ujawala” scheme to get rid of smokes emanating from chulha for my poor mothers. A target has been laid down to provide gas connections to 5 crores poor families within 3 years. Efforts are in progress and we have already provided gas connections to around 50 lakhs and that also have been done merely within the last hundred days – you can imagine – that it may be possible to achieve the said target even before three years. We intend to emphasis upon Last Mile Delivery in this mission.

Post has steadily become irrelevant due to our Post Offices going online, Information Technology, Whatsapp, messages, e-mail. Our country is known as the chains of Post Offices and we have revamped these post offices. Post Offices are linked with poor and marginalised people. Postman is the only representative of the Government who is linked with the feelings and affections of the common man. We have never safeguarded the interests of the Post Man who has always got the affections of everyone and the postman always cares for common people. We have taken measures to convert our post office into a Payment Bank. By setting of these Payment Banks, a network of Banks will be set up across the villages in the country. People will get the benefits of Jan-Dhan account. The funds of MGNREGA for the common man is now being transferred into their respective accounts through ‘AADHAAR’, the cases of corruption are decreasing. Everyone will be benefitted through the mission of converting the Post Office into a Payment Bank.

Brothers & sisters, PSUs in our country are merely set up for loss-making units or for turning into sick units slowly and steadily or for disinvestment. This has been the common practice in the past. We have strived to launch a new work-culture. Today, I can point out in satisfaction that we have succeeded to turn the operation of so called notorious Air India into an operational profit-making undertaking during the last year. It is a fact that which all the Telecom companies of the world are profit-making units, the BSNL was turning into a heavy loss-making undertaking. We have succeeded in bringing BSNL to operational profit for the first time. Nobody believed that the Shipping Corporation of India could also rake in profit, now it is bringing profit. There was a time when it was apprehended that how would a power factory last for a week. Whether we would be able to get coal for them or not. It also used to be reported that power factories have been shut down for want of coal. Now, we have sufficient stock of coal at the threshold of the power factories. It could be used for months by them. Dear brothers & sisters, we have achieved it.

Often, you must have seen that there is huge talk of corruption in our country. I have observed it myself that how corruption has looked the poor people from the lowest strata of the society and how huge amount of money is being wasted. We have linked AADHAAR Card and AADHAAR Number with the Government Policies. Dear brothers & sisters, earlier there was a system under which funds used to be released from public exchequer for widow pension, scholarship, persons with disabilities and

minorities and also we used to receive list of beneficiaries. We looked into it deeply and found that even unborn children are also listed in it and getting benefit out of such schemes. These middlemen used to siphon off billions of rupees from it and nobody even took notice of it. But under the AADHAAR System, we have removed all these middlemen from the list of beneficiaries and directly transferred the amount to the beneficiaries and found that these are millions of such ghost beneficiaries who do not exist at all and used to receive billions of rupees from it. Now that has been checked. We saved lot of amount. We decided to find out the needy persons who were excluded from that list so that the amount of money saved from it should invariably be deposited into the accounts of those persons who want to fight for their rights. We have worked in that direction to deliver it to the last man delivery and we have made it to reach it to them.

All of us are aware of the Coal Scam. Today there is no accusation on the coal auction. No stigma is attached to it. The states which excavate coal in India, will continuously earn millions of rupees in the near future. There was a time when the auction of spectrum was surrounded by allegations. We auctioned it online and that has filled the coffers of the country, bringing about healthy competition and also fetching benefits for the nation.

Dear Brothers and Sisters, today the world is passing through an era of global economy. Every country today is inter-connected and inter-dependent. Economically, the whole world is somehow inter-connected in one way or other. However much we may progress in our country, we'll have to keep the global economy, global arena in view; come up to the global standards, match it also to stay relevant, and contribute, and also lead the global economy when the time comes. Therefore, we'll have to be alert all the time. We'll have to comply with the global standards to make ourselves up to date. Recently, you must have seen how the World Bank, I.M.F., World Economic Forum, credit rating agencies and such other agencies in the world have all appreciated the progress of India. The world is constantly watching these things due to the decisions taken one after another by India in respect of legal reforms, improvement in system and changes in approach. We have very speedily improved our ranking in 'ease of doing business' ratings. In terms of foreign investment, with regard to foreign direct investment our country happens to be the most favourite destination in the world today. We have left behind even the big economies of the world in matters of growth rate and GDP.

Dear brothers and Sisters, do you know what an U.N. institute has estimated about India for the next two years? They have estimated that in two years India will come up to the third spot in the economic sphere in place of its present level at number ten. Brothers and Sisters, logistic support, infrastructure, all these things are taken into account in global standards, comparisons are made with rich countries of the world.

Brothers and Sisters, while making analysis regarding this logistic support and infrastructure of India, the World Economic Forum has said that India has reached above 19 ranks as compared to earlier positions and India is moving up and marching ahead rapidly. Brothers and Sisters, the way we are marching ahead with a dynamic and predictable economy in our country and also in global reference- the recently passed GST law, is also an empowering step towards it and all those parties deserve appreciations for this.

Brothers and Sisters, I had talked about a campaign from the same place- “Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao”. We do not do any work in piecemeal. We have an integrated approach and I still need the cooperation of the society in the initiatives which we have taken in “Beti Bachao-Beti Padhao”. Every single parent need to be aware. We should honour the daughters, protect them and give them the benefit of government’s schemes. We have covered millions of families under “Sukanya Samridhi Yojna” which guarantees benefits for the daughters when she grows up. We have given greatest importance to the insurance schemes in which women are benefitted. They are going to reap its benefits. We have “Indradhanush Tikakaran Yojna”- because if we ensure two things for our mothers and sisters i.e. economic empowerment and empowerment against health problems and we educate them, you can take it as an assurance that if even a single woman is educated in the family, if she is strong physically and independent economically, she has power to pull the poorest of the poor family out of poverty and therefore we are working with emphasis on empowerment of women, health of women, economic prosperity of women, physical empowerment of women in our fight against poverty.

Therefore, my brothers and sisters, “Mudra Yojna”- I am happy that more than three and half crore families reaped the benefits of MudraYojna. In it, most of the people who reached to the door of banks were first timers. Even out of these almost 80 percent people were from SC/ST/OBC. Out of these too, 80 percent are women who took loans from banks, Mudra bank. This is to be considered that how will these womenfolk will contribute in economic development. Brothers and sisters! last week we decided that our mothers and Sisters who have become the participants in the growth story, need leave after child birth. Earlier that leave was shorter but now we have increased this to 26 weeks, enabling the new mother to take care of her infant. Our weavers and the people working in textile, who make yarn and yarn rolls, used to get Rs.100. We have increased that to Rs.190 so as to strengthen the hands of my yarn producing mothers and Sisters. Our mothers, Sisters and weavers who are engaged in silk production will now receive Rs.50 more per meter of production. This has also been decided that this Rs.50 per meter will not go either to the trader or to the middleman or to the dealer. Instead this Rs.50 per meter will go via Aadhaar directly to the account of the weaver

who has produced it. This will empower the weavers. We have started schemes with this intention and effect is now visible.

My dear countrymen! When we visualize railway and post office then we are able to see the unity of India. More we increase the institutions connecting India, our setup will change and that will enforce the unity of the country. So in the same tune we have started a new market scheme for farmers with the name 'E-NAM'. Today farmers can sell their produce online in any of the markets of the country. Now he is not constrained to compulsively sell his produce in the market which is 10 Kilometres from his field. Neither to sell at low prices which is not remunerative for his hard work. Now a uniform sort of market network is establishing throughout the country with 'E-NAM'. GST is soon to result in uniform taxation system and a unitary arrangement thus achieved will unite India as well. You will be amazed to know that earlier a zone was to have surplus energy and there were no takers. Another zone used to be in dire need of electricity, had to remain in dark and factories used to be shut. To effect a change in this scenario, we earned a great success with the 'One nation, One grid, One price'. Earlier it used to be Rs.10 per unit in summers but I went to Telangana few days back to find it to be one rupee ten paise per unit instead of that age old Rs. 10. This is the result of one-price system, which can connect the whole country.

A worker of our county has to change his place of work after every one or two years. But, his amount, deducted under EPF, is not transferred. You will be surprised to know that when I took the charge of the Government, Rs. 27,000 crore were lying under EPF, which belonged to the workers. Workers were not able to claim their amount, as they were ignorant of the relevant process. To solve this problem, we have issued a universal account number to each worker, which would enable easy transfer of fund to his new place of work. Now, the worker would get his amount after retirement and it would no more be lying dormant in a government treasury.

We have strengthened various initiatives such as Bharat-Mala, Setu-Bharatam, and Bharat-Net etc. We are working towards connecting the whole country and towards economic development of the country through all these initiatives.

Brothers and Sisters, this year is important due to various reasons. The country is celebrating 1000th birth anniversary of Saint Sri Ramanuja Acharyaji. The country is celebrating 150th birth anniversary of Shrimad Rajchandra Ji, the Guru of Mahatma Gandhi. The country is celebrating 350th birth anniversary of Guru Gobind Singh ji. The country is also celebrating centenary birth celebrations of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya ji. While remembering Sri Ramanuja Acharya ji today, I wish to underline his message to the country. He used to say that we should serve all the devotees of the Lord, irrespective of their caste and class. He had said that we should never humiliate anyone and should give respect to all, without

any discrimination on the basis of age and caste. The issue that was given importance by Gandhi, Ambedkar, Ramanujacharya, Lord Buddha, our scriptures and by our all-spiritual gurus too is the issue of 'our social unity'.

If the society disintegrates, the empire straggles, is divided into the highs and the lows, the touchables and the untouchables, then brothers and Sisters, that society cannot sustain. There are social evils, centuries old social evils, but if the social evils have become chronic, they need a bit harsh and yet sensitive treatment. The lackadaisical attitude will not solve the social problems and this is the responsibility of 125 crore citizens. The government and the society together will have to steer through the social conflicts. Brothers and Sisters, all of us will have to fight against the social evils. We all will have to rise above social evils in our own behaviour. Each and every citizen will have to rise above them and then only we can build a strong India. Without empowering our society, we cannot make India strong. Mere economic progress does not guarantee a strong India, the guarantee of a strong India lies in a strong society. And a strong society is built at the edifice of social justice. A strong society is built only on the edifice of social justice. Therefore, it is our duty to lay emphasis on social justice. Whether they be Dalits, the downtrodden, the exploited, the deprived, my Adivasi brothers, the rural population, the urban population, the literate or the illiterate, the small or the big- the 125 crore of our fellow countrymen constitute our family. We together have to take forward our country and we all have to work in the same direction.

Brothers and Sisters, today the entire world acknowledges the fact that India is a country of youths. What cannot be achieved by a country through its youth power whose 65 percent population, about 800 Million people, is below the age of 35 years? Therefore, my brothers and sisters, it is the need of the hour that the youth get opportunity and employment. Today we are heading towards the birth centenary of Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya. Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya spoke of welfare of the last human being which was even the view of Mahatma Gandhi. Pandit Deen Dayal Upadhyaya believed in the philosophy of 'Antyodaya'. Welfare of the poorest and the weakest was the central theme of the political philosophy of Pt. Deendayal Upadhyayji. He used to say that every youth should get education, every youth should be skilled and every youth should get the opportunity to realise his dreams. We have taken many initiatives to realise those dreams of Pt. Deendayalji and to fulfil the hopes and aspirations of 800 million youths of the country. The way the road network in the country is expanding, the largest number of vehicles are being manufactured in the country, the country is becoming the largest exporter of softwares, more than 50 new mobile factories have been set up in the country, all these things have created opportunities for the youths. If two crore door toilets have been constructed, it has provided employment to someone, cement has been procured from somewhere, iron has been

purchased from some other person, and the wooden work has been got done from somewhere else. As the scope of work expands, the possibilities of employment generation also increase. Today, we have stressed in that direction.

Similarly, we are working on 'skill development' as a mission so that crores of youth could acquire skills. We have changed a law, though it seems very small, and this law is 'Model Shop and Establishment Act'. We have sent an advisory to states to give reasons why the big malls are allowed to open 365 days and up to 12 in the night but a small shopkeeper in the village has to shut his shop after sunset. Even a poor should get the opportunity to keep his shop open for 365 days. Why should our Sisters not get the opportunity to work in night? We have made legal provisions so that our Sisters could go to work in night also. There should be arrangements for their safety and other requirements but they must get the opportunity to work. These are the things which increase employment. Brothers and Sisters, we are working in that direction and we are ready to do it.

Brothers and Sisters, this is the government, we are the persons who don't believe in delaying the things, we know how to fight not how to delay, so unless we deal with the problems head-on, it is not going to happen. Today when we are celebrating our freedom in the country, someone among the army jawans, who live and die for the country, would be ready for taking the bullets on the border, someone will be sitting in bunker and some other one would not be fortunate enough to meet his sister on the occasion of Raksha Bandhan. How many jawans are working in armed forces? More than 33000 police personnel have got martyrdom since we got our independence. Why should we forget them and how can we? These are the people due to whom we can live a life of peace and happiness. The issue of "One Rank One Pension" was pending for many years. We do not keep the issues pending but we face them. We have fulfilled our promise of "One Rank One Pension" and have spread happiness in the home of every Indian soldier. We did this work.

It was the feeling of our countrymen that the files pertaining to Netaji Subhash Babu should be declassified. Today, I bow my head and say that without caring for the result we have decided to declassify these files; a task which was impossible and kept pending since long. We invited Netaji's family members and shown them the files and this process of declassifying will continue. I requested the other countries of the world to declassify the files held by them and hand them over to India because Indians have full right to know about Subhash Babu and history of India. We have worked in that direction.

Bangladesh — When partition of India took place, a boundary dispute existed since then. A boundary dispute prevailed since the formation of Bangladesh. Many decades passed. Brothers and Sisters, all

parties have together solved the Indo-Bangladesh border dispute and we have amended the constitution also.

Brothers and sisters, a middle class person wants to construct his own house, wants to buy a flat. Builders lobby shows him a beautifully printed booklet and the helpless soul falls prey to it. He is not having any technical knowledge, he pays the installments but he is not getting the promised house in time. A middle class makes one house in his whole life and in it he invests all his capital. Brothers and sisters, we have put a check by passing the "Real Estate Bill", so that a middle class should not face any problem if he wishes to own a house. We have worked for this.

Brothers and Sisters, I have already said that this year is the 150th anniversary of Shrimad Rajchandra Ji, the guru of Mahatma Gandhi. When Gandhiji was staying at South Africa, then also he was having correspondence with Shrimad Rajchandra Ji. In one of his letter, Shrimad Rajchandra Ji discussed violence and non-violence. In that letter, Rajchandra Ji writes, when violence came in to existence from same time the principle of non-violence also born. The important thing in both is that which we prefer or which is being used in the interest of mankind.

Brothers and sisters, the discussion of violence and non-violence is very inherent in our country. Humanity is in our blood. We are the people of a great, colossal culture. This country is full of diversity, colours and beauty. This is such a bouquet of mother India wherein all type of fragrances, all type of colours and all type of dreams exist. Brothers and Sisters, the unity of diversity is our biggest strength. The mantra of unity is connected to our roots.

Brothers and sisters, a country having more than hundred languages, hundreds of dialects, innumerable attires, innumerable life styles, despite that this country remained united- its main reason is our cultural heritage. We know how to respect, we know hospitality, we know how to assimilate, we have carried this great tradition and that is why there is no room for violence and atrocity in our country. If the democracy of India is to be strengthened, the dreams of India are to be fulfilled then the path of violence would never bring success for us. Nowadays a game of killing the innocents is being played on the pretext of Maoism in forests, on the pretext of extremism at border, on the pretext of terrorism at hilly areas by carrying guns on shoulders. Forty years have passed, this mother soil has grown blood stained but the persons on the path of terrorism have not achieved anything. I would like to remind those youth that this country will never tolerate violence nor would it ever put up with terrorism. Nor would it bow down to terrorism. It will never succumb to Maoism. But I exhort them and say that you still have time-return to the mainstream. Just think about your parents' dream; just reflect on the hopes and expectations of your parents; return back to the mainstream; live a happy and peaceful life, for, the path of violence never fetches benefit to anybody.

Brothers and sister, we talk about foreign policy. I don't want to go into details. We had invited the leaders of SAARC Countries on the day we took oath at the Centre. Our message was clear that we all, neighbouring countries, have a common problem, and that common challenge is poverty. Let us fight this poverty together, by fighting one-another, we are left shattered but if we fight this poverty, we will walk towards prosperity. So, I exhort all neighbouring countries to join us in this fight against poverty. No freedom can be much bigger than the freedom of our citizens from poverty; freedom of our country's citizen from poverty. No liberation is more liberating than the freedom from poverty. Whenever a citizen from the neighbouring countries would get freedom from poverty, we will feel elated regardless of the fact whether the poor belongs to us or our neighbouring country.

Brothers and sisters, what kind of people are those who got drive from humanity and, what is the kind of those who reward terrorism? I want to place two pictures before this world, and I say to the world, I say to those who believe in humanity that just weigh out the attack, when terrorists brutally killed innocent children in a school at Peshawar. The attack take place in Peshawar, and was a terrorist incident. The innocent children became victim of the bloodbath; the temple of learning had blood stream all around; innocent children were slaughtered. Hindustan, the Parliament had tears in its eyes; Every Indian school was in tears; every child of India felt the trauma of the deaths of children in Peshawar. His tears had become unstoppable. Every child, who was killed in Peshawar in the terrorist attack, ached our heart too. This is the drive of our nurtured culture of humanity; this is our humanity, but if you look around, you will find a more to glorify terrorists.

Where innocent people are killed in terrorist attack, and they celebrate, what type of terrorism inspired life it is, what type of these creations of the terrorism inspired governments are? The world will understand these two differences properly, this is sufficient for me. Today I want to specially honour and thank to some people from the ramparts of Red Fort. For the past few days the people of Baluchistan, the people of Gilgit, the people of Pakistan occupied Kashmir, the way their citizens have heartily thanked me, the way they have acknowledged me, the goodwill they have shown towards me, the people settled far across, the land which I have not seen, the people I have not met ever, but people settled at far across acknowledge the Prime Minister of India, they honour him, so it is an honour of my 125 crores countrymen, it is respect of my 125 crores countrymen and that is why owing to the feeling of this honour, I want to heartily thank the people of Baluchistan, the people of Gilgit, the people of Pakistan occupied Kashmir for having an expression of thankfulness.

Brothers and sisters, today when we are celebrating the seventy years of Independence, then there is a big contribution of freedom soldiers for the country. When there is a contribution of these freedom soldiers,

then the Government is deciding to increase 20 percent in the honouring amount being received, pension being received by the all these honourable freedom soldiers family members. The freedom fighters who earlier used to get 25000 rupees, will now get 30000 rupees. It is my small effort to pay my respects to the sacrifice and oblation of our freedom fighters.

Brothers and Sisters, when we talk about the history of freedom struggle of our country, some persons are talked about a lot, some are excessively mentioned but the contribution made by the people living in jungles, the tribals, in the freedom struggle was unmatched. They used to live in jungles. We hear the name of Birsa Munda but perhaps there would be no tribal dominated district where the tribals would not have fought and given sacrifice since 1857 to the time we got freedom. They proved through their sacrifice what is freedom, what is struggle against servitude. But our forthcoming generations are not much aware of this history. The government desires and plans that in the coming days, in the states where these freedom fighters, who were tribals, who lived in jungles, fought against the British, who were not ready to succumb. The Government would work towards building permanent museums in various states dedicated to tribal brave freedom fighters, wherever land would be available for the purpose, where their contributions and memoirs would be displayed, so that coming generations could be able to know about their sacrifices for the country.

Brothers and Sisters, in the midst of the debate on inflation, we are realising one fact that the entire economy of a poor household is affected if somebody falls ill. The wedding of their daughters gets stalled, the education of children gets stalled and sometimes even food is not available in the evening. Healthcare is getting costlier and that is why, I am announcing an important scheme from the ramparts of the Red Fort for the healthcare of BPL families. Under this scheme, in the coming days, if such poor families have to take medical facilities, the government will bear expenditure upto Rs.1 lakh per year, so that my poor brothers are not deprived of healthcare facilities and their dreams are not shattered.

My dear Brothers and Sisters, let us proceed forward with a new determination, new energy, new enthusiasm by getting inspiration from those great persons who scarified their lives for our freedom. We did not get an opportunity to die for the country but we have the opportunity to live for the country. We should dedicate our life to the nation. We should achieve something of substance for the nation. We should fulfill our responsibilities and also inspire others to accomplish their responsibilities. We should stride forward for building of one society, one dream, one resolution, one direction and one destination. With this very pious feeling, I once again bow my head before the great personalities of the country, the soldiers who risk their lives for our security on water, land and air fields and also those 33 thousands martyrs who sacrificed their lives for us. So, I, hereby, dedicate myself to dream about the future

of the country and call on all of you from the rampart of the Red Fort to speak with your full might : Bharat Mata Ki Jay! Let the voice reach to every corner of the world.

Bharat Mata Ki Jay! Bharat Mata Ki Jay! Bharat Mata Ki Jay!

Vandematram! Vandematram! Vandematram !

Jay Hind! Jay Hind! Jay Hind!

Thank you.

http://www.pmindia.gov.in/en/news_updates/preliminary-text-of-prime-minister-shri-narendra-modis-address-to-the-nation-from-the-ramparts-of-the-red-fort-on-the-70th-independence-day/?comment=disable

Document: 4**Statement by Muhammad Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan, at the 71st Session of the UN General Assembly, 21 September 2016.**

Mr. President,
Excellencies,
Distinguished delegates,
Ladies and Gentlemen.

We congratulate Mr. Peter Thomson on his election as President of the 71st Session of the General Assembly. We agree that implementation of the Sustainable Development Agenda should be the focus of this Session.

We also pay tribute to Mr. Mogens Lykketoft for his capable stewardship of the 70th Session.

Mr. President,

Today, three decades after the end of the Cold War, our multipolar world is more free and vibrant, yet still chaotic and turbulent; more interdependent, but more unequal; more prosperous, yet still afflicted with poverty.

We see spectacular progress, but also unprecedented human suffering.

The world is at a historic inflection point.

The international order established after the Second World War is passing away, but a new order has yet to emerge.

Competition between the major powers is becoming more confrontational. This can pose serious threats to peace across Asia.

A new Cold War threatens to engulf Europe. The momentum there towards "greater union" has already reversed. Barricades and walls are going up, especially against the tide of misery flowing out of a turbulent Middle East. In many countries, intolerance has revived the ghosts of xenophobia and Islamophobia.

Turmoil is intensifying in the Middle East. International efforts to defeat Daesh are therefore urgent. For this, it is essential to reconcile the divergent objectives and priorities of regional and external powers.

Peace cannot be built when injustice prevails. The long festering tragedy of Palestine demands determined action by the international community.

Mr. President,

After decades of strong growth, the world economy has reached a plateau.

Despite this adverse international economic environment, my government has, in three short years, moved the country towards robust growth.

We have fully integrated the 2030 Development Agenda into our own economic and social strategy.

This rests on our conviction that people are the true wealth of our nation and that it is human development, which will determine our future destiny.

Mr. President,

Our priority goal of economic development requires internal peace and stability. My country has been the principal victim of terrorism including that supported, sponsored and financed from abroad.

We will not allow externally sponsored terrorism and threats of destabilization to cause turbulence in Pakistan.

Tens of thousands of our citizens and thousands of our security personnel have been killed or injured in terrorist attacks.

This has only reinforced our resolve to eliminate the scourge of terrorism. Our comprehensive strategy of law enforcement and targeted military operations has produced remarkable results and enabled Pakistan to turn the tide against terrorism.

Pakistan's Zarb-e-Azb Operation is the largest, most robust and most successful anti-terrorism campaign anywhere in the world, deploying 200,000 of our security forces.

Our comprehensive National Action Plan has the complete endorsement of our people and our Parliament as well as our security forces, all of whom have made heroic sacrifices to defeat terrorism.

Mr. President,

Terrorism, however, is now a global phenomenon, which must be addressed comprehensively and in all its forms, including State terrorism.

The international community must coordinate its efforts to accomplish this. These efforts should be taken collectively and not unilaterally by the passage of any laws with extra-territorial application targeted against certain countries.

We will not win the fight against terrorism and violent extremism so long as we do not address their root causes. These lie in poverty and ignorance, political and social injustice and oppression, foreign intervention and occupation and denial of the legitimate rights of peoples and nations, especially the right to self-determination.

Until these underlying causes are addressed, it will be difficult to counter the twisted narrative of violent extremists and terrorists.

Mr. President,

After 15 years of the current war in Afghanistan, the international community agrees that the only road to a lasting peace in that country is through a dialogue between the Government in Kabul and the Afghan Taliban.

Pakistan has long proposed this as the most viable course to end decades of conflict and suffering in Afghanistan.

Based on this belief in a negotiated peace, and in response to requests from President Ashraf Ghani, we have been facilitating the process of reconciliation in Afghanistan.

There have been setbacks. That, however, is not a sufficient reason to abandon the path of peace and rely on the military option, which has failed, for the past decade and a half, to stabilize Afghanistan.

Progress will be assured only when the Afghan parties themselves conclude that there is no military solution to the Afghan war, and work assiduously, through a meaningful dialogue process, for achieving reconciliation and peace at home.

Mr. President,

Over three and a half decades of conflict and chaos in Afghanistan has had grave security and economic consequences for Pakistan. Almost three million Afghan refugees, to whom we opened our homes and hearts, remain in Pakistan.

We hope to see them return to Afghanistan, voluntarily and with dignity.

Until they do, the international community must shoulder its responsibilities to sustain them.

Mr. President,

Confrontation should not be our destiny in South Asia. Pakistan wants peace with India. I have gone the extra mile to achieve this, repeatedly offering a dialogue to address all outstanding issues.

But India has posed unacceptable preconditions to engage in a dialogue. Let us be clear: talks are no favor to Pakistan. Talks are in the interest of both countries. They are essential to resolve our differences, especially the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, and to avert the danger of any escalation.

Mr. President,

Peace and normalization between Pakistan and India cannot be achieved without a resolution of the Kashmir dispute. This is an objective evaluation, not a partisan position.

Our predictions have now been confirmed by events. A new generation of Kashmiris has risen spontaneously against India's illegal occupation – demanding freedom from occupation. Burhan Wani, the young leader murdered by Indian forces, has emerged as the symbol of the latest Kashmiri Intifada, a popular and peaceful freedom movement, led by Kashmiris, young and old, men and women, armed only with an undying faith in the legitimacy of their cause, and a hunger for freedom in their hearts.

Mr. President,

This indigenous uprising of the Kashmiris has been met, as usual, with brutal repression by India's occupation force of over half a million soldiers. Over a hundred Kashmiris have been killed, hundreds, including children and infants, blinded by shotgun pellets and over six thousand unarmed civilians injured over the past two months.

These Indian brutalities are well documented. I would like to inform the General Assembly that Pakistan will share with the Secretary General a dossier containing detailed information and evidence of the gross and systematic violations of human rights committed by Indian forces in occupied Jammu and Kashmir.

These brutalities will not suppress the spirit of the Kashmiris; it will only intensify their anger and fortify their determination to see India end its occupation of Kashmir. From Srinagar to Sopore, the men, women and children come out each day, defying curfew, to demand freedom.

Mr. President,

Pakistan fully supports the demand of the Kashmiri people for self-determination, as promised to them by several Security Council resolutions. Their struggle is a legitimate one for liberation from alien occupation.

International law and the declarations of the United Nations on Self Determination, give the Kashmiri people the right to struggle for their freedom. Every year, the General Assembly unanimously adopts the resolution, which reaffirms "the right of all people's to self-determination" and calls on the states concerned to immediately end their occupation and "all acts of repression."

Mr. President,

On behalf of the Kashmiri people; on behalf of the mothers, wives, sisters, and fathers of the innocent Kashmiri children, women and men who have been killed, blinded and injured; on behalf of the Pakistani nation, I demand an independent inquiry into the extra-judicial killings, and a UN fact finding mission to investigate brutalities perpetrated by the Indian occupying forces, so that those guilty of these atrocities are punished.

We demand the immediate release of all Kashmiri political prisoners; an end to the curfew; freedom for the Kashmiris to demonstrate peacefully; urgent medical help for the injured and abrogation of India's draconian 'laws'.

Mr. President,

The Security Council has called for the exercise of the right to self-determination by the people of Jammu and Kashmir through a free and fair plebiscite held under UN auspices. The people of Kashmir have waited 70

years for implementation of this promise. The Security Council must honour its commitments by implementing its own decisions. This General Assembly must demand that India deliver on the commitments its leaders solemnly made on many occasions.

To this end, steps should be taken by the United Nations to de-militarize Jammu and Kashmir and undertake consultations with India, Pakistan and the true representatives of the Kashmiri people to implement the resolutions of the Security Council. In this context, we welcome the offer of good offices by Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon. We will also open consultations with members of the Security Council to explore the modalities for implementation of the Security Council resolutions on Kashmir.

Mr. President,

The international community ignores the danger of rising tensions in South Asia, at its own peril.

For its part, Pakistan is committed to the establishment of strategic stability in the region. It neither wants, nor is it engaged in an arms race with India.

But we cannot ignore our neighbor's unprecedented arms build up and will take whatever measures are necessary to maintain credible deterrence.

We have consistently urged the conclusion of bilateral arms control and disarmament measures between Pakistan and India to prevent conflict and avoid wasteful military expenditures.

We are open to discussing all measures of restraint and responsibility with India, in any forum or format and without any conditions.

We are ready for talks to agree on a bilateral nuclear test ban treaty.

Today, from this rostrum, I would also like to reiterate our offer to India to enter into a serious and sustained dialogue for the peaceful resolution of all outstanding disputes, especially Jammu and Kashmir.

Mr. President,

As a responsible nuclear weapon state, Pakistan will continue to cooperate with all international efforts that seek to promote fair and equitable solutions to disarmament and non-proliferation challenges.

We have introduced 'state of the art' measures to strengthen the safety and security of our nuclear materials and facilities. We have adopted a comprehensive export control regime that is fully consistent with international standards.

Judged on the basis of objective criteria, and without discrimination, Pakistan is fully eligible for membership of the Nuclear Suppliers' Group.

Mr. President,

In our turbulent and interdependent world, the United Nations remains an indispensable Organization to restore order and ensure global peace, stability and prosperity. Its principles remain the crucial pillars of international legality, the guide for the conduct of Member States and the guarantor of the legitimate rights of all nations and peoples.

The UN must regain its credibility as the central instrument for the promotion of peace, prosperity and liberty.

To that end, it should become more representative, transparent and accountable. A comprehensive and democratic reform of the Security Council, which Pakistan supports, should enhance its relevance and representation. Creating new centres of privilege will do the opposite.

Mr. President,

Pakistan's unwavering commitment to the UN is well established. We have played a pioneering and consistent role in UN Peacekeeping.

Despite our own security requirements, we will remain one of world's largest troop contributing countries and maintain our record of success in multiple UN peacekeeping operations.

Mr. President,

Pakistan has a vital stake in ending conflicts, fostering peace, fighting terrorism, strengthening democracy, promoting human rights, generating global growth and overcoming the challenges of environmental degradation. We can achieve these goals, and create a new and peaceful world order, only through the United Nations and by strict adherence to the principles of its Charter.

I thank you, Mr. President.

http://pmo.gov.pk/pm_speech_details.php?speech_id=78

DOCUMENT: 5**Statement by Adviser to the Prime Minister on Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sartaj Aziz, at the Sixth Heart of Asia Ministerial Conference held in Amritsar.**

December 4, 2016.

H. E. Mr. Arun Jaitley, Minister of the Finance of Republic of India,

H.E. Mr. Salahuddin Rabbani, Foreign Minister of Afghanistan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

I am honoured to attend the Sixth Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia - Istanbul process. I would like to express our appreciation to both co-hosts, Afghanistan and India, for organizing this important Conference.

My participation in the event, despite escalation on the Line of Control and the Working Boundary with India, is testimony to Pakistan's unflinching commitment for lasting peace in Afghanistan and the region. I look forward to meaningful deliberations today towards this objective.

Pakistan deeply values the Heart of Asia-Istanbul Process. Since 2011, this forum is making important contribution in the efforts to promote Afghanistan's connectivity with neighbouring and regional countries for durable stability in Afghanistan. Pakistan proudly co-hosted this event in Islamabad last December and we continue to actively participate in meetings and CBMs of this process.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

We need to make an objective evaluation of our efforts for peace and stability in Afghanistan. We appreciate progress in many areas under the leadership of President Ashraf Ghani and Chief Executive Abdullah Abdullah. Afghan security forces have firmly and bravely stood their ground in repulsing militant and terrorist attacks. The international community has reiterated its commitment of support to Afghanistan in the areas of security and economic development upto 2020. The Government and people of Pakistan stand in complete solidarity with the elected government and people of Afghanistan in furthering the objective of peace, stability and development in Afghanistan. We would do whatever we can to help achieve this objective.

The Afghan Government has also signed peace agreement with Hizb-i-Islami Afghanistan (HIA). The implementation of this peace deal can serve as a model for talks with other insurgent groups in future.

At the same time we are cognizant that Afghanistan continues to face many serious challenges. The first and foremost in our view is continuing violence and acts of terrorism claiming scores of human lives. This needs to be addressed urgently and effectively through collective efforts. The security situation in Afghanistan is very complex. It is simplistic to blame only one country for the recent upsurge in violence. We need to have an objective and holistic view.

Secondly, the peace process for talks between Afghan Government and Taliban has not yet produced positive results. Pakistan has been making serious efforts for facilitating the peace talks through the QCG. We believe that all members of the QCG should continue their respective efforts for talks between Afghan Government and Taliban. In our view, there is no military solution to the Afghan conflict and all our efforts should be to achieve a politically negotiated settlement through an Afghan-led Afghan-owned process.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Regional connectivity can stimulate economic development. Towards this end, Pakistan is building its national rail, road and energy transmission network to meet with the growing regional transport needs. The focus is on modern, state of the art infrastructure including through the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). There is immense potential for connecting our transportation and energy infrastructure with Afghanistan, and other countries of West and Central Asia.

Our two countries are already part of CAREC's planned transport corridors five and six. At the Global Sustainable Transport Conference in Ashgabat last week, Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif announced Pakistan's decision to join the Ashgabat Agreement and the Lapiz Lazuli Corridor. We also need to expedite energy connectivity projects including TAPI and CASA-1000.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Pakistan is committed to enhancing facilitation for transit of Afghan goods through Pakistan. We believe the two sides need to work together for extension of and improvements in the Afghanistan Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA). In this context, let me emphasize that peaceful resolution of outstanding disputes will further improve prospects of regional cooperation and connectivity.

Pakistan has continued to host millions of Afghan refugees in Pakistan for the past 3 decades. We are engaged with Afghanistan and UNHCR in the

ongoing process of their return to their homeland with honour and dignity. We are working on plans to extend their stay in Pakistan to 31 December 2017 and keep their voluntary return smooth and orderly. It is important to focus on the projects for their sustainable reintegration in Afghanistan.

Ladies and Gentlemen,

Regional cooperation plays an important role in ensuring political stability and promoting and deepening mutually beneficial economic interaction. In this context, SAARC is an important forum, not only for promoting regional cooperation but also for the improvement of relations. The postponement of the SAARC Summit scheduled in Islamabad in November 2016 was a setback to these efforts and undermined the spirit of regional cooperation.

In conclusion, I hope our deliberations would be constructive and focused on the efforts for lasting peace and stability in Afghanistan, which is our shared objective.

Pakistan also welcomes the invitation of Azerbaijan to host the 7th Ministerial Conference of the Heart of Asia process in 2017 and looks forward to its active participation in this Conference.

Thank you very much.

<http://www.mofa.gov.pk/pr-details.php?mm=NDU1NA>

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Reference to a Newspaper:	<i>Dawn</i> (Islamabad), July 30, 2007.
Reference to an Internet Source:	Hamid Hussain, "The Tale of a Love Affair that Never Was: United States-Pakistan Defence Relations," <i>Pakistan Horizon</i> June, 2002, www.pakistanhorizon.com/2002/june/loveaffair.html . (accessed September 2, 2009)

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2. Date should be written as December 7, 2007.
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4. Word "per cent" should be used instead of sign "%".

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