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About BTTN

Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN) was established at Quetta, on March 1, 2021. It is an autonomous, non-profit, non-partisan, and multidisciplinary Research Center with a focus not limited to Balochistan only, but includes the regional and global dynamics which can influence Pakistan. Broadly, BTTN endeavors to undertake in-depth research of provincial issues with a view to developing the socio, political, and economic status of the province. Its interests also include issues of Energy, Regional Stability, Strategic Stability, Peace and Security, Arms Control and Disarmament, Non-Proliferation, Peaceful Uses of Nuclear Technology, Conflict Resolution, Regional Connectivity, and Socioeconomic development at the national level. Geopolitically, besides South Asia, BTTN's research areas also include regions of Europe and Africa.

BTTN OP-EDs

Balochistan Think Tank Network (BTTN) Faculty of Research has been writing op-eds on a regular basis on different contemporary issues that are published on various international and national platforms. The opinions expressed in this edition are the authors' individual views and do not reflect the official policy of BTTN or any governmental organization. This electronic review is compiled on a monthly basis.

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Dr. Zafar Khan   **June 03, 2024**

Global power contestation can have different dynamics, including geoeconomic, geopolitical, and geostrategic competition between the leading powers. Each of these terms is loaded in the broader studies of international politics. All these terms are interconnected, though one may not have a fixed definition.

For centuries, global power competition amongst the contending powers has been played out for primacy, power projection, and dominance. It is in the state of nature that many ruthless empires have risen and fallen, and the global power competition continues to triumph over the elements of non-traditional security paradigms such as international law, international institutions, economy, religion, mutual harmony, collective security, human rights, etc.

Global power contestation is played for one primary reason, which is to meet one's vital security interest, a primary dictum of international relations that there is no permanent friend and no permanent enemy in the international system.

What ultimately remains supreme is the national interest. A nuclear dimension is one of the essential elements of global power contestation. Although security remains the predominant factor for a state's acquisition of nuclear weapons, it is argued that without nuclear weapons, Britain would not remain Britain, and France would not remain France. To recall the history, they were once colonial powers.

Despite being the founding members of NATO and under Article 5 of NATO's nuclear umbrella, both Britain and France opted for the road to weaponization after they observed how the US became the first to develop and use nuclear weapons and why the US unnecessarily would sacrifice Washington or New York for Paris and London. The elements of prestige and security contributed to Britain and France staying relevant in the global power competition.

Predominance of Realism

Linking up the nuclear dimension of great power competition with realism, It is very important to understand at least five essential ingredients of realism best reflected by John Mearsheimer in his often-quoted book "The Tragedy of Great Power Politics" where he simplifies the five assumptions of realism: one, the state is the principal actor in the international system that operates in an anarchic environment where there is no higher authority that sits above the state. Two, all states have some offensive military capability. Third, states cannot be certain about the intentions of other states. Because intentions are harder to see and measure than the capability a state may have.

Therefore, we discriminate between the intention and the capability of a state in international politics. Intentions can be malign or benign, but it is even harder for states to figure out what the future intentions of the states are against others. Fourth, the primary goal of a state is to survive in the international system because, without survival, a state may not effectively pursue other goals. Five, states are rational actors. They are strategic calculators that craft smart strategies to survive in an anarchic system.

Interestingly, when these five assumptions are blended with each other. One may end up with at least three sub-assumptions: 1) states fear each other in the international system, 2) they quickly come to know that it is a self-help system, and 3) states try to be as powerful as they can. Although convincing these core realist assumptions may be, the problem with these assumptions is that a state cannot be a global hegemon. Second, the state's acquisition of material and economic sources against its adversary almost always leads to a quagmire. In a classic sense, this is called the security dilemma.

In the international system, when a state increases its power, it intentionally or unintentionally decreases the power of others, more especially when states are acute rivals to each other.

Domino Effect

That said, a state's security is affected by what other states do in the international system. More academically, this may be termed as an extra-regional link factor. The acquisition of nuclear weapons by the US was out of the fear that Nazi Germany could endanger the

US and its allies' security through Germany's missiles and possible development of its nuclear capability. As the Cold War rivalry intensified between the Soviet Union and the US after the end of WWII, the Soviet leadership that initially was not interested in getting the bomb later had to break the US nuclear monopoly.

As the Soviet Union expanded its security frontiers, both France and Britain got worried about their security and, therefore, acquired nuclear weapons without trusting much of the US-led NATO security umbrella. When the US threatened Chinese security with the indiscriminate use of nuclear weapons during the Korean War (1950-1953), the Chinese speeded up to weaponize with sheer assistance from the Soviet Union. Since China and India had a short border war in 1962, the Indians got worried and tested their nuclear capability first in 1974, which they called the "peaceful nuclear explosion," and later tested their nuclear weapons again in May 1998. Because of the acute security rivalry that existed between India and Pakistan, Pakistan had no other option but to test its nuclear weapon capability in response to the Indian nuclear tests to restore strategic stability in South Asia.

North Korea would surely not forget what happened in the Korean War and how the US consequently attacked Iraq and Libya after 9/11. The Koreans thought they could be the next in line to be preempted, thereby testing its nuclear capability in 2006 after getting away from the Nonproliferation Treaty (NPT). If the security tussle of Iran intensifies with the US and Israel, Iran may speed up its nuclear weapons capability.

Global Contestation and South Asia

Considering all this, we come to know that the nuclear dimension of global power contestation is affecting many regions of the world, and the South Asian region is no exception. Due to the Russian invasion of Ukraine, we also come to know through reliable sources that all the established nuclear weapons states are modernizing their military and nuclear forces.

The New Start Treaty between the US and Russia is suspended. Russia has de-ratified the CTBT for obvious reasons. And there is no sign of arms control and disarmament

between the nuclear weapons states. Recently, Germany indicated its aspiration for acquiring nuclear weapons for security purposes.

Finland and Sweden, which may not be allowed by the US to acquire their nuclear weapons, have joined NATO to get some form of security guarantee.

As part of the global power contestation, the US-led NATO expansion in Europe is encircling and containing the resurgence of Russia on the one hand, while the US has been strengthening its ties with its Asian allies in Asia to contain the regional rise of China on the other hand. That said, the US has been increasing its strategic partnership with India. The US-India nuclear deal in 2005, the QUAD in 2007, the NSG waiver in 2008, the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016; the Communications Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) in 2018, the Industrial Security Agreement in 2019; and Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement (BECA) in 2020 and the Digital Connectivity and Cybersecurity Partnership (DCCP) in 2024 are some of the important agreements reflecting the increasing US-India strategic partnership. Considering all these, the US balancing role in South Asia is being diminished as this is tilting towards India much more than Pakistan. India is exploiting the tilt to the best of its advantage by undermining the security of Pakistan. One may question if this benefits the US balancing security interest in South Asia.

Maximization of Power

In addition, India is also increasing its strategic partnership with other players amid the global power contestation. For example, with Russia, India plans to develop more nuclear-powered submarines. It has already acquired sophisticated air-defense systems such as the S-400. It is increasing the ranges and speed of BrahMos from supersonic to hypersonic capability. This missile was misfired in Pakistan on 9 March 2022, which could have unintended consequences. With France, India is building its strategic partnership in various fields such as nuclear energy, defense, space, cyber, conventional force capability, and technology for nuclear-powered submarines as a broader part of the Indo-Pacific component. With Israel, India has long been in a strategic partnership for developing India's ballistic missile defense (BMD) system.

The India-Israel strategic partnership also includes transferring advanced technology that India may use for its conventional and nuclear forces development.

This reflects how the nuclear dimension of great power contestation is broadly affecting South Asian strategic stability by increasing India's security while decreasing Pakistan's security. The more the great power competition in the geoeconomic, geostrategic, and geopolitical domains is intensified, the more this affects regions of their vital security interest. Similarly, the more the leading powers modernize their conventional and nuclear forces with offensive doctrinal postures, the more they affect others in the systematic security system.

Aspiration for Limited War

India, with its economic advancement and increasing geostrategic partnership with a number of countries, tempts India to be the hegemon of its region. It does not only demonstrate its geopolitical hubris when it gets into contact with other leading players in the region, including that of the US, but also the increasing acquisition of high-tech components for its conventional and nuclear forces tempts India to be more aggressive in its military and nuclear doctrinal posturing. India now aspires for preemptive counterforce targeting strategies.

By closely reading India's Draft Nuclear Doctrine (DND) of 1999 and 2003, one may observe modifications in its DNDs with policy implications. India has already shifted away from "retaliation" to "massive retaliation" strategy without learning a lesson from the flawed US nuclear strategy of "Massive Retaliation" in the 1950s against the Soviet Union. Although India still proclaims to follow the "no-first use" nuclear option, India has been aspiring to shift away from this doctrinal posture to "first use" nuclear option.

India has often omitted "minimum" from the credible minimum deterrence it initially conceptualized. Besides, what is minimum against China cannot be minimum against Pakistan.

Affected by the global power contestation, India has been in constant search for waging a limited war and counterforce preemptive strikes against Pakistan without realistically assessing how limited war can quickly spiral out of control, especially when Pakistan

produces effective countermeasures by plugging the deterrence gaps. At the same time, Pakistan possesses credible conventional and nuclear forces, which can be used for its ultimate defense and survival.

India's temptation to waging a limited preemptive strike is becoming an escalatory risk for a serious military crisis between the South Asian nuclear rivals, endangering the use of nuclear weapons. Therefore, in the realm of strategic and tactical nuclear forces, the strategy for waging a limited war will be flawed risking escalation to a dangerous level.

Strategic Restraint

Since nuclear war cannot be won thereby it must never be fought reflects the value of credible nuclear deterrence between the two nuclear rivals. Nuclear weapons played a significant role in deterring rivals from waging direct large-scale wars, and they will continue to play a similar role despite the arrival of emerging technologies. The components of emerging technologies may become "force multipliers" enhancing the conventional power potential for a decisive role, but they may not make the old methods of fighting in the battlefield and for that matter the classic theorem of nuclear deterrence irrelevant by throwing everything nuclear related out of the window. In other words, artificial intelligence may not produce a supreme field commander winning wars without the human-in-the-loop supported by tactical and operational military strategies.

What is much needed is to reduce the intensifying global power competition amongst the major powers by turning the severe competition into cooperation. Cooperation may be possible under the security dilemma.

Countries do cooperate for many things despite the rivalry. In doing so, this will reduce the pressure on other nuclear rivals including that of India and Pakistan.

What is required in South Asia is a timely contribution towards crisis prevention and crisis management institutionalization between the South Asian nuclear rivals when it comes to the notion of nuclear responsibility. Such imperatives may include several measures to prevent developing war-fighting strategies, reducing reliance on nuclear weapons, practicing nuclear moratorium, mechanism for preventing accidental nuclear war, restricting to the essentials of credible minimum deterrence, and improving means of

communication for risk reduction. South Asian rivals should continue to have hotlines, nuclear CBMs, effective utilization of the third-party role between the acute nuclear rivals, measures for retaining nuclear balance rather than parity.

Of course, it must also include the strategic restraint regime, efforts for peaceful uses of nuclear technology, participation in the international discussion on non-proliferation, de-mating nuclear warheads from delivery systems, and undertaking stringent safety and security mechanisms. More importantly, South Asian security leadership need to practice advance notices before carrying out nuclear and missile tests, and immediate reporting on an accidental firing of any missile directed against each other to prevent retaliatory nuclear strikes. Most if not all these measures can be applicable and doable between the South Asian nuclear rivals to prevent the possibilities of accidental war and promote strategic stability.

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The Age of Soft Power and Pakistani Cinema

Asad Ullah Raisani   **June 04, 2024**

The current era is an era of soft power. The number of social media users and those who love watching movies and web series is far greater than those who genuinely read books and prefer books over the former for information. Many people rely on X, formerly Twitter, rather than newspapers for daily news for multiple reasons. Cinema is one of the aspects of soft power that Pakistan miserably lacks vis-a-vis its arch-rival India. This article analyses only this aspect, discussing how India actively uses its cinema to portray Pakistan as an evil state and the nation as the land of terrorists and recommends a future course of action.

As per the most recent data, the number of films released in India annually is *2,000*, the highest in the world. Indian movies sell 3.6 billion tickets worldwide, nine times the number sold by Hollywood. The highest-grossing Indian film is "*Baahubali 2: The Conclusion*," which earned over $260 million globally. The Indian film industry is estimated to produce 27,000 jobs every year, the total number of people directly/ indirectly depending on the industry for their livelihoods is over a million. The films made in India are exported to some 90 countries globally, contributing two per cent to the country's Gross Domestic Product (GDP). The total revenue of the Indian Film Industry in 2020 was INR183 billion.

In contrast, the number of movies produced in Pakistan yearly is not even 20. No proper industry record is available online to get any idea of the status of this sector in the country. Only eight movies were produced in the country in 2019. These movies have such low budgets and lack substance that hardly any of them have the fortune to be exported abroad or dubbed in any language other than Urdu. Unlike Indian Cinema, there are case studies of movie producers in the country who were compelled to sell their properties to survive. Thanks to the changing trend on private news channels that have started offering jobs and some amount to artists who are often part of the shows aired between 11:00 to 11:55 pm.

This continuous worsening condition of Pakistani cinema has given a marginal edge to Indian soft power, which does not miss any chance to defame Pakistan and its nationals. Even in comedy movies that have no political theme, certain Indian filmmakers leave no opportunity to taunt the nation and use sarcastic, even insulting, tones and dialogues against Pakistan. For instance, "*Guest in London*" is a sequel to a comedy movie in which, in one scene, Paresh Rawal, a member of Modi's BJP and a seasoned actor, taunts a neighbour by asking if he is a Pakistani as he tries to enter Rawal's relative's house by jumping a wall, implying that Pakistanis have this immoral conduct of spying and intruding. While playing such roles, a learned politician like Rawal should consider that Kulbhushan Yadav was not on a picnic in Pakistan, and the fantastic tea served to Abhinandan tells a different story.

The Khans of the industry are no exception, as like many Muslim Indians, they keep trying to prove their patriotism through different means. Whether it is Salman Khan's '*Tiger*' sequels, Shah Rukh Khan's '*Pathan,*' or Aamir Khan's '*Laal Singh Chadda,*' Indian filmmakers have managed to portray Pakistanis as evil and dangerous to global peace. Even Indian comedy shows like the famous "*Comedy Nights with Kapil*" cannot be run solely on comedy and have proudly featured the famously known Khan Sir's statement, "We will call someone living in Pakistan a terrorist," followed by laughter, which is ironic.

Moreover, Indian cinema has a history of producing movies that portray Pakistan in a negative light, often depicting the country as a hotbed of terrorism and hostility. Films like "*Mission Majnu*" and "*Gadar: Ek Prem Katha*" alongside its sequel, revolve around themes of espionage and cross-border conflict, frequently casting Pakistani characters as antagonists. *Veer-Zaara*, although a romantic drama, subtly underscores political tensions between the two nations. Action-packed thrillers like *Sooryavanshi*, *Phantom*, and *Baby* further reinforce these stereotypes by focusing on counter-terrorism plots where Pakistani operatives or terrorists are the primary villains. These portrayals contribute to the demonisation of Pakistan in popular culture, impacting public perception and bilateral relations between the two countries.

Indian cinema has also produced numerous films that depict Muslims in a negative light, portraying them as cowards, warmongers, and disloyal individuals, often through heavily

distorted historical narratives. Sanjay Leela Bhansali's "*Panipat*" and "*Bajirao Mastani*" are prime examples, where historical events are dramatized to portray Muslim characters in a negative manner. *The Kashmir Files*" and "*The Kerala Story*" delve into communal conflicts, often depicting Muslims as the primary instigators of violence and upheaval. "*Article 370*" touches upon the abrogation of the special status of Jammu and Kashmir, again presenting a skewed perspective that demonises the local Muslim population. These films contribute to a broader narrative within Indian cinema that vilifies Muslims and distorts historical facts, fostering communal discord and prejudice.

However, the entire Indian nation or the film industry cannot be blamed for such prejudice and ill-conceived ideas about Pakistan and Muslims, there are individuals like Rajkumar Hirani who create rich content films that do not rely on hatred to earn more. For instance, his *3 Idiots*, *PK*, and *Dunki* are masterpieces that carry messages of compassion, friendship, and personal growth. Nandita Das' *Firaaq*, Aamir Khan's *Dangal* and *Taare Zameen Par*, Zoya Akhtar's *Zindagi Na Milegi Dobara*, Nitesh Tiwari's *Chichhore*, and Ashutosh Gowariker's *Lagaan* and *Jodhaa Akbar* are other examples of films based on rich quality content instead of hatred and stereotypes against a certain group of people. And they are equally admired in Pakistan.

Authorities in Pakistan should make efforts to revive the film industry in the country. This segment cannot be taken for granted in an age of soft power competition. Pakistani artists are already producing masterpiece drama serials that are loved around the globe, demonstrating their ability to create high-quality content. However, they lack the financial support that confines them to drama serials. The success of the Pakistani film, *The Legend of Maula Jatt,* exemplifies the talent and potential content this country can produce. A minimum target of 50 films per year should be set. The Ministry of Information and Broadcasting should form a committee including seasoned artists and filmmakers like Anwar Maqsood, Ali Zafar, Atif Aslam, Mahira Khan, Fawad Khan, Hamza Ali Abbasi, Bilal Lashari, and Sohail Ahmed Azizi, to identify what is needed to revive this sector.

The recent incentives, such as extensive tax exemptions for the film sector, zero income tax for individuals and production houses, tax-free import of production equipment, a Film Finance Fund of Rs2 billion, and Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) tax credits to

encourage film production, along with tax-exempt cinema income for the first 10 years, are praiseworthy and a good start. Still, only the results will validate these efforts.

The age of soft power and Pakistani cinema – The Express Tribunne

Manipulated Allegations against Pakistan

Summra Hamid   **June 04, 2024**

Pakistan, despite being relatively smaller and economically weaker than India, finds itself incessantly targeted by accusations and defamatory campaigns propagated by its arch-rival.

India is uneasy about Pakistan joining key international initiatives such as the BRICS and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). As a result, India tries hard to portray Pakistan as unreliable and irresponsible globally. India has a history of manipulating situations to showcase Pakistan as an irresponsible state, with instances such as its attempts to link Pakistan to terrorist activities without concrete evidence.

The recent allegations regarding Computer Numerical Control (CNCs) serve as another tactic in India's ongoing campaign to defame Pakistan and undermine its credibility on the international stage. Accusing Pakistan of leveraging dual-use items like CNC machines for military purposes disregards the comprehensive C4I2SR framework, essential for effective (Command, Control, Communications, Computers, Information, Intelligence, Surveillance, and Reconnaissance) in military operations. While CNC machines are indeed versatile tools, their civilian applications in manufacturing and industry are widespread and well-documented.

Acquisition of such equipment by Pakistan aligns with civilian usage, which is crucial for economic development and technological advancement. Furthermore, attributing military intent to the mere possession of these tools without concrete evidence directly linking them to military activities overlooks the complexity of modern warfare and the stringent regulatory measures in place to prevent the misuse of dual-use technologies. The absence of compelling evidence by the adversary undermines the credibility of allegations and highlights the importance of objective assessment grounded in verifiable facts, reinforcing the need for fairness and evidence-based analysis in international discourse. Therefore, it can be asserted that allegations like these are part of India's propagandist agenda, aiming to discredit Pakistan by portraying the capture of CNCs as evidence of its dual-use for military and nuclear programs.

Pakistan uses C4I2SR, a comprehensive system. This system is utilized by military and defence organizations to facilitate effective command, control, and decision-making during military operations. Its components include structured frameworks for decision-making and coordination (C2), secure communication channels, data processing capabilities, intelligence collection and analysis tools, surveillance systems, and reconnaissance equipment. Ensuring the secure operation of C4I2SR systems is paramount for national security, preventing unauthorized access or compromise of military communications and intelligence through measures such as encryption, authentication, and physical protection.

In contrast, CNC technology is primarily employed in manufacturing and machining, automating precision processes like cutting and shaping materials. While CNC technology is vital for industrial production, its security concerns primarily revolve around safeguarding intellectual property rather than national defence. The key differences lie in the comprehensive scope and security focus of C4I2SR, which prioritizes secure communication and operational security, compared to the civilian-oriented nature of CNC technology, focusing on process efficiency and quality in manufacturing. Ultimately, while a compromised C4I2SR system could have severe consequences for national security, CNC breaches typically affect individual companies or industries. So, in such a case, where Pakistan uses a high-tech security system, it is absurd to accuse Pakistan of using any item for dual use.

CNC systems are sophisticated automation tools used in various industries to control machine tools and manufacturing processes. By interpreting computer-aided design (CAD) or computer-aided manufacturing (CAM) instructions, CNC systems precisely guide the movement and operation of machine tools such as lathes, mills, routers, and lasers. This automation enables highly accurate and complex component production with close fittings making CNC machines invaluable for industries requiring precision machining, such as aerospace, automotive, and medical. Additionally, CNC technology facilitates rapid prototyping, cost-effective mass production, customization, and high-speed, high-volume manufacturing. By automating processes, CNC systems

improve productivity, reduce labour costs, and minimize human error, playing a vital role in modern manufacturing's efficiency and effectiveness.

Recent allegations made by India concerning Pakistan's import of CNC machinery from China for its nuclear programme are not only superficial but also lack substantial evidence. Ironically, India itself has received similar CNC shipments before pointing fingers at Pakistan. The reality is that CNC machinery, contrary to India's claims of its potential use in nuclear activities, serves many industrial purposes. Pakistan's import data reveals a routine and transparent procurement process, with CNC machine import shipments standing at 3300, imported by 1,235 Pakistan importers from 1,343 suppliers, evidently used in different industries, including some small industries.

India's persistent propagation of disinformation against Pakistan aims to tarnish its image and destabilise its strategic partnerships, particularly within the initiatives like BRICS and CPEC. Despite Pakistan's transparent import practices and the multifaceted utility of CNC machinery, India continues its efforts to defame Pakistan with baseless accusations. Intriguingly, India is among one of the top importers of CNC machines, with shipments totaling a substantial 254,945 units from 67 different suppliers.

Pakistan's legitimate trade activities, including its imports of CNC machinery, should not be misrepresented or sensationalized to suit India's geopolitical agenda. Constructive engagement and dialogue, based on mutual respect and understanding, remain paramount for fostering trust and cooperation in the region. The international community must see through the veil of India's propaganda and recognize the reality behind its allegations against Pakistan. Through a fair and objective assessment of the facts can promote genuine cooperation and understanding between the two nations.

The insinuation that Pakistan and China would opt for land routes for transporting illicit goods, particularly related to weapons of mass destruction (WMDs), holds logical merit. Empirically the Transports Internationaux Routiers (TIR) route which connects China's Kashgar to Islamabad, Pakistan, by land is shorter than the sea route. The land route connecting Kashgar to Islamabad is only 690 km, whereas the sea route is 5996 nautical miles making 11104.59 km. The question is if China and Pakistan were indulged in any

dual-use business they would have preferred a short and safe route rather than opting for a long and unsafe route.

The Indian allegations regarding the capture of dual-use items traded between China and Pakistan are entangled with broader geopolitical tensions and regional dynamics in South Asia. Pakistan, like any sovereign state, maintains the right to engage in trade relations with other nations, and allegations of illicit trade are an attempt by India to not only interfere but also build a false image of Pakistan's trade affairs and cast doubt on its international trade practices. Even in international law, this attempt by India itself is a violation of international law of interference and intervention in the trade affairs of a sovereign state like Pakistan. These allegations challenge principles of non-interference and free trade, potentially escalating tensions between the two countries and impacting their relations. Moreover, such claims may reflect broader strategic competition in the region, driven by India's offensive and efforts to exert pressure on Pakistan. As a result, these allegations have the potential to influence regional security dynamics and shape the future trajectory of relations between India, Pakistan, and China.

India's relentless attempts to defame Pakistan through baseless accusations and propaganda will only worsen the already hostile relations between the neighbours and disrupt regional stability and cooperation. Moreover, the international community should limit India from the interference and intervention in the trade affairs of two sovereign states. Pakistan's legitimate trade activities, including its imports of CNC machinery, should not be misrepresented or sensationalized to suit India's geopolitical agenda. Constructive engagement and dialogue, based on mutual respect and understanding, remain paramount for fostering trust and cooperation in the region. The international community must see through the veil of India's propaganda and recognize the reality behind its allegations against Pakistan. Through a fair and objective assessment of the facts can promote genuine cooperation and understanding between the two nations.

Manipulated allegations against Pakistan – Pakistan Today

Revival of Quetta City Via Human Settlement Model

Sadia Zahra   **June 05, 2024**

Quetta, the capital of Balochistan province in Pakistan, is experiencing rapid population growth due to a substantial increase in its natural population, resulting in a total population of 1,221,000. This population surge is exerting pressure on the city's resources and infrastructure. This influx has resulted in overcrowding, informal settlements, and limited affordable housing options, leading to housing insecurity for many residents. Moreover, it has intensified pressure on essential services such as water supply, sanitation, and healthcare. Climate change has exacerbated the situation, with Quetta experiencing limited precipitation that renders rainwater a valuable yet underutilized resource due to the absence of government policies for water management and rainwater utilization. Inefficient drainage systems and a lack of rainwater harvesting infrastructure contribute to flash floods and erosion, while rainwater accumulation on roads impedes daily activities and commutes for the public.

Human settlement model focuses on reducing pollution by promoting energy-efficient buildings, renewable energy sources, and efficient public transportation systems that minimize reliance on private vehicles. By mitigating air and water pollution, sustainable cities improve air quality and public health outcomes for residents.

Enhancing accessibility to amenities, including parks, community gardens, and recreational areas, enhances overall quality of life and promotes social well-being. Human settlement with a focus on sustainability not only minimizes environmental impact but also creates healthier, more resilient urban communities that thrive harmoniously with nature.

In the case of Quetta, planned human settlement strategies can play a pivotal role in addressing these pressing issues. By meticulously designing and organizing urban spaces, planned settlement can optimize land use and prioritize affordable housing initiatives, upgrading infrastructure to accommodate growing demands while promoting environmental sustainability. This approach facilitates the coordinated provision of essential services such as water supply, sanitation, transportation, and green spaces in a manner that can absorb rainwater and mitigate stormwater runoff. Moreover, planned

human settlement can facilitate the implementation of Integrated Drainage Systems that efficiently manage rainwater flow, directing it towards retention ponds, infiltration basins, or constructed wetlands where it can be stored or naturally filtered.

Given the challenges faced by Quetta, particularly related to rapid population growth, inadequate infrastructure, housing insecurity, and limited water resources exacerbated by climate change, there are few cities that share similar challenges yet have effectively addressed these issues. Cities like Curitiba, Brazil, effectively managed rapid population growth through integrated transport systems, mixed-use zoning, and green space prioritization. Similarly, Medellín, Colombia, transformed into a model of inclusive urban development through investments in public transportation infrastructure and community engagement.

Melbourne, Australia, provides insights into water management and sustainability, including rainwater harvesting and conservation initiatives. Ahmedabad, India, emphasizes community engagement, and Singapore's advanced approaches to urban planning and water management, such as desalination and efficient drainage, could inform strategies for addressing Quetta's challenges effectively. By studying these cities, Quetta can tailor and apply successful urban development strategies to its unique context.

Planned settlement and sustainable urban development can also offer significant environmental benefits that contribute to long-term ecological health and improve quality of life for Quetta's residents. Strategic land use planning and zoning can help preserve natural resources such as green spaces and wetlands like Hanna Lake, maintaining biodiversity and ecological balance within the environment.

To adopt the human settlement model effectively, policymakers and stakeholders must undertake several key actions. Firstly, they should develop and advocate for comprehensive urban development policies that prioritize sustainability, encompassing aspects such as land use planning, affordable housing initiatives, infrastructure upgrades, and environmental protection measures. Secondly, engaging diverse stakeholders, including government agencies, private sector entities, community organizations, and residents, in planning and decision-making processes is crucial.

Thirdly, investing in capacity-building initiatives to enhance technical expertise among local authorities, planners, engineers, and other stakeholders involved in urban development is essential for sustainable progress. Allocating financial resources towards vital infrastructure projects like water management systems is crucial to ensure reliable access to clean water across Quetta. This involves building and upgrading water supply and distribution systems citywide. Promoting rainwater harvesting techniques and implementing wastewater treatment facilities are additional key measures to recycle and reuse water resources effectively.

Furthermore, expanding and enhancing the green bus system will greatly improve citywide connectivity and accessibility. Encouraging walking and cycling through dedicated lanes and pedestrian-friendly zones within residential areas will promote eco-friendly transportation options.

To enrich Quetta's urban environment, it is imperative to develop and maintain existing parks and recreational spaces. Initiatives such as tree planting programs and the installation of green roofs and vertical gardens can further enhance the city's greenery and overall environmental quality.

In the renewable energy sector, promoting solar energy adoption through incentives and subsidies for residential and commercial sectors, with a focus on rooftops, will contribute significantly to sustainable energy usage. Exploring wind energy opportunities in suitable areas around Quetta will also diversify renewable energy sources, fostering a cleaner and more sustainable energy future for the city. Top of Form

Moreover, conducting public awareness campaigns and educational programs to inform residents about the benefits of sustainable development and promoting collaboration with international partners, NGOs, and peer cities for knowledge sharing and innovation are vital. Finally, implementing robust monitoring and evaluation mechanisms to track progress and assess the impact of sustainability initiatives, while embracing innovative technologies to optimize resource use and enhance efficiency, will ensure Quetta's path towards a sustainable and resilient future.

Revival of Quetta City Via Human Settlement Model – Balochistan Diaries

Chaman's Cry

Sadia Zahra   **June 08, 2024**

The Durand Line, a contentious boundary drawn in 1893, continues to be a source of discord between Afghanistan and Pakistan. This 2,640-kilometer border, named after British diplomat Sir Mortimer Durand, was established through an agreement with Afghan Amir Abdur Rahman Khan to demarcate British India's frontier. Apparently, the Durand Line was drawn over a hundred years ago by the British to protect their interests from Russia. It cut through Pashtun tribal areas, dividing families and communities. Afghanistan still doesn't accept this border as real, while Pakistan does. This disagreement makes things tense between the two countries, causing hostile feelings and making it hard for them to work together.

The connection between Pakistan and Afghanistan is complicated, with a mix of old problems, shared needs, and changing politics. Even though they have a lot in common culturally and economically, they often don't get along. Problems with borders and worries about safety and security make things difficult between them. Trade, however, offers a beacon of hope. Pakistan is a significant trading partner for Afghanistan, providing a crucial gateway to global markets through the Karachi and Gwadar ports. The Afghanistan-Pakistan Transit Trade Agreement (APTTA) has been instrumental in facilitating trade, yet it faces implementation challenges that hinder its full potential. The Durand Line has always had serious security problems that affect areas far beyond it. This boundary has seen ongoing problems like attacks, militant activities, and illegal smuggling. The border's easy-to-cross, porous nature lets extremist groups like the Taliban and ISIS infiltrate Pakistan, using the rough landscape for hiding and planning attacks.

UK's new Premier Starmer calls for 'clear, urgent' need for cease-fire in Gaza

The post-9/11 era saw a marked escalation in border tensions, with the US-led NATO forces operating in Afghanistan often clashing with militants, who they alleged were seeking refuge in Pakistan's tribal areas. Pakistan's military campaigns, particularly in the Federally Administered Tribal Areas (FATA), aimed to root out these sanctuaries but also

led to significant displacement and humanitarian crises. Additionally, the mistrust between Kabul and Islamabad exacerbated the situation, as both sides frequently accused each other of harboring hostile elements. The protests in Chaman, the longest ever in Pakistan, which have been going on since October 2023, show how hard life is for the people who live and work there. Chaman has been a busy place where goods have been traded between Pakistan and Afghanistan for a long time. It helps lots of families on both sides make a living. But now, strict rules at the border and the border closings have made things very hard for the people living on both sides of the border.

[JI to arrange IT courses to empower millions of youngsters, says Naeemur Rehman](#)

Local traders and laborers, who once enjoyed a steady flow of goods and income, now face severe economic hardship. The delays and extra checks have not only slowed the supply chain but have also driven up the costs of essential goods, exacerbating poverty and food insecurity. Many laborers, whose daily wages depend on the movement of goods, find themselves struggling to make ends meet. Their frustration boils over into protests as protesters attacked government buildings and disrupted communication systems, turning the town into a chaotic battleground. Law enforcement agencies responded with tear gas and rubber bullets, injuring 40 people, including 17 security officials, escalating the situation even more. These protests are a cry for help from a community that feels abandoned and unheard. The people of Chaman are in a tough cycle, where security concerns overshadow their basic economic needs.

The protests occurring at the Chaman border crossing are more than just local problems. They have big effects on trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan and on how the two countries get along. Chaman is important for trade between Pakistan and Afghanistan, but recent problems are making the relationship between Pakistan and Afghanistan worse. Afghanistan sees Pakistan's strict border rules as making things even harder, and it's making people in Afghanistan angry at Pakistan. It is indeed understandable that Pakistan prioritizes its security concerns, particularly given its tumultuous history of grappling with various security challenges. But it is also important for the government to think about the people who live and work in Chaman. They are the ones most affected by the rules about crossing the border. While needing a passport to cross the border makes

sense for safety, it is also important to understand how it affects people in Chaman. The people of Chaman have already endured the painful result of historical divisions, the creation of the Durand Line, which tore apart families and communities. The citizens have started accepting the Durand. Line as a reality, but the border crossing rules have significantly altered their daily lives. Their concerns need to be addressed through diplomacy and collaboration to find a solution that balances security and economic prosperity.

School Meal Programme for lagging districts of Balochistan on cards

Moving forward, it is essential to adopt a multi-faceted approach to address the challenges at the Durand Line. Strengthening border security measures, investing in infrastructure, and enhancing trade facilitation can foster a more stable and prosperous region. Additionally, engaging in constructive dialogue between Afghanistan and Pakistan is vital to rebuilding trust and addressing the root causes of their longstanding disputes. This will not only improve the lives of those residing in the border regions but also contribute to regional stability and cooperation.

Chaman's Cry – The Nations

Lack of Awareness of Nuclear Program Leading to Nuclear Pessimism

Harsa Kakar   **June 09, 2024**

As Youm-e-Takbeer approaches its 26th anniversary, the need to understand its importance becomes far more necessary. Pakistan, on this day in 1998 entered the nuclear club having felt compelled by the conduction of a second series of Indian nuclear tests back then. This increased the pressure on Pakistan on behalf of the international community asking for 'reasons' why Pakistan felt the need to have nuclear power in the first place. However, only Pakistan knew its position when it came to national survival and that there was an urgent requirement for a robust defense capability to be established.

Having a look at its historical context, Pakistan, as we all know came face to face with India directly one year after independence. This was the first war on the issue of Kashmir. 16 years later, Pakistan and India again shared a head-to-head in the 1965 war. Later, six years had not passed since the Bangladesh Liberation War occurred between the two countries. Back in those days, there were rumors of India going Nuclear in the air. When India conducted its first nuclear test in 1974, Pakistan's insecurity did increase. Because a long-time rival now seemed stronger in the region. This threat perception forced Pakistan to go nuclear and the need for it was now inevitable.

The above discussion concerns the defense part of the nuclear weapon program. However, when we look at its perception among the general public, there is a constant pessimism observed regarding the nuclear program and the need to invest in it. It is seen as a lavish form of investment and the budget spending on it each year is questioned by many. To clear that, the peaceful uses of nuclear energy should be highlighted and focused upon.

Peaceful uses of nuclear energy are as many as one can count. This includes the use of nuclear energy in electricity generation, agricultural and industrial contribution, health sector, countering food insecurity, and countering energy crisis.

Moving towards the first use that is, electricity generation, nuclear energy is significant in Pakistan's electricity generation due to its dependable nature and consistently low energy costs. Pakistan is armed with six nuclear power reactors (NRPs) which have a capacity of 3,530 MW, these contribute about 27 percent of the total electricity generation in the national grid as of December 2022. All these power plants are pressurized water reactors (PWR). This technology is not only used in Pakistan but is used worldwide by developed nations. There is no doubt, that the capacity costs of nuclear plants may be higher than those of local coal and gas power plants, but they do have much lower energy costs and a longer operating life.

As far as its contribution to the agricultural sector is concerned, we are aware that Pakistan's dependency on agriculture is under threat as the country has been identified as one of the most vulnerable to climate change. In that case, nuclear energy is playing a considerable role in countering this threat. The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC), in collaboration with the International Atomic Energy Agency (IAEA), has established two agriculture research centers at Tandojam and Lyallpur, where radiation and radioisotope techniques are used to produce over 125 high-yielding varieties of crops that have better quality and have a high tolerance for environmental stress.

Nuclear energy and its contributions to the health sector are applaudable. In the health sector, nuclear energy provides radioactive-natured treatments for high-edge diseases and cures them in ways nothing else can. In this regard, the PAEC has established 19 Atomic Energy Cancer Hospitals (AECHs) all across Pakistan. PAEC Cancer Hospitals handle over 40,000 cancer cases with 1.0 million procedures per annum, taking ~80 % of the country's cancer burden on their shoulders. These include high-quality diagnostic and treatment facilities either free of charge or at subsidized rates at these hospitals.

Consecutively, Pakistan being 5th most vulnerable country in terms of food insecurity in the world concerning climate change, is yet another issue. In this regard, PAEC in collaboration with IAEA has established four institutions—Nuclear Institute for Agriculture (NIA, 1962), Nuclear Institute for Agriculture & Biology (NIAB, 1972), National Institute of Biotechnology & Genetic Engineering (NIBGE, 1994), and Nuclear Institute for Food & Agriculture (NIFA, 1982). These institutes work in areas such as crop improvement, and

insect pest control, various kinds of wheat, cotton, rice, mung bean, chickpea, lentil, sugarcane, castor bean, kinnow, sesame, tomato, and brassica have been created as a result of their study. These types have more nutritional content, are heat tolerant, resistant to insects and diseases, and yield more.

Moreover, countries or organizations that contribute to nuclear energy power plants in Pakistan are dealt with in a way that does not bring debts to Pakistan's economy. The deals in this respect are based on installments that are paid back to that specific country by the power plant itself. In short, nuclear energy brings socio-economic benefits to Pakistan and it is about time we avoid all kinds of pessimism and misperceptions concerning it while focusing on its benefits. First and foremost, its defensive importance is crucial for our national survival and security, secondly, its socio-economic benefits and importance are unavoidable as discussed in the above-made arguments.

Lack of Awareness of Nuclear Program Leading to Nuclear Pessimism - Strafasia

The battle of bytes: Uncontrollable social media propaganda of India

Summra Hamid   **June 09, 2024**

In the digital age, with the integration of artificial intelligence (AI) and where information travels at the speed of light, social media has become a battleground for narratives, ideologies, and geopolitical manoeuvring.

This is no more evident than in the frosty relations between India and Pakistan. The virtual war rages on, with a special focus on India, deploying an arsenal of misinformation, disinformation, and propaganda to shape public opinion and influence global discourse. As Joseph Goebbels, the Nazi Minister of Propaganda stated, *"If you tell a lie big enough and keep repeating it, people will eventually come to believe it."*

This seems to be the motivation of *Hindutwa* propagandists as disinformation thrives on ambiguity and emotion. India leverages historical grievances, cultural stereotypes, and fear to create a toxic brew. False narratives about Pakistan's nuclear programme, alleged state-sponsored terrorism, and religious extremism have found fertile ground online, shaping public perception and policy decisions beyond just the realm of trolls and bots.

India has mastered the art of using social media as a weapon. Its campaigns against Pakistan are carefully orchestrated, targeting not only domestic audiences but also the international community. From Twitter storms to coordinated Facebook posts, India's propaganda machine churns out narratives that demonize Pakistan, question its legitimacy, and amplify existing fault lines. For instance, an investigative report compiled by Disinfo Lab from the European Union, exposed a New Delhi-based investment firm, the Srivastava Group, for arranging an extensive disinformation campaign and influence operations. According to the report, since 2005, these campaigns have specifically targeted EU politicians and institutions to portray Pakistan and China negatively.

The investigation also uncovered a connection between 10 UN-accredited NGOs and the Srivastava Group, based in Brussels and Geneva. The report includes evidence of 10 NGOs accredited with the UN being directly linked to the Srivastava Group, operating in Brussels and Geneva, and organizing trips for European Parliament members to Indian-

occupied Kashmir, falsely representing them as sanctioned by Parliament. The European non-profit organization, EU Disinfo Lab, has also proven the Indian agenda of spreading disinformation against Pakistan and China, particularly through the popular Indian news agency, Asia News International (ANI).

Furthermore, India's main news agency, ANI, predominantly features articles from over 500 fake news sites spread across 96 countries associated with the Srivastava Group. While India's government denies any involvement, these revelations accentuate the persistent distrust between the two nuclear powers, India and Pakistan, despite their shared history and geographic proximity. The report highlights ANI's repeated use of false sources, including a defunct think tank called POREG, journalists, bloggers, and fictional geopolitical analysts. These fabricated narratives aimed at smearing India's geopolitical adversaries make it impossible to trust Indian claims of noninvolvement in the spread of such misinformation.

The rapid expansion of internet access has enabled the proliferation of misinformation by Indian users. It was observed during the covid-19 epidemic that internet users in India escalated from 422.2 million in 2017 to 845.7 million in 2021, amplifying the spread of misinformation. This trend was observed to be exacerbated by the covid-19 pandemic, as the affordability of low-budget mobile phones and internet plans led to an even greater influx of users. With the increased number of users, the chances of more misinformation increased, as social media sites and apps did not include any fact checkers in them. As a result, the public shared all the misinformed posts in a great number.

Another example of the influx of misinformation resulting in tensions between the religious minorities within India during covid-19. The Hindus blamed Muslims, propagated and linked this misinformation blaming the Muslims for the spread of covid-19, resulting in economic hardship for Muslim vendors, illustrating the profound impact of misinformation on minority communities. The consequences of this misinformation warfare were far-reaching. It fueled mistrust, escalated tensions, and perpetuated a cycle of hostility between the two religions, Hindus and Muslims.

Moreover, the BJP Government in India has used this manipulation of information to sway public opinion, a stark departure from Narendra Modi's initial slogan of *"Sabka Saath*

Sabka Vikaas (Everyone's support, everyone's development)." As Modi consolidated power, the discourse shifted, fostering extremism and stoking anti-Muslim sentiments. The biggest tool of Modi in this war is the manipulation and spread of disinformation through social media apps explicitly overseen by the Modi-led media wings. Resultantly, any misinformation or disinformation spread by Indian users through apps like WhatsApp remained unchecked. On the contrary, any post or source of disinformation against the BJP is immediately removed from the app proving the fact that the government itself is involved in the evil media game.

The recent election in India highlighted the widespread dissemination of misinformation aimed at manipulating the outcome. Bollywood stars rarely engage in political discussions, so when videos surfaced showing two celebrities criticizing Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi and endorsing his main opposition, the Congress party, they quickly went viral.

However, these clips featuring [A-list actors](#) Aamir Khan and Ranveer Singh were fake, AI-generated videos, representing yet another instance of false or misleading claims circulating online to influence India's election. Additionally, various claims have circulated online in India, misrepresenting details about [voting procedures](#), alleging without evidence that the election would be rigged, and inciting [violence against India's Muslim](#) population. Researchers monitoring misinformation and hate speech in India argue that the poor enforcement of tech companies' policies has created ideal conditions for harmful content to distort public opinion, incite violence, and [leave millions of voters uncertain](#) about what to believe.

Promoting a culture of critical thinking by encouraging people to verify information before sharing and providing user-friendly fact-checking tools and resources, like browser add-ons and mobile apps, can make a significant impact. Finally, educating the public on how to critically assess information, recognize biases, and identify reliable sources, while collaborating with government, NGOs, media, and technology sector partners, will enhance the message and optimize resource utilization.

The spread of misinformation can trigger real-world actions, affecting diplomatic relations, security dynamics, and even the delicate balance of nuclear deterrence. As long as social media exists, so will the battle of bytes.

India must recognize that its virtual skirmishes have real-world consequences. A multifaceted approach utilising various communication channels is essential to address the dangers of deception and emphasize the importance of evidence-based information. This includes leveraging social media, traditional media, and community engagement to broaden the reach towards factual data. Partnering with respected community figures, influencers, and experts can help strengthen the message and build trust.

Creating compelling and educational content, based on truth and facts, such as infographics, videos, and podcasts, will engage interest and encourage sharing. It is crucial to empower the public to identify and report misinformation, fostering a sense of accountability and ownership. Integrating media literacy and critical thinking skills into school curricula and community initiatives, along with organizing events, rallies, and educational campaigns, will increase awareness and spread evidence-based information. Using data analytics to monitor misinformation patterns, identify vulnerable audiences, and tailor messaging accordingly is also vital.

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The battle of bytes: Uncontrollable social media propaganda of India – Pakistan Today

The Emerging Economic Powers in Major Power Competition

Atta Ullah   **June 11, 2024**

The Great Power Competition between the United States (U.S.), China, and Russia operates in two global power-led blocs with multiple poles, including the Emerging Economic Powers as the Next Pole.

However, these two blocs remain un-demarcated, and the poles merge at the politico-economic junction because of the role of emerging economic powers, such as Brazil, Argentina, India, Australia, South Africa, Indonesia, the UEA, etc. Dino Patti Dajala, a speaker at the World Economic Forum 2024, believes that the proliferation of middle powers, particularly in the Global South, will shape the 21st-century world order rather than greater or major powers.

Similarly, a panel of renowned scholars, including the renowned political scientist Graham Ellison-, contended that if these powers act more or less in a uniform fashion, they can 'end up being a superpower'. Or, according to Ziya Onis and Mustafa Kutlay, these powers can create a 'world of regions'. In addition, in this major power competition, Fareed Zakaria, the renowned realist and – author of 'post-Americanism', argues that it is not necessarily the decline of the major powers, such as the US, but the rise of the rest. This is where emerging economies matter the most because they belong to the 'era of middle powers.

In the major power competition, the Middle Powers, the emerging economic powers or influential states that sit below the great powers but still exert influence, play an important role due to their instrumentality in shaping global politics. Organski, the proponent of the 'Power Transition Theory' on middle powers, posits that these powers typically align with the winning side to claim victory or avoid responsibility in the event of failure or defeat. Thus, they act unpredictably in the international system.

In this case, these countries are crucial because of their growing economic power in the form of International trade, energy markets, economic growth, technological advancement, and possibly strong currencies. In the wake of the Ukrainian conflict and resulting economic sanctions on Russia, these emerging powers are aware of the vulnerability of reliance on the Western Financial System, especially on the US dollar. Hence, they have started decoupling their economies and using local currencies, or currencies other than the US dollar, to be able to withstand or escape Western sanctions. This can accelerate the phenomenon of de-dollarization led by emerging economic powers. Subsequently, this may antagonize the West against the rest by challenging the existing financial system.

The Inter-regional trade between these middle powers increases their interdependence with the rest of the world thus, increasing their say in world politics. However, countries like India, Brazil, South Africa, and Australia, do not risks taking sides in this major power competition due to the constraining sensitivity as well as the vulnerability of economic Interdependence with other countries.

Likewise, these powers can bring balance and stability to the international order to preserve international peace and security. Especially in a crisis, these countries can also influence conflict dynamics, as well as play a stabilizing role and prevent conflict escalation. i.e., the Ukrainian crisis, in which Middle powers like India and Brazil refused to take sides. However, they can also prove to be disruptive as well as instrumental in worsening the already fragile international order marred by great power competition.

For instance, on the other hand, if these powers choose to side with a major power, Like India aligning with the US, in their quest for hegemony and against another major power, such as China; local-level conflicts would be quick to turn into regional crises with the potential to escalate into a global conflict. Therefore, the degree of their tilt towards great powers would be detrimental to the outcome of such a possibility, in either case. Besides, the independent path, if these countries follow could be equally important in defining regional as well as international politics.

Similarly, a Barometer of International Cooperation, devised by the World Economic Forum, records some instances of international cooperation during a great power competition. However, it does not account for the prevention of genocidal acts of war, such as in the Hamas-Israel conflict, and consensus over the security needs of major powers such as those of Russia in Eastern Europe. This is likely due to the lack of an assertive middle power role.

Likewise, these middle powers sometimes play a different regional role compared to their global role. For instance, they may confront regionally and cooperate globally, and vice versa. Particularly in the South Asian region, the emergence of India as an economic power has emboldened it to project its hegemonic ambitions on the smaller regional countries by bullying them into submission, such as the Maldives, Sri Lanka, and Bhutan, and portray- itself as the leader of multilateral cooperation and responsible international actor. Moreover, in the post-US withdrawal from Afghanistan, India has become the buck-passer and leaning shoulder for the US to look after regional politics, despite its acclaimed democratic credentials of non-interference in the sovereign affairs of its neighbors.

On the other hand, India is in a general confrontation with China at the regional level. Still, it keeps away from conflicts internationally, such as Ukraine, or other disputes outside the region, such as the Hamas-Israel conflict. It confirms the dual-nature role these middle powers play at different levels. These powers, such as India, Brazil, Japan, and Germany, are also critical of the existing power structure at the international level, for instance, particularly in the UN Security Council, but at the same time have the incentive to be part of the global order based on liberal norms. This would entail their selective approach to the international system where they want to benefit the most without any loss.

Subsequently, this may result in a Neo-Cold War that -differs from the old one. The middle powers, such as India, South Africa, and Brazil, would likely play an assertive role or Strategic Autonomy rather than a submissive one. The most consequential fallout of this geopolitical race of interests is, as the UN Secretary-General said at the World Economic Forum 2024 in Davos, that the 'Geopolitical divides – prevent)- us from coming together around global solutions' such as climate change, and poverty.

Therefore, the chances of multilateral cooperation are becoming highly unlikely or otherwise would be very issue-specific in the case of emerging powers. In sum, these emerging powers can influence and reshape the global order into a complex web of multiple poles, but with two important spheres of influence: the economic sphere and the security sphere. China, with its largest economy and trading partner in the world, is likely to dominate the financial system and global trade. And the Security Sphere is going to remain dominated by the US, which leads the largest alliance of collective security, nuclear umbrella, and military bases around the world. Therewith, the emerging economies, as middle powers, can bring stability to the system by balancing both spheres, too.

The Emerging Economic Powers In Major Power Competition – Eurasia Review

Assessing the Motives behind Unjustified Sanctions and Double Standards of a Great Power

Pairman Bazai   **June 11, 2024**

Once again, the U.S. Department of State issued orders against four companies to prevent them from delivering missile-related commodities to Pakistan's ballistic missile program in an effort to restrict the proliferation of missile technology. Firstly, it is crucial to analyze the assertion that Pakistan is developing and manufacturing missiles. Pakistan vehemently contests US accusations that its secret agencies are engaged in terrorism, raising questions about the veracity of the evidence and the underlying motivations behind the sanctions. Secondly, do these restrictions truly stem from concerns about their so-called nuclear non-proliferation, or do they mask deeper geopolitical targets? Therefore, it is crucial to evaluate the reasons for and effects of US sanctions against Pakistan's entities.

Pakistan is no stranger to the US sanctions, which have been repeatedly imposed without logical justification. Since its inception, the US has imposed sanctions on Pakistan several times, which include the Pressler Amendments in 1990, the Nonproliferation Sanctions in 2005, the Kerry-Lugar-Berman Act in 2009, the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) Grey Listing, the suspension of military aid in 2018, and the designation of Pakistani entities as Specially Designated Global Terrorists (SDGT) due to their alleged support for militant organizations and involvement in nuclear proliferation. This seems to be very much part of the fact that Pakistan-US relations were again hit by another bad news story with the sanction imposed on four Pakistani companies. Among these allegations, some concern the sanctions, reportedly because of their connection with missile development, which Pakistan strongly refutes. But it is a vortex of geopolitical dynamics, economic interests, and strategic calculations that are concealed behind all these sanctions. Pakistan finds itself in the crosshairs of geopolitical chess and needs to identify the genuine motives behind the subsequent punishments it faces.

A potential motive behind sanctioning Pakistan is very obvious that is, the US views China as its primary adversary. Pakistan, being China's close neighbor and trade partner,

becomes a target. Conversely, China and Pakistan do not have stable relations with India. In this geopolitical context, the US follows the principle "the enemy of my enemy is my friend" by aligning with India to counter China's influence. According to the [analysis of Mr. Zamir Akram](), the former Ambassador of Pakistan, the US overlooks and even supports India's military expansion while demanding unilateral restraint from Pakistan. This double standard aims to empower India as a "Net Security Provider" against China, thereby limiting Pakistan's capabilities so India can focus on countering China.

Also, the arguments raised by Pakistan's officials that the US' actions reek of hypocrisy and double standards. Comparing the trade and alliances of Pakistan with those of the mother states of the sanctioned companies reveals glaring inconsistencies in US foreign policy. While the US justifies its actions under the guise of nuclear non-proliferation, it conveniently turns a blind eye to its own partnerships with countries like Australia, the UK, and India in formal (Quadrilateral Security Dialogue, the QUAD) and informal (the [SQUAD]()) alliances, which have nuclear capabilities. In addition, Pakistan's delayed membership in Nuclear Suppliers Group (NSG) has contributed to furthering criticisms against the US. That is why, due to the constant pressure from the US and the continued violation of non-proliferation norms in Pakistan, it had to work on the improvement of various nuclear safety measures. This selective approach makes a mockery of the nuclear states and further erodes the US' standing in the present world.

There might be another reason for the US sanctions, namely, [Pakistan's engagement in the Iran-Pakistan (IP) Gas Pipeline](). Continuing this project even after the disapproval of the US might have angered some people within the US administration, resulting in punitive actions. The IP Gas Pipeline carries natural gas from Iran to Pakistan with the aim of assisting Pakistan to meet its energy deficiencies. Nevertheless, the US has always been against this project based on the general sanctions it has imposed on Iran and its antagonistic attitude toward Iran's hegemonial role in the Middle East region. Additionally, asserting a firm economic and strategic relationship between Pakistan and Iran may be viewed as a threat to the US due to the historical enmity of the US-Iran relations and the Iran-Israel relations. The U.S. opposes developments that boost Iran's economy or regional influence, as this undermines U.S. and Israeli strategic policies.

Indeed, could these sanctions be a way of preventing the emerging amity between Pakistan and Iran?

While the cited concerns are nuclear non-proliferation and missile development, the sanctions demonstrate a set of intersectional affiliations of geopolitical and strategic territorial identities, cordial relations, and economic integration. Thus, while the US qualifies Pakistan as an unsafe country due to proliferation concerns, making sanctions its response, it is forming its own alliances, for instance, the future SQUAD. People are starting to doubt certain evidence about US policymaking in the Middle East and the aftermath that the region will see soon. In the future, it will be crucial for the US and Russia to develop strategies and have open discussions about certain issues that are essential for making the relations between the two countries constructive and beneficial. Thus, fairness and impartiality should be given top priority in US diplomatic relations as a global leader. This can be achieved by treating all states fairly, avoiding prejudice, and encouraging international collaboration and trust.

[Assessing the Motives behind Unjustified Sanctions and Double Standards of a Great Power – South Asia Journal](#)

Pakistan's Peaceful Use of Nuclear Technology

Sikandar Azam Khan   **June 11,2024**

Recently, Pakistan commemorated the 26th anniversary of Youm e Takbeer. It is important to discuss the crucial role of Pakistan's nuclear program in ensuring the national security of the country. Pakistan's nuclear acquisition capabilities began in the mid-1970s, and the country successfully displayed them in May 1998, shortly after India conducted nuclear tests and declared itself a nuclear weapon state. Apart from its vital role in the security of the country, Pakistan is utilizing nuclear technology for socioeconomic development in the country.

Many nations have prioritised nuclear energy for sustainable development through the IAEA's 'Atom for Peace Development' strategy to accomplish the Sustainable Development Goals SDGs-2030. Peaceful applications of nuclear technology are an important component of Pakistan's nuclear programme. Pakistan remains dedicated to using the immense potential of nuclear technology for the country's socioeconomic development and contributing to the attainment of the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. The Pakistan Atomic Energy Commission (PAEC) has taken significant steps to support the country's efforts to accomplish the SDGs and ensure sustainable development.

Energy is essential for achieving practically all of the SDGs. Nuclear energy is a clean, dependable, and cost-effective energy source that meets all of the SDG-7 criteria (affordable and clean energy) while contributing to the other goals. Pakistan's civilian nuclear programme adds substantial value to the country's energy mix by producing clean and cost-effective electricity. Pakistan has grown its nuclear energy capacity to 3262 MWe (Net)/ 3,530 MWe (Gross), accounting for 12.5% of Pakistan's total energy production as of March 2022. Pakistan wants to attain 8,000 megawatts of nuclear energy capacity by 2030, immediately accomplish SDG-7, and contribute to the achievement of all sustainable development goals, objectives, and indicators. Furthermore, nuclear power plants provide enormous amounts of clean electricity while occupying small land

areas, so directly contributing to SDGs 15 (Life on Land), 9 (Industry, Innovation, and Infrastructure), and 11 (Sustainable Cities and Communities).

Many nations have prioritised nuclear energy for sustainable development through the IAEA's Atom for Peace Development strategy.

Climate change is one of the most pressing challenges the world is facing today. It has generated various pressing problems such as water scarcity, food shortages, biodiversity loss, and natural disasters. Over the past two decades, Pakistan has been persistently ranked as one of the most vulnerable countries due to climate change. Pakistan has increased the capacity of indigenously generated nuclear energy to achieve SDG-13 (climate action). Moreover, it is assisting Pakistan in achieving SDG-1, which aims to end poverty for all, and SDG-2, which aims to eradicate hunger and malnutrition. After harvesting, insects, bacteria, and rodents cause about 25-30% loss of food production, thus creating a food deficiency. Pakistan`s agricultural sector is a significant contributor to the country's exports, as it accounts for 80% of the country`s total export earnings.

Pakistan is embracing nuclear technology to boost agricultural efficiency and output. Nuclear technologies have developed crop cultivars that are stress-tolerant and climate-resilient. Furthermore, nuclear technology is useful in pest control, plant nutrition, water management, productivity, and food decontamination and preservation. Furthermore, attempts to educate farmers and equip them with plant materials and technology to prevent water loss in water-scarce locations would help SDG 6 (clean water and sanitation).

Pakistan is also striving to achieve SDG-3 (excellent health and well-being) and reduce the country's illness burden. Cancer has become an increasingly widespread illness in Pakistan. Breast cancer is becoming more common in Pakistan, which has the highest incidence in the region. Pakistan has one of the world's highest breast cancer rates. Cancer therapy relies heavily on nuclear technologies. Studies have indicated that it is quite successful in the early stages of breast cancer therapy. PAEC has developed 19 Atomic Energy Cancer Hospitals (AECH) where over 700,000 cancer patients are treated each year, accounting for about 80% of all cancer patients in Pakistan, according to the IAEA's slogan, "Cancer Care for All."

The AECHs provide a substantial contribution to attaining SDG-3 (excellent health and well-being) by providing patients with cutting-edge diagnostic and treatment services, either for free or at a reduced cost. Furthermore, AECHs are aiming to raise awareness about cancer and the need for early detection and treatment. Pakistan should extend its use of nuclear technology in medical and cancer therapy, which has become a more common and concerning disease.

Nuclear technology is also helping the country to enhance the quality of education and gender equality. Science and technology institutes contribute to training and education, helping to achieve SDG 4 (excellent education). In addition, the PAEC is launching projects to encourage young women to seek jobs in science and technology to prevent prejudice, thus contributing to the country's efforts to promote gender equality and achieve SDG 5.

Pakistan's safe and effective use of nuclear technology is a more sustainable option for putting the country on the path to progress and prosperity. Pakistan's peaceful use of nuclear technology has a substantial impact on the country's socioeconomic progress.

Pakistan's Peaceful Use of Nuclear Technology – Daily Times

Haram Ka Paisa Aur Umar e Nooh\

Asad Ullah Raisani   **June 23, 2023**

حالیہ دنوں میں میری ملاقات ایک ۶۰ سالہ بزرگ سے ہوئی جن کا حال ہی میں جرگہ کے ذریعے ایک تنازعہ حل ہوا تھا۔ جب میں نے ان سے پوچھا کہ انہوں نے عدلیہ کی بجائے جرگہ کے ذریعے مسئلہ حل کرنے کا انتخاب کیوں کیا تو انہوں نے کہا "نہ تو میرے پاس عدالتوں اور کچہریوں میں ضائع کرنے کے لیے حرام کا پیسہ ہے اور نہ ہی عمرِنوحؑ کہ سالوں فیصلہ آنے کا انتظار کرتا رہوں میں۔" اس بات پرپورے کمرے میں ایک زوردارقہقہہ گونج اٹھا اوروباں بیٹھا ہر شخص زوروں سے ہنسنے لگا۔مجھے یوں لگا جیسے یہ زوردارقہقہہ ملک کی عدلیہ کی بگڑتی ہوئی حالت پہ ہیں، جہاں ایک عام شہری انصاف کے لیے عدلیہ کی بجائے دوسرے رستے تلاش کرتا رہتا ہے۔ مثلاً، بلوچستان میں رہنے والے کئی لوگ، شاید اکثریت ، انصاف کے لیے روایتی نظامِ عدل جیسے جرگہ کا انتخاب کرتی ہے۔

یہ بات قابلِ غور ہے کہ ورلڈ جسٹس پراجیکٹ کی رول آف لاء انڈیکس ۲۰۲۱ کی رپورٹ کے مطابق پاکستان قانون کی حکمرانی پر عمل کرنے میں ۱۳۹ ممالک میں ۱۳۰ ویں نمبر پر ہے۔ رپورٹ میں کہا گیا ہے کہ پاکستان کی عدلیہ میں احتساب اور انصاف کا فقدان ہے۔ انصاف کی رسائی میں مشکلات اور جانبداری دیگر بڑی وجوہات ہیں جن کی وجہ سے رپورٹ میں پاکستان کو اتنا نیچے رکھا گیا ہے۔ یہ وہ بنیادی وجوہات ہیں جن کی وجہ سے پاکستان میں متوازی و متبادل نظام عدل اپنی حوصلہ شکنی کے باوجود کام کر رہی ہیں۔ بلوچستان کے دیہی علاقوں باالخصوص جنوب مشرقی بلوچستان کے سلیمانی قبائل اور صوبے کے پشتون اکثریتی دیہی علاقوں میں رہنے والے حصولِ انصاف کے لیئے جرگے کےنظام پر زیادہ انحصار کرتے ہیں۔

تاہم، اس بات کو نظر انداز نہیں کیا جا سکتا کہ جرگوں پر قبائلی اشرافیہ کا غلبہ ہے، جس میں خواتین کی نمائندگی نہیں ہوتی، اور یہ ایسے فیصلے سنانے کے لیے جانے جاتے ہیں جو اکثر بنیادی انسانی حقوق کے خلاف ہوتے ہیں۔ اس کے باوجود قبائلی لوگ جرگے کے نظام پر اعتماد کرتے ہیں اور اسے انصاف کی تیز رفتار اور سستی فراہمی کے لیے زیادہ مُؤثر سمجھتے ہیں۔ ایک اور موقع پر میں ایک پشتون َملک سے ملا جنہوں نے مجھے بتایا کہ انہوں نے ایک دن میں تین تنازعات بھی حل کیے ہیں اور جس فیصلے میں أنہیں طویل ترین مدت لگی وہ ڈھائی ماہ کی تھی۔ انہوں نے مزید کہا، " اس کے برعکس ہمارا ایک دوست عدالت میں جائیداد کا تنازعہ طے کرنے گیا، اور اسے چار سال سے زیادہ کا عرصہ گزر چکا ہے، لیکن فیصلہ آنا ابھی باقی ہے۔"

ایک شخص ،جس کی عمر ۲۵ سال کے آس پاس ہے، نے شکوہ کیا کہ وہ اپنے دستاویزات میں اپنی تاریخ پِیدائش کو درست کرنا چاہتا تھا اور اسے تین سال سے زیادہ عرصہ لگا عدالتوں کے چکر کاٹنے اور مختلف وکلاء سے مشورہ کرنے میں اور آخر کار تنگ آکر اس نے ایک با اثر شخص سے مداخلت کرنے کی درخواست کی اور اس با اثر شخص کے مداخلت کرتے ہی یہ معاملہ مہینوں میں حل ہو گیا۔ایک اور شخص نے کہا کہ شناختی کارڈ پر اس کا نام محمد ظہور جبکہ اس کے سرٹیفیکیٹس اور دیگر دستاویزات پر ظہور احمدتھا، اس نے عدالت میں کیس کیا کہ نادراکے رکارڈ

اور اسکے قومی شناختی کارڈ پہ اس کے نام کی درستگی کی جائے ۔لیکن اس چھوٹے مسئلے پہ بھی اس کو ڈیڑھ سال تک عدالت کے چکر کاٹنے پڑے ۔ اس دوران ایک وکیل سے بھی اس موضوع پہ تھوڑی بہت گفتگو ہوئی جنہوں نے غصے بھرے لہجے میں کہا کہ کچھ عرصہ قبل ایک مشہور سیاستدان کی گاڑی کے نیچے ایک پولیس اہلکار کوسرعام کچل دینا ملک کی عدلیہ کے تابوت میں آخری کیل تھا۔انہوں نے مزید کہا   "اگر لوگ عدالتوں پر جرگوں کو ترجیح دیتے ہیں تو وہ صحیح کر رہے ہیں کیونکہ ہم ان کی توقعات پر پورا نہیں اتر پائے اور کوئی بھی نظام جو انصاف کی فراہمی میں ناکام رہے اس پہ یقین کرنے کی کوئی بھی تُک نہیں بنتی۔"

مختصراً، بعض سطحوں پر حوصلہ شکنی کے باوجود، جرگہ کو بلوچستان میں خاص طور پر دیہی علاقوں میں، جہاں لوگوں میں ملک کے عدالتی نظام پر اعتماد کی کمی ہے، لوگوں کی بڑی تعداد زیادہ قابل اعتماد سمجھتی ہے۔ یہاں تک کہ ماضی قریب میں پاکستان کے ایک نگراں وزیر اعظم انوار الحق کاکڑ نے بھی ملک میں جبری گمشدگیوں کے حق میں بات کرتے ہوئے میڈیا پہ ایسے ہی خیالات کا اظہار کیا تھا کہ ملک کا نظامِ عدل کمزور ہے۔ مزید برآں، صوبے میں متوازی نظام عدل پر انحصار واضح ہے، کیونکہ جو لوگ منتخب ہو کر قومی یا صوبائی اسمبلیوں کے رکن بنتے ہیں وہ بھی لوگوں کو ملک کے عدالتی نظام پر اعتماد کرنے کی ترغیب دینے کی بجائے، جرگوں میں سفید ریش کی حیثیت سے شریک ہوتے ہیں ۔ جس سے صاف ظاہر ہے کہ وہ خود بھی کہیں نہ کہیں ملک کی عدلیہ پہ بھروسہ نہیں کرتے۔

اس لیے ملک کے عدالتی نظام کو فوری اور سستا انصاف فراہم کرکے مزید قابل اعتماد بنانے کی ضرورت ہے۔ اس ڈیجیٹل دور میں، لوگوں کو ہر معمولی بات کے لیے کچہری آنے میں اپنا وقت ضائع نہیں کرنا چاہیے۔ اس کے بجائے، عدالتی نظام کو ورچوئلائز کیا جانا چاہیے، اور ہر قسم کا فارم، درخواست، خط، یا اسٹامپ پیپر انہیں آن لائن دستیاب ہونا چاہیے تا کہ۳۰ روپے کے اسٹامپ پیپر کے لیئے اُنہیں ۲۰۰ روپے نہ دینے پڑیں۔ صوبے کے مختلف علاقوں میں عدالت کی ذیلی شاخیں بنائی جائیں تاکہ لوگوں کو ہر بار فیصلے کے لیے کوئٹہ آنے کا سوچنے کی ضرورت نہ پڑے۔ عدالتی نظام میں شفافیت اس نظام میں ریڑھ کی ہڈی کی حیثیت رکھتی ہے جس کا واضح فقدان ہے۔ تھانہ کلچر عام شہریوں پر مزید بوجھ ڈالتا ہے جس پر اعلیٰ حکام کو غور کرنے کی ضرورت ہے۔

اگرچہ ان تجاویز پر عملدرآمد کے بعد بھی لوگوں کو عدالتی نظام پر اعتماد کرنے میں وقت لگے گالیکن اگر اس سلسلے میں غیر سنجیدگی جاری رہی تو متوازی نظام عدل اپنی برتری برقرار رکھے گا اور صوبے کے مختلف حصوں میں مختلف قوانین ہوں گے۔ سبی میں بیٹھنے والے جرگہ کا ژوب میں بیٹھے جرگے سے انصاف کی پیمائش کرنے کا پیمانہ مختلف ہوگا، اور قلات میں بیٹھے جرگے کی نظر میں انصاف کچھ تو پشین میں بیٹھے جرگے کی نظر میں کچھ اور ہوگا۔ اس لئیے ایک منصفانہ اور مستقل نظام عدل وقت کی اہم ضرورت ہے۔

[Haram Ka Paisa Aur Umar e Nooh –Daily Urdu](#)

The Deep Fake Dilemma – Identifying, Spotting and Combating Digital Fakes

Muhammad Suleman   **June 24, 2024**

In the digital age, the ability to manipulate images and videos has evolved dramatically, culminating in the rise of "DeepFakes." These hyper realistic digital fabrications are created using advanced Artificial Intelligence (AI) and machine learning techniques, making it nearly impossible to distinguish them from authentic footage with the naked eye. The significance of DeepFakes in today's digital landscape cannot be overstated, as they pose a profound threat to trust and authenticity in media. As DeepFake technology becomes more accessible, the potential for misuse grows exponentially, affecting various facets of society. From manipulating political narratives to fabricating celebrity scandals, DeepFakes can distort reality and erode public confidence in the media. The DeepFake dilemma presents a critical challenge: identifying and combating these digital fakes to preserve the integrity of information in our increasingly interconnected world.

Several notable cases illustrate the pervasive impact of DeepFakes. In 2018, a DeepFake video of former President Barack Obama surfaced, created by filmmaker Jordan Peele to demonstrate the technology's potential for misinformation. The video showed Obama delivering a speech he never actually made, highlighting how convincingly DeepFakes can replicate real-life figures.

Another high-profile case involved actress Scarlett Johansson, whose likeness was used in explicit DeepFake videos without her consent, raising serious concerns about personal privacy and digital consent. Additionally, deepfake technology has been weaponized in political arenas, such as during the 2019 Indian elections, where DeepFake videos of political candidates were circulated to mislead voters and manipulate public opinion.

In 2020, a fabricated video of the Speaker of the U.S. House of Representatives, Nancy Pelosi, appeared online, manipulated to make her appear intoxicated during a public speech. This video spread widely across social media, demonstrating the technology's potential to defame public figures and distort public perception.

The financial sector has also not been immune to the DeepFake threat. In 2019, a UK-based energy firm was scammed out of $243,000 after criminals used AI-generated audio to mimic the voice of the company's CEO, instructing an employee to transfer funds to a fraudulent account. This case underscores the severe implications of audio DeepFakes in the realm of corporate security and financial fraud.

In another alarming instance, deepfake technology was utilized in international conflicts. In 2022, during the ongoing conflict in Ukraine, a deepfake video purportedly showing Ukrainian President Volodymyr Zelenskyy urging his troops to surrender was circulated online. This incident illustrated how DeepFakes could be employed as a tool of psychological warfare, aiming to undermine morale and sow confusion.

These cases collectively highlight the multifaceted dangers posed by DeepFakes, extending from personal privacy violations and political manipulation to financial fraud and international security threats. Addressing these challenges requires a concerted effort involving technological innovation, legal frameworks, and public awareness campaigns to mitigate the risks associated with this rapidly evolving technology.

The effects of DeepFakes on society are multifaceted and alarming. Politically, DeepFakes can undermine democratic processes by spreading false information and discrediting public figures. In personal privacy contexts, DeepFakes can be used for revenge porn, harassment, and identity theft, causing significant psychological distress to victims. Moreover, the proliferation of DeepFakes contributes to a broader erosion of trust in media, as people become increasingly skeptical about the authenticity of the content they consume. This growing mistrust can lead to a societal landscape where fact and fiction blur, undermining informed decision-making and social cohesion.

Identifying DeepFakes involves a combination of technological and analytical methods. Techniques such as digital forensics, which examine the metadata and file structure of videos, can sometimes reveal inconsistencies. AI-based detection tools analyse patterns and anomalies in the video, such as unnatural facial movements, inconsistent lighting, and pixel-level artefacts. One prominent method is the use of deep learning models trained to recognize the subtle differences between genuine and fake videos. These

models continuously evolve, improving their accuracy in detecting DeepFakes as the technology behind them advances.

Debunking DeepFakes requires a proactive approach that combines technology and public awareness. Once a potential DeepFake is identified, experts can use reverse image searches, forensic analysis, and comparison with verified sources to debunk the content. Advanced techniques such as digital watermarking and blockchain can also play a role in verifying the authenticity of media. Platforms like YouTube and Facebook are increasingly employing AI to flag and remove DeepFake content, using algorithms that detect anomalies in facial movements, voice inconsistencies, and other tell-tale signs of manipulation.

Public education campaigns are also crucial, teaching individuals how to critically assess the media they consume and recognize potential signs of manipulation. These campaigns should focus on promoting digital literacy, enabling people to understand the basics of how DeepFakes are created and the common characteristics that might indicate a video or image is fake. Collaboration between governments, tech companies, and educational institutions can help develop comprehensive programs to reach diverse audiences.

Moreover, there should be a legal framework that addresses the creation and distribution of DeepFakes, establishing clear consequences for those who produce malicious content. Encouraging ethical standards within the tech industry is also essential, promoting the responsible development and use of AI technologies.

Preventing DeepFake related harm involves both technological solutions and societal strategies. For individuals, using reliable sources of information and verifying content through cross referencing can help avoid falling victim to DeepFakes. Organizations should invest in AI detection tools and establish protocols for verifying the authenticity of digital content. Legislation can also play a pivotal role, with governments enacting laws that criminalize the malicious use of DeepFakes and support victims. Furthermore, encouraging digital literacy and critical thinking skills in the public can reduce the overall impact of DeepFakes.

The Deepfake dilemma is a pressing issue that requires a concerted effort from technologists, policymakers, and the public to address. By understanding how deepfakes are created, identifying them with advanced technology, debunking false content, and implementing preventive measures, we can mitigate their negative impacts. As we move forward, the challenge will be to stay ahead of this rapidly evolving technology, ensuring that our digital landscape remains trustworthy and secure. The future of information integrity depends on our collective ability to adapt and respond to the threats posed by DeepFakes.

[The DeepFake Dilemma – Identifying, Spotting and Combating Digital Fakes – Pakistan Today](#)

Palestine's Humanitarian Crisis: A Call for Immediate Action and Global Solidarity

Harsa Kakar   **June 28, 2024**

While writing my master's thesis based on the Palestine issue back in 2022, it seemed like the issue was at its peak. Today when one looks at the turn that it has taken, one cannot deny the fact that worse has happened and it still isn't a red line for the rest of the world. Especially, the turn of events since October 7, 2023, has been horrifying, unnerving, and deadly. No amount of condemnatory words can adequately encapsulate the situation in Palestine during this period of occupation and apartheid. What is more shocking is the silence and inaction of organizations and countries that were known for their humanitarian 'operations and chants'. By the end of May 2024 for a hundred thousandth time, another red line was crossed when an 18-month-old child named Ahmad Al-Najar was left beheaded when Israel struck the tents of displaced Palestinians in the Tal al-Sultan area of Rafah. The video was watched by millions of people all around the world sending chills down their spine. However, it was not the first child who was killed brutally in Palestine but, he was the first child to have been beheaded in this episode of killings by Israel.

Points to Ponder

In October 2023, right after the October 7 episode when the operation against Palestinian civilians started, countries like Algeria, the African Union, Belize, Brazil, Colombia, Cuba, Indonesia, Iraq, Iran, Reland, Kuwait, Morocco, Malaysia, Maldives, Norway, Oman, Pakistan, Qatar, Russia, Syria, South Africa and Venezuela did raise eyebrows at Israel and condemned what was happening. However, did Israel stop, or were condemnations enough, or were they the only option? These are questions that every human around the world has in mind today, but no one has answers to give.

"When an Israeli soldier sees a Palestinian baby, he does not see an infant he sees the enemy. In Israel, since 1948, ethnic cleansing is not just a policy, it is a way of life, and its constant practice criminalizes the state, not just its policies." Ilan Pappe. The irony is, that more than 38,000 innocent civilians were killed, 13,800 among them being children and 20,000 of them being adults, and the world only raised eyebrows, stood in protest in

some Parliaments and the rest blinked twice if that even matters. The question is, why was there not a single UNSC Resolution passed against the occupation and killing of innocent civilians in Palestine? The answer is there will not be any such resolutions passed when the ones responsible for it will hold the power to veto the resolution right there and then. Another question is, why was the UN so powerless in front of an offensive state such as Israel despite having the rest of the 192 countries as its members and them being proponents of peace and humanity? the response to this question is likely to be extensive and multifaceted. But the conclusion to it is as evident as the day, and that is, not even the UN could stop all of this from happening, nor will it be able to do so in the future. Because, Israel is the US's favorite child in the region, and with the US's support it is almost untouchable by anyone.

However, the video of the beheaded baby did cause an uproar among the masses like nothing before. Social media hashtags were shared regarding the incident more than 46.5 million times. The world once again looked up to the stakeholders and all they could hear was, 'The red line was not crossed by Israel'. It made people implore the question of the time which was 'What is Israel's red line?' after all. Children of Palestine at this time appeared in videos asking their Muslim brotherhood countries especially *'Ahl al Arab'* (referred to as the Arabic countries in Arabic language) to wake up and take a stand for them. However, it is profoundly disheartening and distressing to witness their silence and hear their euphemistic remarks. It is understandable historically, that the Arab world has had no emotional connection to the issue, but has used this only as a tool for their interests, which in this case are majorly economic in terms of Israel.

What needs to be done?

Nonetheless, a resolution to this issue is imperative. The situation has reached a critical juncture where an entire ethnicity is at risk, posing a significant threat to the Palestinian nation as a whole. And, if anyone thinks that this extremist state's actions would not boost other aggressive-natured states' confidence, they're wrong. All individuals globally need to recognize that continued silence on the issue of Israel's occupation of Palestine may lead to a similar disregard when such conflicts affect them directly. The normalization and lack of accountability for such ruthless and sadistic behavior at this juncture will set a

dangerous precedent. This can be supported by Noam Chomsky's words saying, "I have often written since the 1970s that the people who call themselves supporters of Israel are supporters of its moral degeneration and probably ultimate destruction."

For an unbiased and effective resolution, one should consult the solutions given by non-Muslim writers and thinkers first. In this regard, US-based intellectual, a Zionist, and political scientist, Noam Chomsky with his partner Ilan Pappe who is a former soldier of the Israeli Defense Force, Middle-eastern historian, and political scientist in their book 'On Palestine' explain the historical, religious and strategic context of the Palestinian issue. They both have been criticizing Israel's aggressive and apartheid nature.

Both Chomsky and Pappe advocate for a one-state solution which would require dismantling the existing discriminatory structures and ensuring equal rights for all. Second, ending occupation and settlements. Third, acknowledging historical injustices like the Nakba (the displacement of Palestinians during Israel's creation in 1948). Fourth, they call for international pressure on Israel to comply with international law and UN resolutions. This would be possible through Civil society movements, boycotts, and divestment campaigns that play a crucial role in raising awareness and advocating for change. They call for a just solution that must address security while ensuring coexistence and equality. This, they recommend is possible through education and dialogue. They emphasize the role of education in promoting understanding and empathy, also dialogue between Israelis and Palestinians is essential for building trust and finding common ground.

The book, 'On Palestine' was published in 2015, and both Chomsky and Pappe's recommendations might take time to come to life. However, if they don't, the eventual solution will be for all states to come together under the umbrella of an organization or authority of one strong responsible actor. This could be anyone. This should comprise all kinds of power equipment and its use at times of need. This should include countries that are not in any way willing to be pressured by Israel's role in the world's market. At times of need, this umbrella should have the ability to protect any of its members be it economically or strategically. This will give the members a sense of security and a feeling of cooperation would lead them to stand together with their weak brothers today and at

any time in the future as well. The point is to pressurize an occupant state and not create war. The focus is to convey the message of justice and fair play, a permanent solution, and an end to this ethnic cleansing.

[Palestine's Humanitarian Crisis: A Call for Immediate Action and Global Solidarity – Pakistan Today](#)