



Strategic Analysis:  
A Monthly Journal of the IDSA

August 2000 (Vol. XXIV No. 5)

## ***Civil-Military Coordination and Defence Decision-Making in Pakistan***

By Smruti S. Pattanaik 

Defence decision-making or any decisions pertaining to higher management have always been a coordinated effort between the civil and the military elements in democratic countries. However, Pakistan has hardly seen uninterrupted democracy, thus the civilian hold over the military decision-making has been minimal. Given the political history of Pakistan and the role of the armed forces in politics it is not difficult to conclude that defence decision-making and foreign policy/security matters pertaining to Indo-Pak relations, nuclear issues and Kashmir have been a prerogative of the military and would remain so for a considerable period of time.

Pakistan's defence policy is inseparable from its foreign policy to a larger extent, taking into consideration its Indo-centric defence policy. As a commentator has aptly remarked, "Military needs had to command foreign policy. And because foreign and defence policies are for the new states a matter of survival they seriously affect domestic policy. By this chain of logic the leader of Pakistan army is propelled into the centre of decision-making and first its arbitrator and then its monopolist." <sup>1</sup> Another analyst also argues "defence policy usually led rather than followed foreign policy." <sup>2</sup> Thus the juxtaposition between the two necessitates that this article would include to a certain extent the foreign policy considerations within the parameter of defence decision-making.

In this context though the article will focus on defence decision-making, but an attempt will be made to analyse the army's influence on foreign policy decision-making. This also includes how in the case of Pakistan the major defence and foreign policy concerns converge completely. The recent military takeover after the Kargil debacle is a case in point. This article will look into the factors of the military's dominance in matters, which normally pertain to the domains of the civilian government. It will also analyse how the successive civilian governments have made efforts to consolidate their hold on these important matters of governance without much success. How and why the army would like to take direct control of defence policy. This article discusses the army's perception of political leaders and why military takeover is a logical culmination of the inevitable rather than a compulsion or a reluctant choice.

### Defence Decision-Making: Preponderance of Military

Defence decision-making in Pakistan has remained in the hands of the army though it has sometimes had a civilian mask as a masquerade that all is well with the infant democracy of Pakistan. The army has taken keen interest in politics. This was evident even before the first martial law regime was imposed in Pakistan. This is well recorded in Ayub's autobiography "Friends not Masters."<sup>3</sup> The army is often perceived as the most uncorrupt and efficient organisation in Pakistan. Moreover, the army's description as the defender of Islam and of the ideological frontier of Pakistan translates the army's actions as legitimate and desirable. The views expressed by most of the martial law administrators on the civilian government<sup>4</sup> reflect the army's total lack of faith in the politicians. Thus the army has prescribed for itself a role that includes both internal security as well as the traditional external threats. This role perception envisages that it cannot entrust the task of defence decision-making completely in civilian hands. As a natural corollary of the defence decision-making, the policy towards India cannot move forward without the approval of the army.

One needs to understand here what the major defence and foreign policy concerns of Pakistan are and how both the issues converge completely. India has remained the core of Pakistan's defence policy and the Kashmir issue has shaped the relations between both the countries. Since India is a major security concern, Pakistan's foreign policy has been oriented towards striving for parity militarily and at the same time pressurising India to settle the Kashmir dispute diplomatically. As a Pakistani commentator has aptly described the Pakistan army's identity "its main feature and contours had owed their prominence to a perpetual confrontation with India".<sup>5</sup>

The importance and significance of the armed forces has been emphasised by none other than Z.A. Bhutto, who still looms large in the people's psyche as one of the most popular leaders. He wrote "Pakistan's security and territorial integrity are more important than economic development".<sup>6</sup> Thus, if defence is a priority, the defender of territorial integrity also gains priority in the scheme of the government's plan. Here one is not arguing development against defence, but a balance has to be worked out between the two to eliminate any chance of internal dissension as a source of instability. Though economic underdevelopment coupled with political alienation paved the way for the break up of Pakistan, however there is hardly any realisation in this regard. As it appears, Bhutto's maxim has still been a guiding philosophy of the governing elite of present day Pakistan. This also explains as to why military and defence expenditure are important issues and remain out of bounds for the civilian government to tamper with without the approval of the armed forces.

It is not the founding father of Pakistan who envisaged a role for the army in decision-making, rather it was the incompetent politicians who have endowed such a privilege on the army, though informally. While arguing for civilian supremacy, Jinnah said to the armed forces, "Don't forget that you in armed forces are the servants of the people. You do not make the national policy. It is we, the civilians, who decide the issues and it is our duty to carry out those tasks (with) which you are entrusted."<sup>7</sup> However, notwithstanding such views, the army developed a stake in the political system because of its strong ideological underpinnings rooted on the partition agenda. Commenting on the army's role in politics even in the initial years. Aziz Siddiqui wrote that the army had developed strong views of their own on foreign policy. This was evident even during Liaquat Ali's period. On major events like the Suez Canal issue, the dispute over Anglo-American Oil Company between the US and Britain and Iran and Egypt, the army had made up its mind. Khwaja Nazimuddin was dismissed by the support of the army when he cut the defence budget by one-third for the first and only time.<sup>8</sup>

The function of the Pakistan Army can be summed up in the words of Stephen Cohen, "From the day Pakistan was created, it has been active in helping to establish internal order and in protecting Pakistan's permeable and often ill-defined borders; during this period it has used its power and special position within Pakistan to ensure that it be supplied with adequate weapons, resources, and manpower. Moreover, it has always regarded itself

as the special expression of the idea of Pakistan, and a few officers have advocated an activist role in reforming or correcting the society where it has fallen below the standard of excellence set by the military." <sup>9</sup>

The history of military takeovers suggests that the army has entered politics whenever the economic conditions are bleak and the political situation is perceived as one of utter hopelessness. The political history of the initial years after the creation of Pakistan created space for the military to grow. Thus the open articulation by some sections of the people, for the army to take over whenever there are economic problems or political instability is significant. It is the only institution which is perceived as clean and efficient since the army has proved its efficiency through frequent interventions in the form of 'aid to civil administration'. Thus given the preponderance of the army's role even in the civilian sphere, it extends to the exertion of a greater influence in decision-making and foreign policy as a norm rather than an exception. Its long rule has helped it to exercise effective control in these areas. Their legitimacy as an institution, conferred on them the authority to exert influence in important areas of decision-making as mentioned above. Moreover, the philosophy of the Pakistan Army, and its ideology are significant determinants of the extent of its influence over the decision-making apparatus. The legitimacy for such influence emanates from the ideological basis of the Pakistani state and the structure and nature of the society at large.

Decision-making after the creation of Pakistan was vested with the Governor General. This is because Pakistan was evolving a democratic structure for itself. The 1947 war, for the first time brought the divided nation into collusion. Though it was waged under supreme civilian control of Jinnah and Liaquat Ali, Field Marshal Sir Claude Auchinleck supreme commander of both Indian and Pakistan armies and Pakistan Army Commander-in-Chief Gen. Sir Douglas Gracey operated during this war without regular orders from the political leadership in Pakistan. Moreover, the acting commander-in-chief was a British general. Though he was de jure responsible to the Governor General of Pakistan, but he was subordinate to the supreme commander of both the countries. After the difficulties in persuading a British general to take up operations against India a need was felt that a Pakistani should command the Pakistan Army.

"In Pakistan, the question of civilian control of armed forces in matter of peace and war, had always been a difficult one, too complex and blurry. The Kashmir war, for most part, an irregular effort, was waged under supreme civilian control reflected symbolically rather than substantively...The Kashmir war thus highlighted the total absence of a chain of command and control governing the military establishment." <sup>10</sup> An 1947 the decision to attack Kashmir was taken in a haphazard manner as explained by Major Gen Akbar Khan who was one of the architects of this invasion. <sup>11</sup> However he also confirmed that Jinnah had also ordered an attack on Kashmir. From the material available on the first Kashmir War one can conclude that though the civilians had knowledge about the tribal attack, it was initially under the control of some segments of the Pakistan Army and other vested interests.

Failure to retrieve Kashmir from India in the first Kashmir War gave rise to a sense of dissatisfaction in a section of the army. They felt that the civilian government would never be able to take a strong decision on Kashmir because of its political implications for Pakistan, both domestically and internationally. Thus the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case, was an expression of dissatisfaction by a section of the army which was openly against the governments ineptness in handling the Kashmir issue. According to their perception i.e. Pakistans failure to resort to a military solution initially, its hesitation to provide adequate material support to those tribal invaders and its acceptance of the cease-fire line with India at a time when victory of the Pakistanis in their view was inevitable. <sup>12</sup> Ayub's emergence as Commander-in-Chief can be attributed to the obsession of senior officers to renew war with India over Kashmir. Ayub was considered to be a person who would have effective control over the dissatisfied elements. Thus Ayub Khan was made Commander-in-Chief to eliminate such a possibility after the Rawalpindi Conspiracy Case was detected. As another commentator has put it, "When Ayub Khan took direct

control of the country, it wasn't because civilian rule had seemed like it was set to fail but, on the contrary, because with a constitution promulgated and a general election that was no longer feasible to postpone...As a result, scope for the accustomed praetorian role of the army diminished." <sup>13</sup> Thus it is evident that the army wanted to have an institutionalised role in decision-making which would have been rendered impossible after the promulgation of the constitution. The 1947 Kashmir War not only exposed the limitations of the Pakistan Army in political decision-making, but also its manoeuvrability in political decision-making.

The first martial law rule was declared in Lahore after the anti Ahmediya riots that gave the armed forces the first chance to restore order under "aid to civil power". At the same time the civilian government's incapability was exposed. This strengthened the conviction of the Pakistan Army that it was them rather than the politicians who were the saviours of the country. Thus with the service, the army was slowly becoming a part of the decision-making authority. This increased the prestige of the army.

The importance of the army in decision-making was underlined when Ayub visited Washington in October 1953 along with the Prime Minister and Foreign Minister and the Defence Assistance Agreement was signed in March 1954. The decision for Mutual Defence Pact with the US was a politico-military decision and was taken in close coordination with the army and Ayub played a very important role in this decision. Ayub Khan's first brush with politics, apart from his inclination towards politics from the beginning, started when he was asked by the Governor General Ghulam Mohammad to be a member of his new cabinet as Defence Minister after the dissolution of the Parliament in October 24, 1954. Ayub was the first Defence Minister as well as the Commander-in-Chief. By 1954, the military role had begun to expand to non-professional fields and it was gradually emerging as an important actor in the decision-making process." <sup>14</sup> Though the army was not a part of any decision-making per se but the influence of Ayub Khan in politics and thus in decision-making was obvious. <sup>15</sup> Ayub Khan's autobiography, "Friends not Masters" aptly illustrates this point.

The murky politics of those days after the creation of Pakistan and intense power struggle between the politicians had disenchanted the army and Ayub especially, who was a product of the British military tradition. He had closely watched both the struggle for the creation of Pakistan and also observed carefully the evolution and embodiment of a political system characterised by a naked power struggle. The dream that envisaged transforming the Muslims of the subcontinent into a vibrant nation slowly emerged as a distant illusionary vision. Interestingly, Ayub Khan who was critical of Akbar Khan's action in 1953 <sup>16</sup> and described it as a grievous blow to the prestige of the army took over charge in 1958. <sup>17</sup>

Justifying the army's need to intervene, Ayub writes in his autobiography, "Friends Not Masters", "Being a patriotic and national army, it was bound to respond to the thinking of the people in the country...A well organised, trained, and disciplined army would find it extremely distasteful to be turned into an instrument for securing political power. But as conditions were, the army alone could act as a corrective force and restore normalcy." <sup>18</sup>

After the 1958 coup, the defence decision-making was not a problem. Because the army chief was the chief martial law administrator and being the President he hardly needed any endorsement of his decisions by his subordinates. In the absence of democracy, with the handpicked elements that constituted the bureaucracy, decision-making became much easier. Moreover, Ayub himself recognised the centrality of the army in defence decision-making. It is not surprising that he included a clause in the 1962 constitution of Pakistan that the defence minister of Pakistan should be a person, of the rank of colonel for the next 20 years.

It is also worth mentioning here that the 1965 war with India on Kashmir and the subsequent Tashkent agreement led to the political death of Ayub. As a commentator has written "the military supremacy was

carried to the point of absurdity where things are either done or not done at a mere whim in the absence of any checks and balances <sup>19</sup>even from other services." This again indicates that the army was the sole authority, though some of the blame could be attributed to Bhutto, as the Foreign Minister.

The transformation of Ayub era to Yahya Khan era was a change of guard rather than the contour of the governance that remained military to the core. <sup>20</sup>After Yahya took over, he appointed a hand-picked civilian cabinet. A Commander-in-Chiefs Committee was formed for major decision-making. Yahya kept under him the defence and foreign affairs portfolio. There was a National Security Council whose chairman was Yahya Khan and membership included the Director-General Service Intelligence, Gen. Akbar Khan, the Director General of (civil) intelligence bureau, the Home Minister, Major General Ghulam Umar, the National Security Adviser. <sup>21</sup>There was no semblance of civilian control also during the 1971 war.

## Emergence of Bhutto: Semblance of Civilian Supremacy

The 1971 war and break up of Pakistan saw the emergence of Bhutto, as the democratically elected leader of Pakistan. However, Bhutto donned a uniform corresponding to military wear and assumed the role of President and CMLA. He used the term Awami Martial law to justify his absolutism. The military debacle of 1971 gave the civilian government some breathing space in the decision-making. The army was subjected to a great degree of ridicule after the defeat. The army could not escape the major blame and this was skillfully manoeuvred by Z.A. Bhutto who was an equal partner and hence was equally responsible for the break up of Pakistan. To achieve his objectives to sideline the army from politics according to K.M. Arif, a close associate of Gen. Zia, "Bhutto's act in the Security Council was one of showmanship. In this scheme, the army had to be defeated in battle and Mujib removed from the political scene to compel Yahya Khan to hand over power to him. The means employed were irrelevant to Bhutto." <sup>22</sup>Lt. Gen. Attiqur Rahman, another commentator writes, "Bhutto whose pronouncement was that the army has to be cut to size," took certain decisions deliberately to stain the army's reputation. The army's involvement in the East Pakistan turmoil and repressive measures were largely undertaken at Bhutto's insistence. It is Bhutto who argued for war with India as 7,000 Pakistan-trained "freedom fighters were launched from over the line from Azad Kashmir side. <sup>23</sup>However, Bhutto saw this as an opportunity to consolidate his position by discrediting the army. Commenting on the civilian governments approach toward the military after the 1971 war, the editorial of Defence Journal wrote, "Minister and top civil servants assumed a superior attitude towards military brass. The social status of the man in uniform became a questionable affair. Nobody seemed to realise, that the military, after the defeat, needed to be handled with a great deal of care and consideration. Thus were sown the seeds of tension and distrust between the civil authority and military establishment." <sup>24</sup>

Bhutto's rule can be described as the epitome of civilian control of both defence and foreign policy. Bhutto with his new found power forced the retirement of two service chiefs, Air Marshal, Rahim Khan and Lt Gen Hamid Khan. The Cs-in-C were redesignated as Chiefs of Staff. The three Chiefs were put under the command of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee, with the President as the Commander-in-Chief. The tenure of the Chiefs of Staff initially fixed at four years, was reduced to three years in 1975. However, realising that the army's morale had been shattered, Bhutto did not leave any opportunity to destroy the army's image. Considering the positive image of Pakistan Army among the public psyche, the demolition of its image was needed so that the army should not be seen as an alternative to civilian government. The 1971 War provided the opportune moment for such an effort. The army emerged as a demoralised lot. Though Bhutto ridiculed the army in public but he also took essential steps to rebuild the army. Bhutto who was never short of rhetoric wanted to have an effective control over the army. After the Bangladesh debacle, Bhutto removed General Abdul Hamid Khan as Chief of Staff

and appointed Gul Hassan in his place. Though Gul Hassan placed some conditionalities, one which is significant and pertinent to this paper is "no interference from anyone, himself or his ministers included" <sup>25</sup> in the matter pertaining to the Pakistan Army.

Lt. Gen Gul Hassan was also the acting Commander-in-Chief. However, the gap between the two widened. Prime Minister Bhutto wanted more participation in the military affairs. Gul Hassan did not relent when Bhutto wanted to use the army in Karachi, and wanted the release of national cadets. Bhutto visited units and headquarters on his own initiative and even wanted all the army officers to be screened by police or intelligence agencies to determine their political leanings and also wanted to attend the meetings of the promotion board. <sup>26</sup> All these factors widened the differences between Bhutto and the military. Gul Hassan was later removed and replaced with Tikka Khan. Gul Hassan's compulsory retirement represents the high point of civilian supremacy.

In the initial years after Bhutto took over, the military confined themselves largely to planning the force structure, equipment, and the supplier group. During Bhutto's regime, Pakistan set up the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee to circumvent the power of the army to declare martial law. There was a suggestion that the post of the chairman JCSC should rotate between the three services.

## The 1973 Constitution and the Army

Some clauses of the 1973 constitution clearly laid down the role of the army. The constitution makers wanted to define their role in the constitution without any ambiguity that might lead to different interpretations. The role of the army was defined as "defend Pakistan against external aggression or threat of war, and subject to law, act in aid of civil power when called upon to do so." <sup>27</sup> To ensure the army's neutrality, a constitutional formality was incorporated in the 1973 constitution. "I do solemnly swear that I will bear faith and allegiance to Pakistan and uphold the constitution of the Islamic Republic of Pakistan which embodies the will of the people, that I will honestly and faithfully serve the Pakistan Army/Navy/Air Force as required by and under law." <sup>28</sup> Incidentally this law was formulated after the detection of an alleged coup attempt in which 14 air force officers and twenty army officers were arrested. <sup>29</sup> The 1973 constitution also stipulates capital punishment for any attempt to damage the democratic order of governance or attempt to abrogate or conspire to abrogate and subvert the constitution by use of force or other unconstitutional means. <sup>30</sup> The parliament also passed a law prescribing capital punishment or life imprisonment for subverting the constitution. <sup>31</sup>

Apart from defining the role of the army, Bhutto took measures so the government could function smoothly. In October 1972, Bhutto raised Federal Security Forces (FSF) <sup>32</sup> as a potential rival to the army in internal affairs. This was created to lessen the government's dependence on the army and reduce their credibility as an effective alternative mechanism for tackling the nation's problems and if need be to serve as a counter to the military in the internal law and order situation. Its declared objective was to assist the civil administration and the police in maintaining law and order.

Bhutto never underestimated the army's capacity to enter politics. Thus convinced of the threat from the army, Bhutto allocated equal funds to both army and FSF. On the eve of elections to ensure the support of the army Bhutto "informed Gen Zia of his decision to allow junior officers in the army to 'purchase' valuable lots of land in the DG Khan and Muzaffargarh districts of Punjab at virtually gift price." <sup>33</sup> Without any regard to the principle of seniority, he wanted Gen Zia-ul-Haq to become the Army Chief, thus ensuring his loyalty and effectively curtailing any political ambition by the army. He also modernised the army navy and the air force of Pakistan. A



Defence Production Division was set up in the Ministry of Defence in 1973 to encourage and streamline defence production.

The army's involvement in Balochistan to supplement local police in a bid to control the political problems there gave a chance to the army to prove its credibility again which was lost after 1971. Later the army's involvement in the post-election scenario in Karachi, Hyderabad and Lahore in aid of civil power further consolidated its position. A commentator while describing the implication for using the army to quell internal problems, wrote that it eroded the government's authority and increased the army's power in inverse proportion. <sup>34</sup>

### Joint Chief of the Army Staff (JCSC) and the Civilian Government

Bhutto's White Paper on Defence Organisation contains effort to ensure civilian control over defence. The White Paper reads, "It is only a representative government and the exertion by the government of supreme authority over the country's Defence Establishment that ends the separation of the Armed Forces from the people and eliminates the element of caprice from decision of war and peace...National defence policy is no longer a military affair alone...the evolution of national defence policy and its administration requires (a) effective political control at the top...and (b) a number of institutions and agencies at the base, to produce necessary data and appreciations on which political decisions can be based." <sup>35</sup>

At the apex of the structure of defence decision-making is the Defence Committee of the Cabinet (DCC), responsible for determining the size, role, and shape of the armed forces. At present a military person presides over it and appoints its members who are supposed to be elected. <sup>36</sup> The military wing in the Cabinet division was reorganised, which serves as the Secretariat of DCC. Only matters pertaining to defence will be referred to the DCC. Below this is the Defence Council on military matters, the members of which are people from the military. It also includes the External Affairs Minister, the Finance Minister and other cabinet ministers with a special interest in defence policy. It receives recommendations from a Joint Chief of Staff Committee. <sup>37</sup> The work of DCC revolves round the determination and approval of defence policy, the Defence Council is responsible for its translation into military policy.

The JCSC was established in order that it would concern itself with minor Inter-Services work, administrative in nature. As written in the Defence White Paper, the Defence Ministry as it existed before was no more than a routine coordinating agency. Thus the Ministry of Defence was reorganised, with the creation of a separate division, with its field organisation for defence production.

The JCSC was constituted during Zulfikar Ali Bhutto's period not to devise a joint command, or for better defence planning after the 1971 military disaster, but to keep the armed forces in abeyance from the actual decision-making authority. The most significant factor which had mooted such a proposition for JCSC was Bhutto's own experience with the previous Ayub Khan regime and the preponderance of the military element in governance which was obvious. Thus the JCSC was devised as a curtailment of army authority and reducing the chances of army takeover. To rule out any such possibility in the Defence White Paper published in 1976, he equalised the ranks of service chiefs by upgrading the naval and air chiefs to four star.

The JCSC was headed by the chairman at the level of service chiefs, but was accepted as the senior most officer of the military establishment. The three service chiefs were supposed to coordinate staff work and operationalise plans jointly under a chairman. During war, the Chairman JCSC would have to take decisions as authorised by the Defence Minister who most of the time was the Prime Minister.

To plan defence efficiently, Higher Organisation for Defence was organised. In this, the responsibility of the Prime Minister included allocation of necessary resources to defence, establishing, expending and/or reorganising institutions to ensure the coordinated application of such resources; ensuring the raising and development of the armed forces; coordinating defence policy with domestic and external policies. "As Minister of Defence the Prime Minister would be assisted in the discharge of his duties by the Minister of State for Defence" <sup>38</sup>-who would exercise such powers as delegated to him. Among his other functions, he also had to ensure effective civilian participation in the war effort and smooth functioning of all the Services during war. <sup>39</sup>

The main responsibility of the Chairman JCSC would be "raising, training, administration, morale and discipline of the forces under their control and for the conduct of operations. He would not interfere with or give directions to the services about the normal functioning nor will he exercise any executive authority in time of peace...during war (declared or undeclared) when the Prime Minister has informed the nation the country is at war or facing a warlike situation, the Chairman JCSC, will assume responsibilities to assist the PM (Defence Minister) in the supervision and conduct of war and an overall coordinator to the extent authorised specifically in that behalf by the Prime Minister who will continue to exercise Supreme Command over the forces." <sup>40</sup>-The efficacy of the chairman of JCSC to be the superior in the military establishment was exposed when Gen Zia-ul-Haq took over the administration of the country by ignoring his nominal superior, Gen. Mohammad Sharif who was the Chairman JCSC. During Zia's regime, the Chairman of JCSC was nominally superior to Zia as COAS but Zia in turn was his superior as the President.

However, the JCSC has long been a semi retirement home for officers who have either been sidelined or could not achieve higher promotion. The JCSC has been an ornamental one and it has hardly brought any semblance between the three services and in the recent past individual services have been buying weapons off the shelf according to their service needs, rather than in accordance with an overall purchasing strategy. <sup>41</sup>

Thus the civilian supremacy was discarded after the military took over. Commenting on the inevitability of military supremacy in decision-making a commentator was candid when he wrote. "There is no artificial civilian cell of power against the armed forces. To have a defence minister or defence secretary and believe that in a country like Pakistan where the armed forces have wielded power for such a long period the writ of the defence minister or secretary shall be accepted by the chief of army staff is to live in a fool's paradise." <sup>42</sup>

However, in Pakistan most of the times the Defence Minister's portfolio is held by the Prime Minister. The reason that can be attributed is that during civilian rule, the civilian leadership wants to control defence matters to check the threat that is emanating from the armed forces for its survivability. Giving a descriptive view about the army's role in politics Stephen Cohen writes, "partly because they had virtually no faith in those politicians, but partly because they had begun to develop their own views on the reorganisation and stabilisation of Pakistan." <sup>43</sup>

Even after reaching the pinnacle of civilian supremacy, when the opposition movement against Bhutto intensified, to prevent any threat to his rule he wanted a joint statement from the three service chiefs of staff reiterating their allegiance to his government. A joint statement issued on April 27, 1977 by the JCSC and the three service chiefs read, "while the military code prohibits the soldiers, sailors and airmen to have anything to do with politics, the Armed Forces who belong to the nation have to remain on call to safeguard the constitution's integrity when threatened on account of external aggression or internal subversion...we wish to make it absolutely clear that the Pakistan Army, Navy and the Air Force are totally united to discharge their constitutional obligations in support of the present legally supported government." <sup>44</sup>-This in effect establishes the importance of the armed forces in Pakistan. However, the irony is that in spite of well thought out measures to keep the army at bay, Gen. Zia-ul-Haq took over in 1977. The importance of the army was quite evident from



the fact that each facet of Bhutto's negotiation with the Pakistan National Alliance (PNA) movement was communicated to the army.

## Islam and the Ideological Orientation of the Army

It is in fact necessary to discuss the role of Islam as a motivational factor in the army as it has direct implications for Pakistan's foreign and security policy and religious and political ramifications as well. The psyche of the Pakistan Army was shaped by numerous factors at the time of partition. The communal holocaust and the imprint it left was deeply ingrained in their mind along with perceptual problems. Moreover, "their subsequent difficulty in obtaining a fair share of military stores from India, Indian behaviour in Kashmir, Hyderabad, and a thousand other examples of Indian duplicity—real or imagined—are part of their legacy of the present-day Pakistan army. For Pakistani officers of succeeding generations, this distrust of India is a fundamental assumption, no more subject to question than is the very existence of Pakistan." <sup>45</sup> This perception has converged the defence and foreign policy. Moreover, "in an ideologically oriented state like Pakistan however, the armed forces become the custodian of state's ideology as much as that of its territory". <sup>46</sup>

It is important to emphasise the motivational factor of the Pakistan Army to analyse its orientation and attitude towards defence policy and influence on its formulation. India is perceived as the source of insecurity for Pakistan. This view emanates from the very foundation of partition on the basis of the two-nation theory. Pakistan's ideological orientation that is essentially Islam is inherited in an anti-Indian articulation. The ideology and commitment of the Pakistan Army gives it a clear vision about its strategic objectives. As a noted analyst has observed. "They are expected to take pride in the fact that they are Muslims and part of a broader world community". <sup>47</sup> The religious identification of the Pakistan Army gives them sufficient impulse to prepare themselves against 'Hindu India', a description often used by the Pakistani elite. Of course this is not the only factor for battle preparation against the potential enemy. Coupled with this are factors of history and politics of the subcontinent and the issue of Kashmir.

To strengthen the religious orientation that can be a sufficient motivating factor against the so-called Kafirs, maulavis are attached to the Pakistan Army unit to impart religious teaching. It is important here to mention Zia's idea of a professional army as he has explained in the foreword to Brig. S.K. Mallick's book on "Quranic Concept of War". According to him "the professional soldier in a Muslim army, pursuing the goals of a Muslim state, CANNOT become 'professional' if in all his activities he does not take on 'the colour of Allah'". <sup>48</sup> All these religious orientations having an anti-Indian bias have prevented the civilian government from asserting control over policy making that is divergent from the army's line of thinking.

The propaganda and false description about their valour added to the self-aggrandisement of the Pakistan Army. Writing on this false propaganda Stephen Cohen writes quoting an unpublished Pakistani manuscript, "...In a country such as Pakistan, where for many years the armed forces have been at the helm of civil affairs, the influence of adulatory publicity on them cannot be overlooked. It appears to have affected them deeply enough to change their professional attitude and standards and to breed in them the unfortunate belief that armed forces could do no wrong." <sup>49</sup>

Omar Norman wrote "One of the first changes made by Zia, after his appointment as COAS, was to upgrade the status of Maulavis attached to each army unit. Hitherto they had been regarded as comic figures which the military elite tolerated as a gesture to religious obligation. Zia integrated them into the everyday ethos of the military and made it compulsory for them to go into the battlefield with the troops. Thus when the military,

bureaucratic apparatus regained power in 1977, it was the religiously inclined generals who were dominant." <sup>50</sup> Zia, after assuming power presented a proposal for a constitutional guarantee that would enable the military to share decision-making powers with the political elite. To this end he constituted majlis-e-shoora and then had himself elected as the President. Zia after assuming power formed a military council of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and the three other service chiefs of whom he was one.

## Institutionalising Army's Control

### (a) The 8th Amendment:

Gen. Zia institutionalised the army's role in politics through the eighth Amendment to the constitution. As a method of control, during Zia's period the famous eighth Amendment, an unique formulation was implemented by amending Art 243 2(c) of the constitution whereby the President has the discretion to appoint the Chiefs of all the armed forces as well as the Chairman JCSC. Apart from this, the President retained absolute power to dismiss an elected head of the government. This gave the military leverage against the civilian government.

The important aspect was that the political authority and the military interest converged in the Presidency whereby Zia was the President as well as the Chief of the Army Staff. Zia devised the unique method of power sharing with a civilian government. In 1985 he became the so-called elected president of Pakistan and Junejo his hand-picked lieutenant became the Prime Minister. It is surprising that a civilian government agreed to relinquish such extraordinary power of great importance to the President, which includes the dismissal of the Prime Minister himself. It was a compromise worked out with the army for the return to civilian government. Article 58 (2)b was inserted by Junejo's government as a compromise for power sharing. In all, 188 members present out of 217 members of the house passed the amendment bill unanimously while not even a single vote was cast against it. This demonstrates clearly that the civilians do not hesitate to compromise on the power actually belonging to them in a democratic structure, thus enabling the army to remain in power.

The army reached its pinnacle of power in the civilian sphere during Zia's period. Recently, there is talk of reviving the 8th Amendment Act, which was repealed during Nawaz Sharif's time in 1997. This move is mooted by Sharifuddin Pirzada. According to him, had the 52 (2)b not been repealed, the army would have taken its supreme commander into confidence and, as a consequence, a constitutional change would have taken place and democracy continued to flourish. <sup>51</sup> A petition for restoration of the eighth Amendment is under the consideration of the Supreme Court.

### (b) National Security Council

The concept of National Security Council emerged as a forum for collective decision-making where the army can also have an effective say. The history of such kind of an arrangement for collective decision-making can be traced to the Ayub era. After the assumption of power Ayub Khan constituted the National Advisory Council to run the affairs of the state. This was done to mask it with a civilian appearance. His successor, Gen Yahya Khan constituted National Security Council where actual decision-making was with the military.

Gen. Zia set up the National Security Council through Presidential Order 14 of 1985, to recommend on issues relating to the proclamation of emergency, security of Pakistan and any other matter of national importance that may be referred to it by the President in consultation with the Prime Minister. The NSC was set up with the motive of providing the military a say in a constitutional set up. Other than the Chairman of the senate the President appoints other members. The NSC consisted of eleven members. The Prime Minister, the President,

Chairman JCSC, Chief of the Staff of all the three services, and the Chief Ministers of all the four provinces. He incorporated 152-A in the constitution so that the council could be formed. However, the NSC was abolished the same year as a result of political bargaining. <sup>52</sup> Thus, the army appropriated the power of retaining its hold on major decision-making through the eighth Amendment.

The Council for Defence and National Security (CDNS) was constituted during a federal cabinet meeting on January 5, 1997 following the dismissal of the second Benazir government by the interim caretaker government of Malik Mairaj Khalid. The aim of the CDNS was "to aid and advise the government in the determination of national strategy and fixation of priorities in terms of overall national security". <sup>53</sup> The council was to be chaired by the President. The agenda of CDNS was all encompassing though its advice was not binding. <sup>54</sup> The Sharif government abandoned such an idea because it felt that a handpicked caretaker government had established the council. According to him only an elected parliament is competent to approve such a sensitive body. <sup>55</sup> However, the DCC met on a number of occasions always with chiefs in attendance and formally took the decision to go for a nuclear test which was approved by the Cabinet later.

Gen. Jehangir Karamat mooted the talk about the constitution of NSC to institutionalise decision-making, on October 3, 1998, in a meeting at Navy War College. It was reported that he apprised the Prime Minister that he was under severe pressure from his service to float the idea of NSC. <sup>56</sup> However, this suggestion created such furore in political circles and drew so much criticism that he had to resign for even entertaining such an idea. The reason for resentment was due to the fact, that it would have given constitutional legitimacy to the army to have a say in the national security affairs. Nawaz Sharif being the popularly elected leader did not want to have a National Security Council, which would undermine civilian decision-making. It can be inferred that the existence of a National Security Council would have prevented much of the bickering that took place between the military and the Prime Minister and could have avoided the circumstances which paved the way for military takeover. Reacting to the takeover, former Army Chief Gen. Jehangir Karamat said, "The present situation (military rule) would not have been created had he talked to me about my proposal and accepted it (may be) with some amendments. Its basic purpose was to keep the democratic dispensation intact." <sup>57</sup> After taking over the reins of the country, Pakistan's Chief Executive Pervez Musharraf constituted the National Security Council. <sup>58</sup> The federal cabinet is subordinate to the NSC. It is reported that now Musharraf wants Attorney General Aziz A. Munshi "to give the NSC a permanent role in the constitution, which should be endorsed and approved by the parliament." <sup>59</sup> When asked about whether the army would like to have a constitutional role. Gen. Musharraf said that the National Security Council should take major decisions. Further elaborating he said, "I would like a constitutional Commission to be formed, to deal with such issues." <sup>60</sup> The civilian government does not prefer the system of NSC because it curtails their power in major decision-making. Thus both Z.A. Bhutto and Nawaz Shariff preferred to keep the defence portfolio under them and were assisted by Minister of State for Defence.

## Phase of Cooptation: Democracy and Defence Decision-Making

The centrality of the army in major decision-making is quite obvious. Though the India factor and nuclear issue have been the most significant. The first Army takeover can be attributed to the offer of a no war pact to India made by Feroz Khan Noon, then Prime Minister, and before that could happen, Ayub Khan took over. Of course the domestic political discourse was mostly oriented towards Pakistan's relations with India around that period. "...Kashmir played a prominent role in Ayub Khan's decision to oust the parliamentary government and abrogate the 1956 constitution." <sup>61</sup>

The Zia brand of democracy and elections in 1985 institutionalised the army's control, placing unrestricted power in the hands of the President who was also the COAS. In fact the civilian leadership agreed to such an agreement to be a part of the ruling elite which was virtually impossible otherwise. Thus this phase can be described as the phase of cooptation.

Prime Minister Junejo and President Zia started off the cooptation in the power sharing quite understandingly. However, differences between them started surfacing with the government's policy on Afghanistan. Junejo was critical about the Afghan policy of Pakistan and favoured a negotiated settlement compared to a military solution as contemplated by the military. To pressurise the military decision-makers he called an all-party conference where Gen. Zia was not invited. This conference endorsed Junejo's approach and Pakistan signed the Geneva Accord. During his Prime Ministership he insisted on the removal of Akhtar Abdul Rehman who was the Director General of ISI during the Ojhri army camp explosion. <sup>62</sup>He also questioned the promotion of two officers (Pir Dad Khan and Shamin Alam Khan) to be Corps Commanders. "As Defence Minister he held up the promotions of a couple of generals considered to be close to Zia and even suggested that the time may have come for the President to give up his position as the Chief of Army Staff. <sup>63</sup>This was one of the factors, which led to his dismissal. Junejo himself said that the reason for his dismissal was because he asked Gen. Zia to relinquish the charge of Chief of Army Staff if he wanted to participate in politics. <sup>64</sup>During Zia's period ISI acted not only as the country's largest intelligence agency, but also as the major policy-making body under his supervision and was assigned the task which otherwise had been the function of foreign, home and defence ministries. <sup>65</sup>Even the caretaker Prime Minister after Junejo's dismissal, Moin Qureshi admitted that the army had the final say in the political dynamics of the country. <sup>66</sup>

After the restoration of democracy, it is clear that the army 'remain central to the locus of national decision-making beyond the areas of mere defence'. It retained essential powers to ensure that the elected political leadership would have no power over the military itself. <sup>67</sup>After Zia's death when Benazir came to power, she was sidelined in the policy making both by the President and the COAS Mirza Aslam Beg. However, she was aware of the army's centrality under the democratic regime when she stated even before her election in June 1988, "the army is very powerful institution, much more so than eleven years ago. Anyone thinking that after the elections the power of the army will automatically wane is being unrealistic." <sup>68</sup>In fact Benazir was not administered the oath for quite some time till she agreed to surrender her right as civilian head of the government on important matters of policy decisions. This included nuclear policy, Afghan policy, Kashmir and its relations with India. The army was to have a say in the choice of Defence Minister and the defence budget should be kept up. <sup>69</sup>As a matter of accommodation she had to appoint Shahbzada Yakub Khan as the Foreign Minister who was an army appointee. With so many preconditions as a prelude to her Prime Ministership made Benazir remarked pathetically to Christina Lamb that "I am in office not in power." <sup>70</sup>Though the COAS and Presidency were separated, the tacit understanding of a clearly defined civilian sphere and military sphere brought these autonomous power centres to function in harmony till the civilian authority did not step on the military sphere and vice versa.

Benazir after assuming power became assertive in the foreign policy sphere. She appointed Tanvir Ahmad Khan as the Foreign Secretary replacing Humayun Khan. Abdul Sattar who was removed as Foreign Secretary by Zia, was sent to India as the High Commissioner. As a result of this both Yakub Khan and Akhund, National Security advisor resigned. However, the defence policy sphere remained immune from such interference. The Zarbe Momin exercise, as a commentator puts it, the elected government was not even involved in the conceptual or strategic planning, underpinning the country's largest exercise, and its input has been restricted to giving formal permission and approving extra funds. In substance, the army has made political decisions...creating strategic depth in Indian soil itself, to give the government elbow room at the negotiating table. It might be a

correct decision, but it was made by the army under Zia, not by the PPP government under Benazir." <sup>71</sup> Speaking on the same wavelength, this commentator argues that the army refused to entrust its own direction to the government of Pakistan after the death of the President-COAS, "not just that the government had nothing to offer it, but because the army viewed the government as suspect" they feel that "the commitment of the federal cabinet to the country is less than that of the Army's highest echelons." <sup>72</sup>

Major political decisions which had implications for the army were taken by Benazir. She stood clearly for a negotiated settlement of the Afghan problem rather than a military solution. She also appointed a high-powered committee, under retired Air Chief Marshal Zulfikar Ali Khan, to review the performance of ISI. The most significant recommendation of the commission among other suggestions was the abolition of the political cell dealing with Afghanistan. She also dismissed Director General of ISI Lt Gen Hamid Gul under the alleged pressure of the US and replaced him with Shamsur Rehman Kallue; for the first time a retired lieutenant general was to head the ISI, to reduce the army control over ISI. This was done because ISI had become an apparatus in the hands of the army to keep itself abreast of the activities of various politicians and the domestic political scene. Quoting a Lahore daily M.H. Askari wrote that among the measures implemented on the recommendations of the committee on ISI, one of them was that operation in India was ended abruptly with funds frozen and personnel recalled. <sup>73</sup> In an interesting article Christina Lamb and Edward Desmond wrote that Lt Gen. Hamid Gul and other intelligence officers believed that Bhutto would "sell out" Pakistan to rival India because of her family's real or imagined connections. <sup>74</sup> ISI's obsession with this theory was so acute that even the meeting between Benazir and Rajiv was secretly taped and was later played to the opposition to win over their support before her dismissal. Benazir even sought to appoint a new chairman of the joint chiefs of staff committee in place of Admiral Iftikhar Sirohey who had been holding this position since November 1988. The dismissal of Admiral Sirohey was not accepted by the President. This opened the pandora's box of the demarcation of spheres of power between the President and the Prime Minister. Though the Chairman, JCSC and COAS were devised to be headed by two different individuals, Benazir to please Gen. Beg offered him the post of chairman of JCSC, but he declined unless the chairman JCSC was put at par with US commander of Joint Forces.

During Benazir's first term the COAS, Mirza Aslam Beg went to the extent of announcing policy towards Iran which is the prerogative of the civilian government. On September 13, 1989 he offered defence material and training to Iran after the Iranian Revolution without consulting the Prime Minister. On December 2, 1990 while speaking about the Gulf War in Pakistan Ordnance Factory in Wah cantonment he commended Iran for defying 'the mightiest of the mighty'. His pronouncement on Kashmir created misunderstanding which was later clarified by the foreign office. <sup>75</sup> Moreover, the army was not comfortable with her special assistant Maj Gen Nasirullah Babbar as well as the advisor on defence, former Maj Gen. Imtiaz Ali who was her father's military secretary. However, the major factor which led to her dismissal was because she had ignored army headquarters in matters of defence procurement.

The army's apprehension about a party coming to power which did not follow the rules of the game was understandable. Thus its role in the elections became significant in order to guard its interests which included an important aspect of decision-making. In this context the role of the army especially in the 1990 election is worth mentioning. This also establishes the fact that the army while even formally not in power wanted a person in power who would not curtail the army's interests Lt Gen. Assad Durrani, former ISI chief admitted that he was asked by the former Army Chief Mirza Aslam Beg to distribute funds among politicians who required support in the campaign against Benazir Bhutto. Even his predecessor, Gen Hamid Gul, also stated that he created Islamic Jamhoori Ittehad to take on Benazir Bhutto.

During Nawaz Sharif's first tenure, General Beg took a diametrically opposite view to official government policy on the Gulf War, much to the embarrassment of the Prime Minister. It was also known that both the army and



the PM differed in their approach to Kashmir, US and Sindh. The main factor which annoyed the army and led to Nawaz Sharif's dismissal was "Sharif's solo flight in initiating peace process with India." <sup>76</sup> Contrary to the views expressed by the outgoing Army Chief, Gen Mirza Aslam Beg about the threat to the security of Pakistan and a possible attack by India, the foreign office issued a speedy contradiction. This statement by the Foreign Office was criticised by Benazir who herself was victim of the 8th Amendment while trying to pursue her own policy.

Differences between Nawaz Sharif and Ghulam Ishaq Khan started due to Sharif's objection to Gen Abdul Wahid, Commander XII corps in Quetta who was appointed as the Army Chief, after Asif Nawaz passed away. Nawaz Sharif was dismissed in April 18, 1993 after he aired his opinion against the President publicly. It is important to note that, one of the grounds for his dismissal was subverting the armed forces authority. Though the army denied any role in his dismissal, it finally intervened after Nawaz's government was reinstated by the Supreme Court. The differences between both widened, which they were unable to sort out mutually and the COAS, Gen. Waheed Kakar asked both the Prime Minister and the President to resign.

To come back to power Benazir Bhutto entrusted two of her trusted lieutenants Farooq Leghari and Aftab Sherpao with the job of bridging the gulf between her party and the establishment. <sup>77</sup> This indicates the army's role in politics and also establishes the fact that without the army's patronage the survival of a democratically elected government is also at stake. Benazir in her second term was careful about her limitations in annoying the army and breaking the delicately balanced power sharing formula between them. President Leghari appointed Gen. Karamat without consulting Benazir.

During Benazir's second term it was well known that Gen. Karamat and Benazir Bhutto had differences over the Mirage 2000-5 aircraft deal because the deal would make a dent in the expenditure made for defence purchases. The army was also equally critical about several purchases made by its sister services without adequate transparency. The government was adamant and refused cancellation of the deal leading to further stand-off between the two. <sup>78</sup> The army was dissatisfied with the "political" budget decision and weapon purchases, partly because rumours of kickbacks in the Mirage deal and submarine purchase for the Navy. Coupled with these differences, Benazir's performance in the domestic political sphere was marked by corruption, nepotism, worsening law and order situation etc. This led to the dismissal of her government.

## The Nuclear Issue and Defence Decision-Making

Pakistan's nuclear programme was started under Z.A. Bhutto. Some sections of the people of Pakistan even argue that the nuclear weapons programme was started by him to give the civilian ruling elite the ultimate weapon, which would even sideline the army. However, the nuclear weapons programme accelerated under Zia's period and the military had effective control over it. Even Benazir claimed that she had no idea about the military nature of the Pakistan nuclear programme when she was queried by the journalists during her visit to the US in 1989. After the Indo-Pak tension boiled over Kashmir in 1990, Pakistan accelerated its uranium enrichment programme. The decision was taken by the President and COAS. This is admitted by Benazir herself during an interview to ABC television. <sup>79</sup> This statement indicates the military nature of Pakistan's nuclear programme where the civilians hardly have any say. It is not surprising that some reports point out that no prime minister has ever been allowed to visit the nuclear facility in Kahuta. <sup>80</sup> Nawaz Sharif was aware of the reality after the stoppage of US economic and military aid to Pakistan. The enrichment programme was capped, but he did not have any authority to roll back the nuclear programme to appease the Americans. He expressed his constraint in his interview to Barbara Crossette in June 1991 that although he wanted to take a flexible



position, he could not since he was constrained by certain factors which pointed to the hard-liners in the military. <sup>81</sup> All these indicate that the civilians have hardly any role in the matter of defence decision-making.

**National Command Authority:** The recently established National Command Authority of Pakistan established by the Chief Executive Gen. Pervez Musharraf has nine members and also establishes the military supremacy. The Employment Control Committee (ECC) is the apex body of the NCA, which would decide the further stages of weaponisation and the decision to authorise its use. Its membership includes Chairman JCSC, the three service chiefs, Defence and the Interior Ministers and Director General, Strategic Plans Division. The Foreign Minister is the Deputy Chairman of ECC and ECC is chaired by Head of the State, i.e. Gen. Musharraf. This is because the Chief Executive is also holding the defence portfolio. It sidelines the Defence Minister and supersedes the Defence Council, the tier immediately below the Development Control Committee (DCC). It will supervise the actual development of the system. DCC will be chaired by the head of government and his deputy will be the Chairman JCSC. Its member are the service chiefs, the DG, SPD and scientific and technical representatives. The ECC now constitutes four members each, civilian and military. However, the military members dominate since the DG Strategic Plans Division is to function as the Secretary of the ECC. Though Pakistan would be having a full time executive head of the ECC in the shape of DGSPD but his being based in the Joint Staff Headquarter raises serious questions about the civilian control.

There are reports that the establishment of NCA which will be responsible for policy formulation on nuclear issue and which "will exercise employment and development control over all the Strategic Forces and Strategic Organisations." <sup>82</sup>

### Resurrection of Civilian Supremacy

Nawaz Sharif was elected for the second time with a landslide victory. This majority provided him with necessary strength to consolidate the infant democracy of Pakistan. On April 1, 1977, the government of Nawaz Sharif announced that President Farooq Leghari had 'most democratically and graciously agreed' to the cancellation of presidential power concerning appointment of senior military officers. However, Sharif had elaborate discussions with Gen. Karamat before initiating the 13th Amendment. The policy of accommodation prevailed when in November 1997, Sharif accepted the army's proposal to allow the Army Chief to hold simultaneously the post of Chairman of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee.

The judiciary and Prime Ministerial tussle in which Gen. Karamat was asked to intervene underpins the role of the army in the domestic politics. This led to the resignation of Chief Justice Sajjad Ali Shah and the President Farooq Leghari. The 13 Amendment Act, which restored the Prime Minister's power in appointing the service chiefs, was not liked by many in the establishment. However, the government tried to contain the army's dissatisfaction and agreed to induct army officers between the ranks of captain and colonel on a permanent basis into the police, the IB and the Federal Investigation Agency, effectively giving the army a greater control over the intelligence services. <sup>83</sup>

The 14th Amendment on anti-defection strengthened the hand of Nawaz Sharif. With a two-third majority, he was the most powerful Prime Minister of Pakistan after Z.A. Bhutto. However, like Bhutto he used his electoral power to accumulate more authority. The army was sidelined and Jehangir Karamat's resignation on the issue of NSC epitomised the Prime Minister's power. He floated the idea of reconstitution of the National Security Council, which is not an alien concept to the Pakistani political system. This would have formalised a role for the army in decision-making, which is anathema to the civilian government though the army's role after the abolition of the 8th Amendment was a precedent rather than mandatory.

## The Military Coup: Reasserting Army's Centrality

The Kargil operation and the fourth army takeover brings forth the role of the army in the decision-making structure of the country. There is no doubt that Kargil precipitated army intervention. Nawaz Sharif in his second tenure was the most powerful Prime Minister of Pakistan with a sweeping majority. He was able to consolidate his position by amending the 8th Amendment, thus virtually removing hindrances in the way of absolute authority. The all-powerful President became a figurehead with the removal of the 8th Amendment. The army also lost its leverage over the civilian leadership. However, resignation of Gen. Jehangir Karamat and his success in removing the Chief Justice had made the Premier more powerful. To his credit he had initiated the nuclear test and the Lahore declaration which, emphasising Pakistan's power also underlined his emphasis on peace and reassertion of the civilian government in the most important aspect of Pakistan's foreign policy. It is significant that the three service chiefs were not present at the time of the arrival of the Indian Prime Minister indicating the army's displeasure over the peace overtures. After the military coup, Gen. Musharraf and his ruling clique were candid about their reservation on the Lahore declaration.

There is still confusion regarding the exact time when the Kargil operation was planned, one is also groping in the dark about the actual author and implementor. The question arises, an operation of this nature could not have been undertaken without the knowledge of the civilian authority. Because, though the army can implement its operation, the political fall-out had to be managed by the Prime Minister. However, it is very likely that Nawaz Sharif was unaware of the extent of the operation. It is highly unlikely that a politician of his maturity could not have gauged the likely outcome of such a misadventure and the political fallout of such an operation in the domestic and international political arenas. Moreover, given the autonomy that the army enjoys, how far Sharif himself could have enforced any viewpoint contrary to the army's plan remains questionable. <sup>84</sup>

Given the political set up of Pakistan, the army enjoys a considerable degree of autonomy as has been evident in the past. According to a commentator "the military's position has been strengthened because...Pakistan's security predicament persists because of civil war in Afghanistan, and because Pakistan and India are engaged in undeclared nuclear weapons and missile race. Such regional insecurity increases the military's relevance to decision-making." <sup>85</sup> Thus when the army took over, there was absolutely no protest. The verbal duel which ensued with both the civilians and the military accusing each other for the Kargil adventure is quite surprising.

Sources close to government say that the Prime Minister was not consulted before undertaking this operation. While addressing Pakistani-Chinese society in Karachi, Niazi Naik said, the back channel diplomacy which could have resolved the Kashmir issue received a setback because of the operation in Kargil by the army. In fact he said that the operation was army driven and the civilian government hardly had any say. Later Mr. Naik refuted the statement attributed to him but the reporter who had stated this refused to take back the report, thus leaving a grey area of suspicion regarding the extent of the civilian government's role. However, Gen. Musharraf was on record in his interview to BBC that it was a joint decision. The Washington agreement was sought as a face saving device. Sharif after his return from Washington explicitly put the blame on the army, after Jammāt and other right wing elements took on to the streets against the government decision to withdraw. The army could not sit quietly and see its image tarnished. This was evident from the speech delivered by Musharraf after taking over. He said, "few at the helm of affairs in the past were intriguing to destroy the last institution of stability left in Pakistan by creating dissension in the ranks of the armed forces. <sup>86</sup> Dislodging the army from the domain of politics in Pakistan will remain an uphill task. "It will also call for a reorientation of political behaviour and a rethinking of policies relating to defence and foreign relations. Nothing less will do." <sup>87</sup> Quoting sources closer to the army Idrees Bakhtiar wrote "...specific issues, like nuclear enrichment, foreign affairs—specially

vis-à-vis India, and to some extent the US—and other related issues, will no longer be the domain of the civilian government..." 88

However, though there are other reasons, the Kargil debacle sounded the death knell of the civilian government. 89. This once again established the primacy of the army in decision-making. War and peace in Pakistan, as the political history suggests have to be the decision of the army and any attempt to trespass the well demarcated and acknowledged sphere of its domain will lead to reassertion of the army's prominence through a spate of military rules.

---

## Endnotes

**Note \*:** Researcher, IDSA [Back](#).

**Note 1:** Wayne Wilcox, "Political Role of the Army in Pakistan: Some Reflections" in S.P. Uerma and U. Narain eds., Pakistan Political System in Crisis: Emergence of Bangladesh, (Jaipur: University of Rajasthan Press, 1972), p. 35. [Back](#).

**Note 2:** Ueena Kukreja, Civil-Military Relations in South Asia, (Delhi: Sage Publications, 1991), p. 57. [Back](#).

**Note 3:** See Ayub Khan, Friends Not Masters, (London: Oxford University Press, 1967). [Back](#).

**Note 4:** See the interesting similarity of the text in their address to the nation by all the Martial Law Administrators explaining the reason for their takeover. See The Herald, December 1999. To take one instance of the army's view of politicians, Ayub Khan the first Martial Law Administrator is quoted, "The politicians...are trying to get power by hook or by crook. And having got there, they know that they will have nothing to show for themselves except working for the disruption of the country further...I am not certain that if the country is left to them we should expect nothing but ruin." Also see Stephen Cohen, Pakistan Army (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), pp. 107-110. [Back](#).

**Note 5:** A.R. Siddiqui, "Armed Forces: Tasks and Missions" Defence Journal, vol. 4, no. 1-2, 1978, p. 6. [Back](#).

**Note 6:** Zulfikar Ali Bhutto, Myths of Independence, (London: Oxford University Press, 1969), p. 152. [Back](#).

**Note 7:** M. Asghar Khan, "Quaid-i-Azam on Soldier and Politics", Defence Journal, vol. 4, no. 11, 1978, p. 10. [Back](#).

**Note 8:** Aziz Siddiqui, "Born to Rule?", The Herald, June 1991, pp. 31-32. [Back](#).

**Note 9:** Cohen, n. 4, p. 105. [Back](#).

**Note 10:** "National Defence: Reorganisation of Higher Command", Editorial, Defence Journal (Karachi: April 1991), p. 5. [Back](#).

**Note 11:** He complains that when he went to attend a conference with the Prime Minister and others there was no serious discussion of the problem involved and there was complete ignorance about the business of anything in the nature of military operations. For details see, Akbar Khan, Raiders in Kashmir, (Delhi: Army Publishers, nd), pp. 16-17. [Back](#).

**Note 12:** For a detailed account see Hasan Zaheer, *The Rawalpindi Conspiracy*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1998), p. 140. See especially chapter 3 and 5. Also see page 174 where three reasons are cited for overthrowing of the civilian government and Kashmir is one of the causes. [Back](#).

**Note 13:** Aziz Siddiqui, n. 8, p. 32. [Back](#).

**Note 14:** Hasan-Askari Rizvi, *The Military & Politics in Pakistan, 1947-86*, (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1987), p. 57. [Back](#).

**Note 15:** Ayub Khan's autobiographer Mohammad Ahmed in his book *My Chief* (Lahore: 1960) pp. 73-76, refers to Ayub's role in clinching the defence pact with the US in 1954. [Back](#).

**Note 16:** This is known as the Rawalpindi Conspiracy case. Ayub has admitted that Maj Gen. Akbar Khan used to spend a lot of time in Azad Kashmir, an indication of his involvement in the cause. He had accused the Prime Minister and everybody else in the government of inefficiency and inability to take decisions, See Ayub, n. 3, p. 38. Akbar Khan wrote...the action in Kashmir would need to be preceded by the coming into existence of a government in Pakistan that would back us. Among the main features of this (proposed declaration by the Governor General, written by Akbar Khan) declaration were dismissal of the old government, formation of a civil caretaker government, date for general elections on adult franchise, a constituent assembly for framing a constitution, impartiality in elections to be ensured by using the neutral machinery of the army, and an advisory military council consisting of all generals." See Akbar Khan, n. 11, p. 164. The record of his dissatisfaction is elucidated in pp. 176, 178. For the meticulous planning of the Kashmir operation see pp. 11-44. [Back](#).

**Note 17:** Ayub Khan, n. 3, p. 39. He wrote "the army had inherited a great tradition of loyalty, sense of duty, patriotism, and complete subordination to civil authority. No one could imagine that when the country was in a difficult situation this great instrument of stability would prove so vulnerable." [Back](#).

**Note 18:** Ibid., p. 58. [Back](#).

**Note 19:** Defence Journal, n. 10. He has written that Pakistan armed forces in some instances have acted independent of each other rather than as a coherent whole. He has cited the example of Pakistan Airforce under Air Marshal Asghar Khan who at his initiative spoke to his counterpart Air Marshal Arjun Singh of India to advise him to keep his force out of conflict without consulting anyone. Even the army launched its operation Gibraltar and Grand Slam without consulting the air force and navy during the 1965 war. The navy acted on its own and hit an Indian coastal target off Dwaraka. [Back](#).

**Note 20:** Lt Gen. SGM Peerzada was appointed Principal Staff Officer to the Chief Martial Law Administrator (CMLA). Three Deputy CMLAs were also appointed. They were Lt Gen. Abdul Hamid Khan, Chief of Staff, Army, Air Marshal Nur Khan, C-in-C, Air Force, S.M. Ahsen, Vice Admiral, C-in-C, Navy. These four officers were the real decision-makers. [Back](#).

**Note 21:** Brian Cloughley, *The Pakistan Army: War and Insurrections* (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999), pp. 156-57. [Back](#).

**Note 22:** K.M. Arif, *Working With Zia*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1995), p. 48. [Back](#).

**Note 23:** Stanley Wolpert, *Zulfi Bhutto of Pakistan* (Delhi: Oxford University Press, 1993), pp. 88-93. It is even said that Bhutto deliberately delayed the acceptance of Polish resolution in the UN for a cease-fire by making the army fight deliberately. See Brig A.R. Siddiqui, "Martial Law: An Overview", *Defence Journal*, vol. 4, no. 6-7, 1978, p. 6. [Back](#).

**Note 24:** Brig A.R. Siddiqui, "Armed Forces: Task and Mission", Defence Journal, vol. 4, nos. 1-2, 1978, p. 2. [Back](#).

**Note 25:** Cloughley, n. 21, p. 242. [Back](#).

**Note 26:** Ibid., p. 245. [Back](#).

**Note 27:** Article 245, The Constitution of Pakistan, 1973. [Back](#).

**Note 28:** Ibid., Third Schedule of the Constitution. [Back](#).

**Note 29:** Cloughly, n. 21, pp. 245-50. [Back](#).

**Note 30:** See Article 6(i), (ii) and (iii), n. 27. [Back](#).

**Note 31:** An interesting fact is that inspite of such laws, martial law was imposed in 1977, the constitution was suspended and an Indemnity Act was passed in 1985 to put President's order, martial law regulations, enactment, notifications, rules orders including the martial law beyond the ambit of the judiciary. It will remain in force until altered, repealed or amended by competent authority. This Indemnity Law is known as the eighth Amendment. This amended 18 articles 2 schedules and incorporated a new schedule. [Back](#).

**Note 32:** The strength of FSF was 13,875 men and officers in 1974 which rose to 18,563 by the end of 1976. Its equipment included semi-automatic 7.62 rifles SMGs and LMGs, 60mm mortars, hand grenades, modern communication equipment and transport vehicles. There were plans to acquire reconditioned tanks from the army. White Paper on the Performance of Bhutto Regime, vol. III, Islamabad, Government of Pakistan, 1979, p. 26. As cited in Hasan-Askari Rizvi, p. 202. [Back](#).

**Note 33:** Wolpert, n. 23, p. 273. [Back](#).

**Note 34:** Mohammad Asghar Khan, Generals in Politics: Pakistan 1958-1982 (Delhi: Vikas Publishing House, 1983), p. 215. [Back](#).

**Note 35:** White Paper on Higher Defence Organisation, Sec. 3, Full text can be referred in the Defence Journal, vol. 5, no. 9, 1989. [Back](#).

**Note 36:** Members include Prime Minister who is also the Chairman, Defence Minister, Minister of Foreign Affairs, Finance Minister, Interior Minister of Frontier Region, Kashmir Affairs; Information and Broadcasting, Communication, Commerce, Industries and Production. [Back](#).

**Note 37:** Cohen, n. 4, pp. 124-25. [Back](#).

**Note 38:** White Paper on Higher Defence Organisation, Sec. 3, n. 35, p. 29. [Back](#).

**Note 39:** Ibid., p. 31. The Ministry of Defence is the secretariat of the Defence Minister which is headed by Secretary General (Defence) and comprises defence division, defence production division, aviation division, the JCSC, HQ of three services. [Back](#).

**Note 40:** Defence Journal, n. 10, p. 6. [Back](#).

**Note 41:** Ahmed Rashid, "Marching Orders", The Herald, May 1997, p. 39. [Back](#).

**Note 42:** Sameen Khan, "Do We Need a Defence Ministry in Pakistan?", Defence Journal, vol. 4, 1991, p. 18. [Back](#).

**Note 43:** Cohen, n. 4, pp. 50-51. [Back](#).

**Note 44:** K.M. Arif, n. 22, p. 74. [Back](#).

**Note 45:** Asghar Khan, n. 34, p. 60. [Back](#).

**Note 46:** A.R. Siddiqui, "The Military Option", Defence Journal, vol. 4, no. 2, 1978, p. 6. [Back](#).

**Note 47:** Cohen, n. 4, p. 38. [Back](#).

**Note 48:** S.K. Mallik, The Quranic Concept of War, (New Delhi: Himalayan Books, n.d.), p. [Back](#).

**Note 49:** Wolpert, n. 23, p. 70. [Back](#).

**Note 50:** Refer to Omar Norman, Pakistan: A Political and Economic History Since 1947 (1990) as cited in Cloughley, n. 21, p. 278. [Back](#).

**Note 51:** Amir Mir, "Unholy Resurrection? Newsline, February 2000, p. 47. [Back](#).

**Note 52:** This was abolished as a prelude to the 8th Amendment which conferred unfettered authority to the President. The abolition was part of a deal with the National Assembly members to seek their support in the passage of the Indemnity Act. [Back](#).

**Note 53:** Amir Mir, n. 51, p. 47. The members included President, Prime Minister, defence minister, foreign minister, interior and finance minister, Chairman JCSC, Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee and the three service chiefs. Altogether a combination of six civilians and four in uniform. [Back](#).

**Note 54:** Its task was to advise the government in (a) determination of national strategy and fixation of priorities in terms of overall national security, (b) formulation of defence policy in accordance with national strategic objectives and securing of assessments and plans for fulfilment of defence policy (c) Coordination of defence policy with external and domestic policies (d) definition of the task of armed forces of Pakistan in accordance with national strategy (e) economic and financial policies affecting defence and national security (f) recommendations relating to internal security, proclamations of emergency and any other matter of national importance referred to the CDNS. See F.S. Lodi, "Evolution of the NSC", The News, November 2, 1999. [Back](#).

**Note 55:** The CDNS could hold only two meetings before it was wound up. [Back](#).

**Note 56:** As per some reports the crisis originated at the corps commanders conference of September 19, 1998, where concerns were expressed about the situation in the country by a number of officers and Gen Karamat was urged to do something about it. The Khaleej Times, August 24, 1998. [Back](#).

**Note 57:** The Nation, April 2, 2000. [Back](#).

**Note 58:** The National Security Council had four civilian members. They are Dr. Mohammad Yaqub, member of NSC on finance, Imtiaz Sahibzada member of NSC on national affairs. Dr. Attiya Enaytullah, member of NSC on foreign policy, S. Sharifuddin Pirzada, senior advisor to the Chief Executive and ex-officio member of the NSC. [Back](#).

**Note 59:** Amir Mir, n. 51, p. 47. [Back](#).

**Note 60:** In an interview with Zahid Hussain and Farah Durrani, for details refer Newsline, November 1999, p. 27. [Back](#).



**Note 61:** Lawrence Ziring, *The Ayub's Era: Politics in Pakistan, 1958-1969* (New York: Syracuse University Press, 1971), p. 50. [Back](#).

**Note 62:** It is important to mention that the ISI was held responsible (for the explosion where hundred people died) by an inquiry commission set up by the Prime Minister. Even the succeeding Director of ISI General Hamid Gul was asked to resign which was not acceptable to Zia. [Back](#).

**Note 63:** Shahid Javed Burki, *Pakistan: Fifty Years of Nationhood*, (Lahore: Vanguard, 1999), p. 65. [Back](#).

**Note 64:** He made this statement while speaking in the Lahore District Bar Association. Dawn, January 8, 1990. According to Zia, Junejo was dismissed because of (a) rushing to sign the Geneva Accord, (b) politicisation of Geneva negotiations (c) creating minor hurdles in the way of Zia. See, K.M. Arif, n. 22, p. 393. [Back](#).

**Note 65:** A.R. Rehman, "The ISI Affair", *Defence Journal*, vol. 15, no. 8, 1989, p. 8. [Back](#).

**Note 66:** Mirza Aslam Beg, "Nuclear Programme and Political Ramblings", *Defence Journal*, vol. 19, no. 11-12, 1993, p. 19. [Back](#).

**Note 67:** Jasjit Singh, "The Army in Pakistan", in Jasjit Singh ed., *Kargil 1999: Pakistan Fourth War for Kashmir*, (Delhi: Knowledge World & IDSA), 1999, p. 42. For an interesting analysis refer to an article by the same author, "The Army in the Power Structure of Pakistan", *Strategic Analysis*, vol. 18, no. 7, October 1995, pp. 855-880. [Back](#).

**Note 68:** Christian Lamb, *Waiting for Allah*, (London: Hamish Hamilton, 1991), p. 41. [Back](#).

**Note 69:** *Ibid.*, p. 47. [Back](#).

**Note 70:** *Ibid.*, p. 107. [Back](#).

**Note 71:** M.A. Niazi, "Army's Role as Political Decision-Maker," *Nation*, January 17, 1990. [Back](#).

**Note 72:** *Ibid.* [Back](#).

**Note 73:** M.H. Askari, "The Change in ISI and its Implications", *Defence Journal*, vol. 15, no. 8, 1989, p. 12. [Back](#).

**Note 74:** Christina Lamb and Edward W. Desmond, *The Time*, March 27, 1989. [Back](#).

**Note 75:** The statement was the following. "It is quite likely that India in sheer desperation could lead venture against Pakistan. It was later clarified by the foreign office that he said a certain course of action in the long term by India", See Cloughly, n. 21, pp. 325-26. [Back](#).

**Note 76:** Zafar Abbas, "The Call to Arms" *The Herald*, December 1997, p. 41. [Back](#).

**Note 77:** See *The Herald*, April 1999, p. 60. [Back](#).

**Note 78:** Ahmed Rashid, "Chasing Mirages", *The Herald*, July 1996, pp. 37-38. [Back](#).

**Note 79:** Zahid Hussain, "The Bomb Controversy", *Newsline*, November 1991, p. 26. [Back](#).

**Note 80:** George Perkovich, "A Nuclear Third Way in South Asia", *Foreign Policy*, no. 91, Summer 1993, p. 90. [Back](#).

**Note 81:** Barbara Crossette, "Pakistan Asks Talks on Atomic Spread", *New York Times*, June 7, 1991. [Back](#).

**Note 82:** Umar Farooq "Pakistan Tests New Missile and Revises Command Structure", Jane's Defence Weekly, February 16, 2000, p. 3. [Back](#).

**Note 83:** Muslim, July 1, 1997. [Back](#).

**Note 84:** Refer May 26 taped conversation between Gen. Musharraf and Lt Gen. Moh. Aziz about the secrecy of the operation, The Hindustan Times, June 12, 1999. [Back](#).

**Note 85:** Hasan-Askari Rizvi, "Civil-Military Relations in Contemporary Pakistan", Survival, vol. 40, no. 2, Summer 1998, p. 110. [Back](#).

**Note 86:** Text of Gen. Musharrafs speech, Dawn, October 18, 1999. [Back](#).

**Note 87:** Aziz Siddiqui, "Born to Rule?" The Herald, June 1991, p. 33. [Back](#).

**Note 88:** Idrees Bakhtiar, "The PM: Put in His Place", The Herald, August 1991, p. 25. [Back](#).

**Note 89:** Nawaz Sharif himself admitted that he was dismissed because of the Kargil issue. He even said that the army by removing Gen. Tariq Pervez wanted to create an impression among the public that "merely meeting the Prime Minister could result in removal or retirement of three star general". For Nawaz Sharifs statement on the Plane case see Dawn, March 9, 2000. [Back](#).