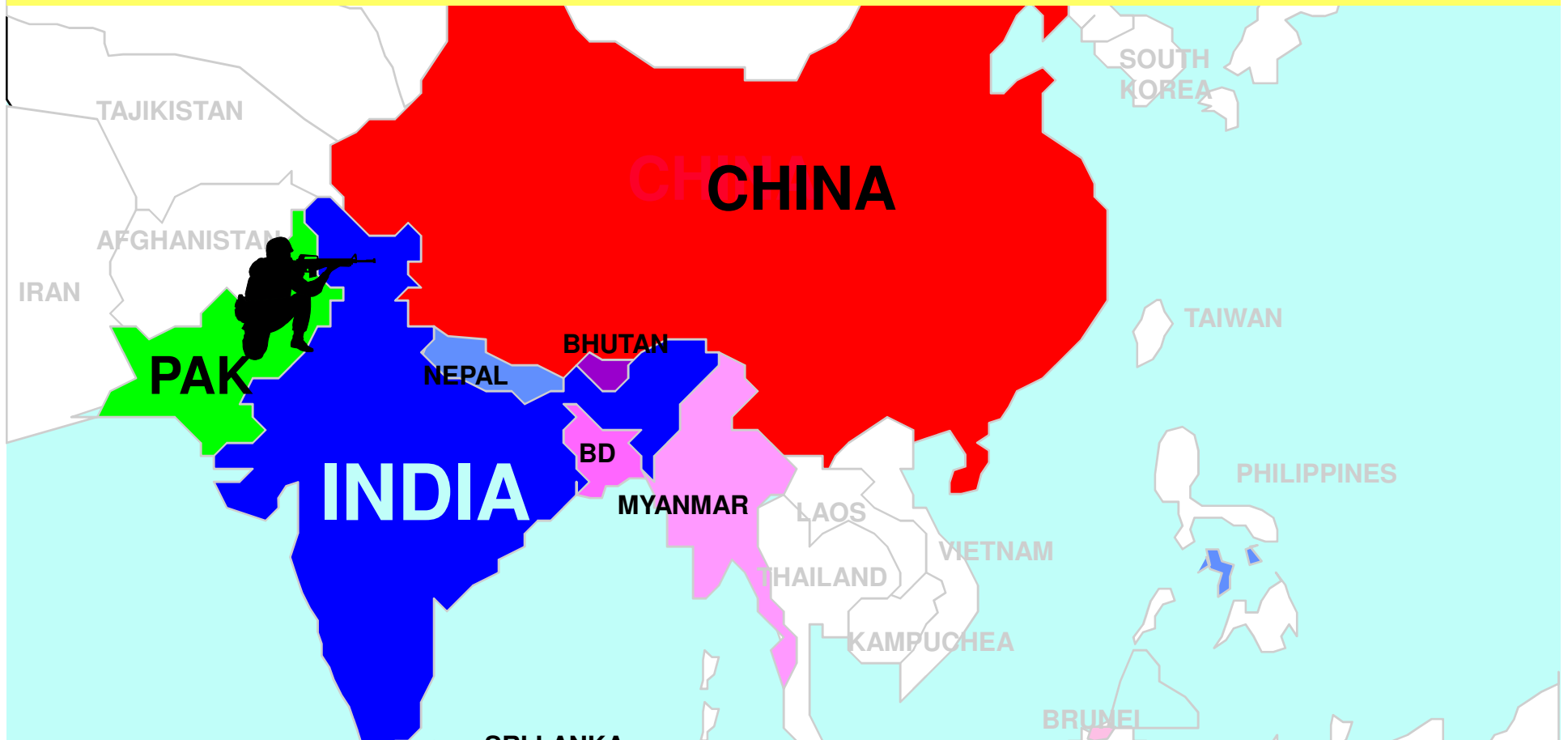


# STRATEGIC COMPETITION IN SOUTHERN ASIA

## Arms Race or Modernisation?



**Brig Gurmeet Kanwal (Retd)**

**Institute for Defence Studies and Analyses (IDSA), New Delhi**

# **Military Modernisation**

# Modernisation

**Military Modernisation has two facets:**

- **Replacement of obsolete/ obsolescent weapons and equipment; new acquisitions are naturally more modern.**
- **Qualitative upgradation of combat capabilities through the acquisition of force multipliers – net centricity, EBOs (C2, situational awareness, RSTA, PGMs, light-weight protection).**
- **Qualitative upgradation is not happening.**

# Funds for Modernisation

- Defence Budget for FY 2017-18 US\$42.18 billion is < 1.60 per cent of projected GDP – lowest since the 1962 war with China.
- Share of Capital Expenditure has fallen from 34.7 to 33.0 of the budget.
- After allowing for committed liabilities, < US\$1 billion available for new acquisitions.
- With 10 per cent of the total as initial payment, new contracts worth US\$10 billion may be signed.
- Procedural delays often lead to the surrender of funds.

# Army Modernisation

- Howitzers (all 155mm): 145 US M777; 120 Dhanush (Indigenous); 100 K-9 Vajra (SP); SSM: BrahMos; MBRLs: Smerch, Pinaka; **no progress**: 155mm (52 calibre) towed guns – 1,500 pieces.
- **Large number of MBTs and ICVs are still night blind.**
- Air Defence, light helicopters, C4I2SR systems – largely obsolescent. NOUCAVs.
- **Infantry: Rifles need replacement; BPJs deficient.**

# Air Force Modernisation

- **Squadrons: Peak – 39, present – 33, required – 42.**
- **Su-30MKI: Required – 272, delivered by HAL – 210; MMRCA: Required – 226, contracted – 36 Rafale.**
- **Mig-21 & Mig-27: Required 245 + 87; contracted 20 LCA Tejas (+20, +83). (Competing: F-16/18, Gripen)**
- **Recent acquisitions: AWACS – 3 (Phalcon/IL-76), C-17 – 10 (+1), C-130J – 6 (+6), CH-47 – 15, Apache – 22, Mi-17V5 – 80 (+59). (Ka-226 LUH??)**
- **SAMs/AAMs: S-400, Akash, Spyder, MRSAM, BrahMos, Meteor.**
- **Future: FGFA, AMCA, AWACS, 56 Airbus C-529, modernisation of Mirage 2000, Mig-29...**

# Strategic Forces Modernisation

- **Missiles: Agni-IV canisterised, MIRV likely; Prithvi SRBM likely to be phased out.**
- **SSBN: Arihant induction shortly; second SSBN under construction; K-4 (3,500 km, trial stage).**
- **BMD system (endo/exo-atmospheric) still technology demonstrator, no deployment.**
- **NCP under construction; GCS for military satellite coming up...**
- **Strategic Planning Staff (SPS) in place.**
- **Future: Agni-V (5,000 km).**
- **Doctrine: NO change.**

# **Strategic Competition**



# Trends in Strategic Behaviour

- Change in India's response to Pakistan's war for Kashmir (proxy war??): **Tactical assertiveness, under umbrella of strategic restraint.**
- Resumption of negotiations (Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue) with Pakistan only after cross-border terrorism ends.
- **Cold Start doctrine for war in the plains – multiple thrust lines; shallow objectives.**
- **NO CHANGE** in India's 'no first use' nuclear posture.
- **India is increasingly more willing to contribute positively to security in the region.**

# Trends in Strategic Behaviour

- **Implementation of CPEC has further deepened the collusion between China and Pakistan:**
  - **Increase in presence of Chinese troops on Pakistani soil.**
  - **Pakistan's dependence on China will increase – economic indebtedness.**
  - **Gwadar Port likely to become a Chinese citadel/naval base in due course.**
  - **Efficacy of SAARC will be further undermined.**

# Trends in Strategic Behaviour

- **Indo-US Strategic Partnership – a paradigm change in India's outlook:**
  - **Hedging strategy against negative fallout of China's rise.**
  - **Nucleus of cooperative security framework for the Indo-Pacific.**
  - **Defence cooperation poised to rise to next higher trajectory – joint threat assessment, intelligence sharing, joint contingency planning, joint operations...**
  - **US support for Pakistan army is a spoiler.**

# Trends in Strategic Behaviour

- **Strategic stalemate in Afghanistan; could degenerate into civil war.**
- **ISIS has begun to make inroads.**
- **Pakistan is in a state of slow motion implosion.**

# PAKISTAN'S SLOW MOTION IMPLOSION

**FISSIPAROUS TENDENCIES**  
**INTERNAL INSTABILITY**

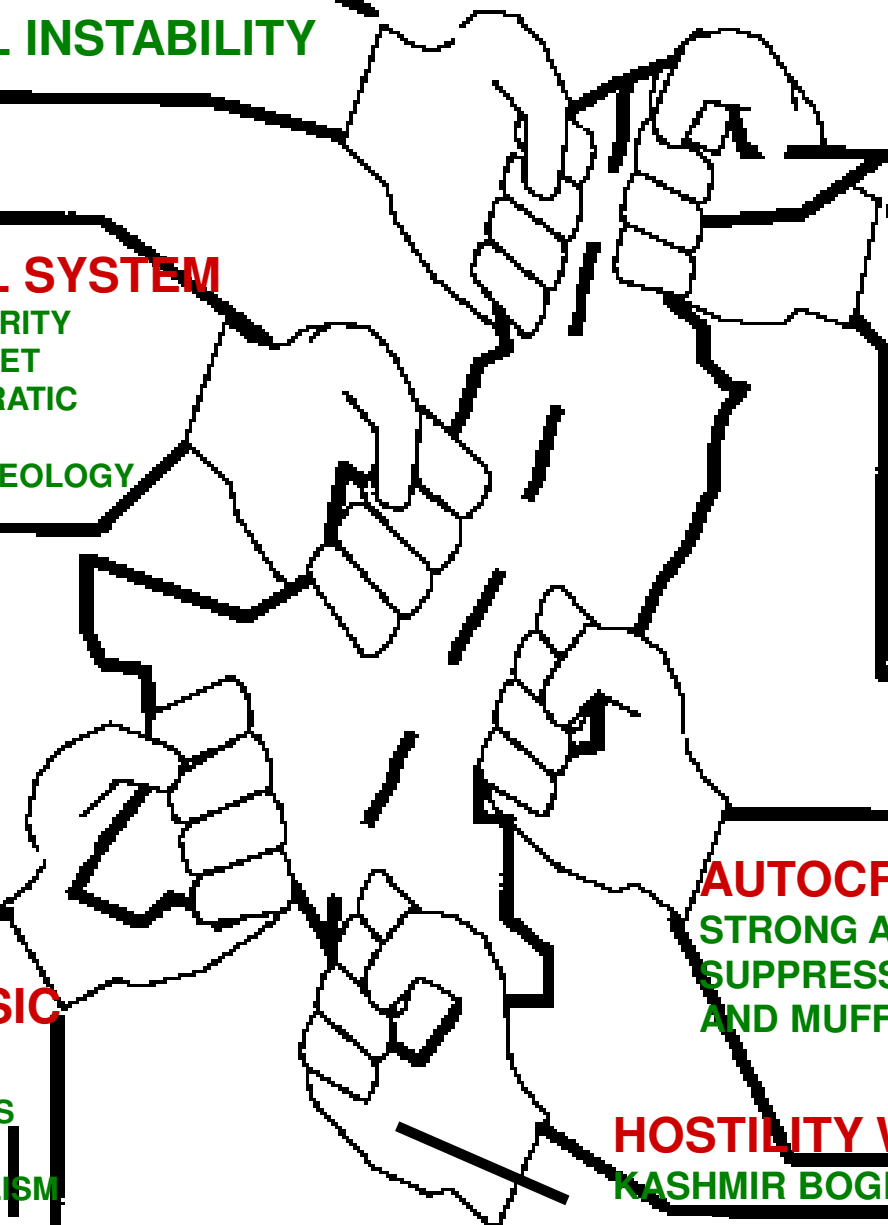
**POLITICAL SYSTEM**  
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FEUDAL MINDSET  
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**ROLE OF PAK  
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CONTROLS FOREIGN  
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ISLAMISATION

**WEAK BASIC  
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IDENTITY CRISIS  
COMPETITIVE  
SUB-NATIONALISM

**AUTOCRATIC REGIME**  
STRONG ARM TACTICS TO  
SUPPRESS RESENTMENT  
AND MUFFLE DISSENT

**HOSTILITY WITH INDIA**  
KASHMIR BOGEY



# **Pakistan's Slow Motion Implosion**

- **Tensions with India and Afghanistan.**
- **TTP-TNSM insurgency in KPK.**
- **Creeping Talibanisation.**
- **Shia-Sunni divide; frequent clashes.**
- **Fissiparous tendencies: Balochistan, Gilgit-Baltistan.**
- **Islamisation of the army (several attacks on army establishments with insider help).**
- **Failing economy.**
- **Poor civil-military relations.**

# Ugly Stability

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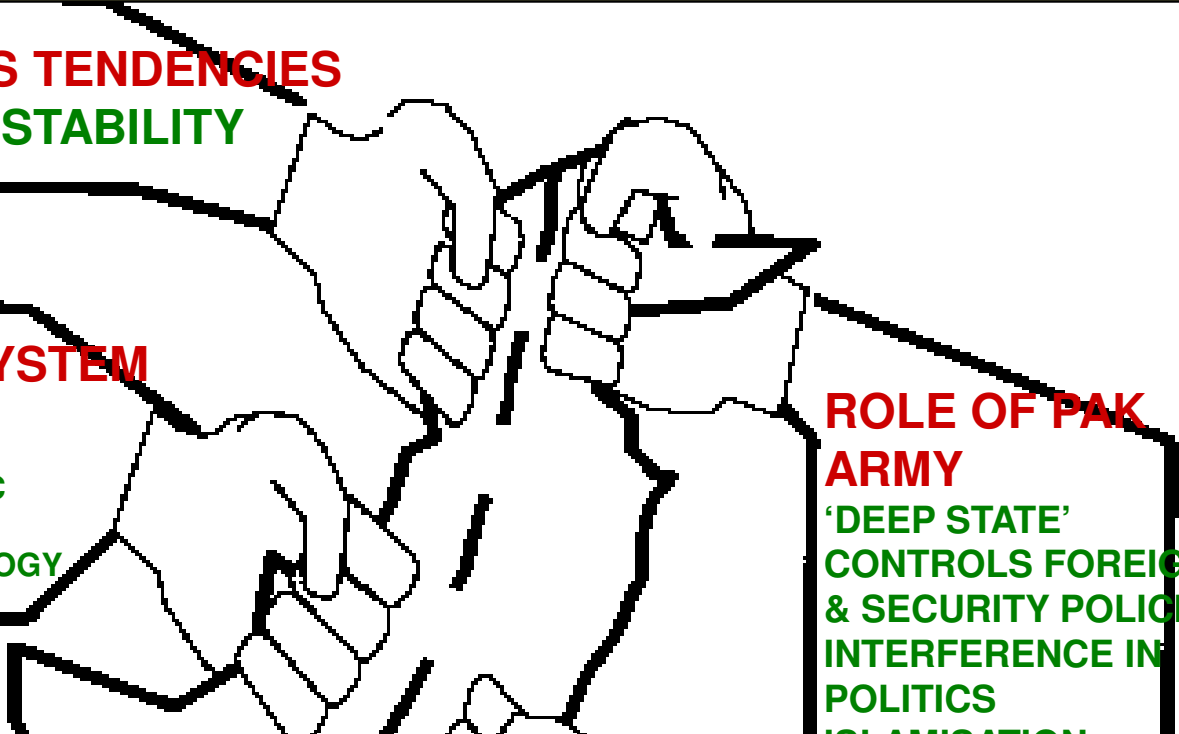
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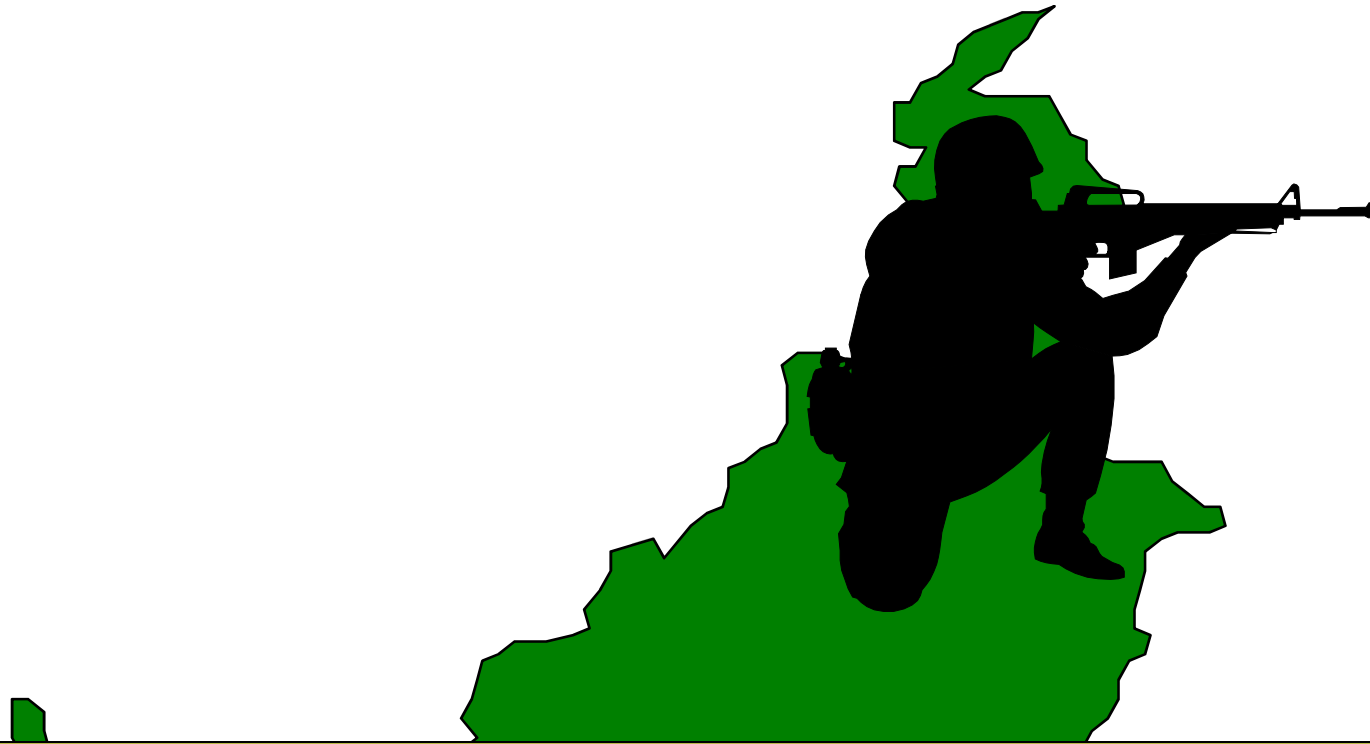
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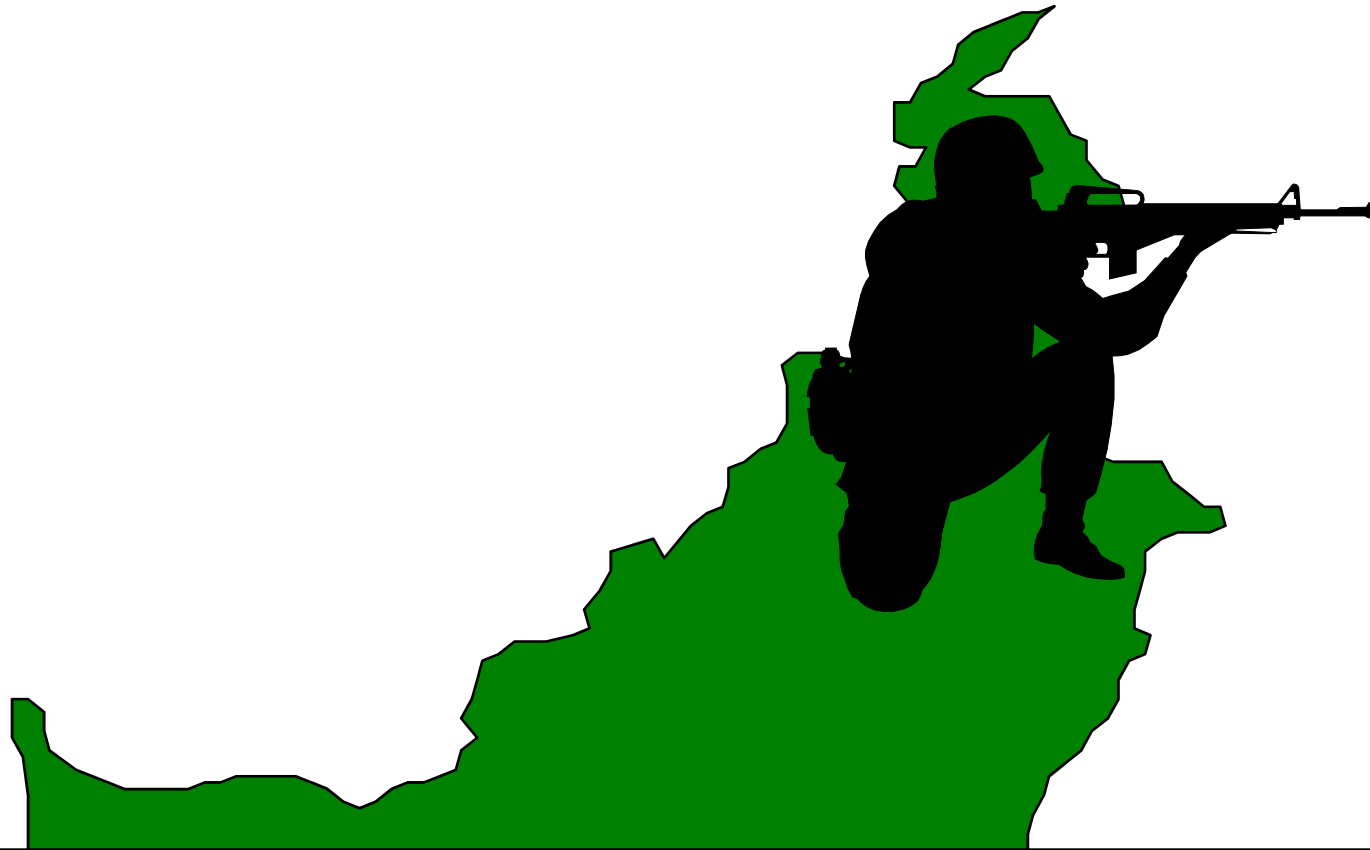
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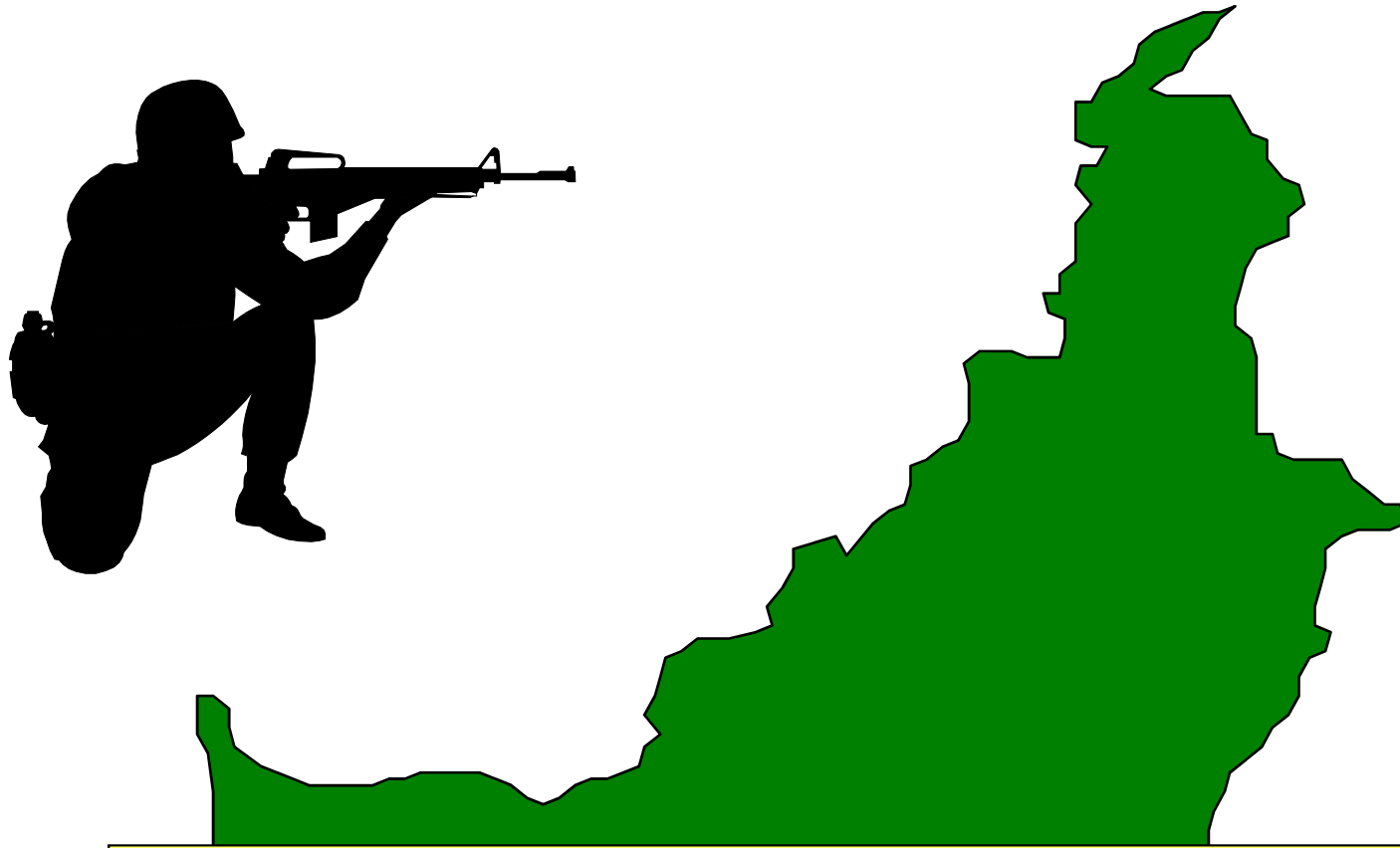




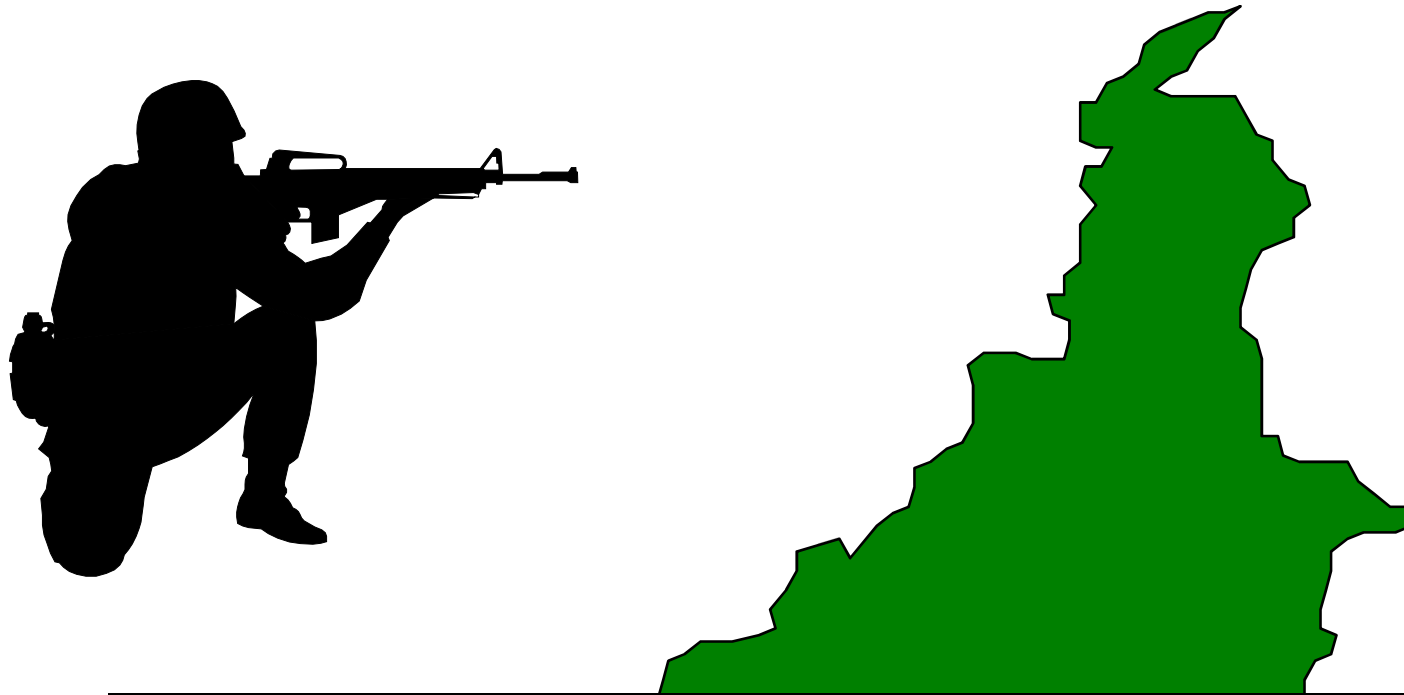
**Pakistan continues to sponsor trans-border terrorism as an instrument of state policy...**



**Waging war through  
asymmetric means to  
wrest Kashmir from India**



**Support to Haqqani  
network to destabilise  
Afghanistan government.**



**If Pakistan wants, the  
Taliban insurgency can  
be wound up in a month.**

**- Ashraf Ghani**

# Grave Provocation

- **Punjab, J&K, Parliament, Mumbai...**
- **Recent terrorist attacks:**
  - **Gurdaspur (Punjab) – Jul 2015**
  - **Udhampur (J&K) – Aug 2015**
  - **Pathankot Air Base (Punjab) – Jan 2016**  
(A week after PM's Lahore visit.)
  - **Pampore (J&K) – Jun and Oct 2016**
  - **Uri (J&K) – Sept 2016** (Surgical strikes.)
- **Masterminded by the ISI; executed by LeT and JeM.**
- **Handling of Kulbhushan Jadhav case.**

# **India's Strategic Restraint**

**Despite grave provocation, India has consistently showed immense strategic restraint...**

# **India's Strategic Restraint**

**Attack on army  
camp at Uri was the  
last straw... followed  
by trans-LoC  
surgical strikes on a  
wide front.**

# **India's Strategic Restraint**

**New policy: Tactical assertiveness under the umbrella of strategic restraint.**



**Ugly stability  
prevails...  
Miscalculation is  
possible.**

# **US Role in South Asia**

# Relationship with the US

## India

- **Strategic partner**
- **Designated 'Major Defence Partner'**
- **Intel sharing**
- **US largest supplier - defence equipment**
- **Growing bilateral trade (\$115 bn, 2016)**
- **People-to-people contacts, tourism, students**

## Pakistan

- **MNNA**
- **Supports ISAF fight against Taliban**
- **Land route for arms, ammo and supplies for ISAF**
- **Receives coalition support funds, surplus military equipment from the US**
- **Arms sales**

# US Concerns in South Asia

- **US Assessment:** Pakistan is going down the tube... nuclear weapons could fall into Jihadi hands.
- **To prevent this – a vital national interest – it is necessary to support and strengthen the Pakistan army.**
- **India-Pakistan tensions could lead to conflict – with risk of escalation to nuclear exchanges. Hence:**
  - **Counsel India to continue to show restraint and resolve Kashmir dispute.**
  - **Call on Pakistan's 'deep state' to stop cross-border terrorism.**

# US Actions in South Asia

- **No real pressure on Pakistan to stop state sponsorship of terrorism.**
- **Dozens of Russian citizens and companies are under US, EU, Canadian and Japanese sanctions; only a few Pakistanis designated as terrorists.**
- **CSF and arms transfers continue despite American deaths in Afghanistan at the hands of Haqqanis.**
- **Efforts to promote 'new normal' nuclear Pakistan as responsible nuclear power.**

# Impact of US Policy

- Policy prescription to ‘support and strengthen’ the Pakistan army **finds no resonance in New Delhi.** It is:
  - Helping to destabilize Pakistan’s neighbours.
  - Helping the army to **maintain its salience in Pakistan’s polity** and guide key foreign and security policies.
  - **Undermining democracy and civilian control over the military.**

# Impact of US Policy

- US support for the Pakistan army is slowing down further growth of the strategic partnership with India, particularly defence cooperation – doubts about US intentions.
- Since the key requirement is to safeguard Pakistan's nuclear warheads, assistance should be limited to achieving that aim.
- If support to Pakistan continues, the relationship with India could become merely a transactional one.

**Looking Ahead**



# Looking Ahead

- **Pakistan MUST stop trans-border terrorism.**
- **Resumption of stalled peace process contingent on above...**
- **Need for military-to-military CBMs; nuclear CBMs and NRRMs.**
- **Both must tone down political rhetoric and media frenzy.**

# Looking Ahead

- India has exercised **immense strategic restraint**, but must formulate a strategy to prosecute limited conventional conflict under a nuclear overhang to:
  - **Deter future terrorist strikes.**
  - Achieve limited political and military aims if deterrence fails.
- **The Cold Start doctrine** gives India the option to launch offensive operations in the plains **with minimum risk of escalation to nuclear level.**

