



MONITOR

Civil-Military Relations in Pakistan

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Law and order situation in Sindh: Civil-Military Public Statements

Lt. Gen. Naveed Mukhtar, Commander V Corps (Karachi) delivered an extraordinary speech on May 16, 2015 during a seminar organized by the National Defence University's Alumni Organization in Karachi. The fact that the address could be perceived as openly critical of the elected Sindh Government, in full media glare, signified that the channels of communication in Sindh were not as open and fluent as were previously believed to be.



Lt. Gen. Naveed Mukhtar during his address in Karachi¹

His address repeated some of the old concerns of the Military leadership that '*the police and administration should be free from political interference*' in Sindh along with the resolve to bring the Karachi Operation '*to its logical conclusion*'. However, Corp Commander's concerns regarding the distribution of development funds by the Sindh Government, and the statement that '*parallel governments and centres of power must come to an end in the province*' were somewhat extraordinary, even by the Pakistan standards of Military outspokenness²

During an interview given by Mr. Asif Ali Zardari to Mr. Hamid Mir in the Capital Talk episode of May 20, 2015, this subject also came under discussion, with the latter asking that '*Peoples Party ko Sindh main apni performance ka jawab dena ho ga. Ap nahin samajhtay kay Peoples Party ki jo Sindh main performance hai, uss peh bohat say sawaal uth rahay hai? Pichlay dinon aik Seminar peh Corp Commander Sahib nay Karachi main aik takreer ki. Ap nahin samajhtay uss takreer main bhi ap kay liay koi message tha?*'³ (Translation: Peoples Party will have to be answerable for its performance in Sindh. Don't you feel that several questions are being raised on Peoples Party's performance in Sindh? A few days ago, the Corp Commander [Lt. Gen. Naveed Mukhtar] gave a speech in Karachi. Don't you feel that there was perhaps a message for you in that speech?)

Mr. Asif Ali Zardari in his masterful style which alludes to many, but directly points to none, replied that '*Main samajhta hoon kay aik propaganda zaroor hai. Last time bhi yeh hi propaganda tha... Magar uss kay bawajood hum nain Sindh jeet liya... Agar hum nay perform nahin kia, toh Sindh kay log hamain vote nahin dain gay. Uss kaa ap intezaar karain. Ap mujhay lecture matt dain toh behtar hoga. Aap apnay kaam karrain, main apna kaam karroon*' (Translation: I believe that there is a propaganda [against the PPP Government] like the last time... However, despite that, we were able to win in Sindh... If we don't perform, the people of Sindh will not vote for us. You should wait for that. It will be best if you do not lecture me. You should do your work, and leave me to do mine).

Even though Mr. Hamid Mir's question was about Lt. Gen. Naveed Mukhtar's speech, Mr. Asif

1. Picture courtesy Dawn, May 17, 2015
2. For details, please see 'Political inefficiency adds to Karachi's security woes', The Express Tribune, May 17, 2015, as accessed on June 01, 2015 at: <http://tribune.com.pk/story/887728/political-inefficiency-adds-to-karachis-security-woes>
3. The complete video of the interview, from the show Capital Talk on May 20, 2015 can be accessed at: <http://www.zemtv.com/2015/05/20/capital-talk-asif-ali-zar-dari-exclusive-20th-may-2015>

Ali Zardari did not directly refer to it, rather choosing to make a vague allusion by terming it as a propaganda. All the while, he still managed to get his point across of refraining from any 'lecturing' and letting the people of province decide upon the Sindh Government's performance.

It is understood that the concerns voiced by Lt. Gen. Naveed Mukhtar represent a well-considered institutional view of the Military with regards to the elected Sindh Government and its performance vis-à-vis the law and order situation. One may find it difficult to disagree with most of the things said by the Corps Commander. However, given that such statements are made in front of the media signifies that the official channels of communication have either been exhausted or considered useless by the senior Military leadership. Consider also the tweet issued by the DG ISPR, Maj. Gen. Asim Saleem Bajwa after the '**special**' meeting of the Apex Committee of Sindh on May 14, 2015, during which '*regular, meaningful Apex Committee meetings on weekly basis*' were emphasized,⁴ suggesting that the forum was not meeting as frequently, and had lost its effectiveness.

The address by Lt. Gen. Naveed Mukhtar, the tweet issued by DG ISPR, and the statements by Mr. Asif Ali Zardari point towards uneasy civil-military relations. Should the speech be taken as yet another effort by the Military leadership to persuade the political leadership to take the steps which may be difficult, may bear heavy political price, but which they consider essential for restoring peace and order in the city and the province? Does it indicate that the Military is running out of patience? These questions are difficult to answer with certainty but what is quite obvious is that civilian political leadership is fast losing its grip and initiative on the law and order situation of the city and the province. Despite the obvious weaknesses of the civilian Government in the province, it remains indispensable in the context of the law and order in the province.

The only alternative is that political leadership across party divide should persuade and help the Sindh Government to reform, reinvent and reassert itself. Leadership of the PPP in Sindh bears special responsibility for initiating the reform from within.

Will public expression of displeasure and dissatisfaction by such an important organ of the state as the Armed Forces help the situation in any way? Won't this further spread despondency and confusion among the people? These are also equally weighty questions to consider both by the civil and military leadership of the province and the country. Why can't the State institutions provide the opportunity to the Armed Forces to voice their concerns at the proper forums rather than in public? Why shouldn't the civil-military interaction at various levels produce consensus on cohesive, coordinated and effective actions? Supremacy of democratic civilian leadership can only be established and sustained if it learns how to provide effective, and good governance.

GHQ continues to be a 'must-visit' for visiting Foreign Dignitaries

In consonance with the COAS' growing international profile, the month of May 2015 also saw him receiving foreign civilian officials at the GHQ. This included Ms. Julie Bishop, the Australian Foreign Minister, who visited the GHQ on May 07, 2015⁶ and Mr. Daniel Feldman, the United States Special Representative for Afghanistan and Pakistan, who visited on May 19, 2015.⁷

According to a pattern already highlighted by PILDAT in its Monitor on Civil-Military Relations for Pakistan, April 2015, the Australian Foreign



The Australian Foreign Minister, Ms. Julie Bishop, during her visit to the GHQ on May 07, 2015⁵

5. Picture courtesy ARY News
6. According to the Press Release issued by the ISPR, 'During the meeting, matters of mutual interest including defence and security coop between both the countries came under discussion. Australian FM appreciated the successes of Zarb e Azb and sacrifices rendered by Pakistani security forces in this operation. She also appreciated Pakistani security forces efforts towards regional stability'. The Press Release, issued on May 07, 2015 can be accessed at: https://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press_release&date=2015/5/7
7. For details, please see the Press Release issued by the ISPR on May 19, 2015, as accessed on June 01, 2015 at: https://www.ispr.gov.pk/front/main.asp?o=t-press_release&date=2015/5/19

Minister also held *separate meetings* with the Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif, Prime Minister's Advisor on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sartaj Aziz, the Federal Minister for Interior, Chaudhary Nisar Ali Khan, MNA, the Federal Minister for Planning and Development, Mr. Ahsan Iqbal, MNA, and the COAS.

PILDAT believes that a culture of coordinated meetings should prevail, rather than separate and exclusive ones, as this would contribute to a coordinated approach rather than a disjointed one. With regards to the COAS' exclusive interactions with visiting civilian foreign dignitaries, the questions that remain of importance, since this trend has been set from November 2014, are:

1. Why the civilian leadership can not initiate the culture of holding Joint Meetings with Foreign Dignitaries? If meetings of Foreign Dignitaries with the COAS are a must, why are these not held in the presence of the Civilian heads of institutions such as the equivalent of Foreign Minister and the Defence Minister?
2. Is the growing international role of the Army Chief a manifestation of the passiveness of the civilian leadership, or it reflects the growing dominance of the Military in international relations in Pakistan?

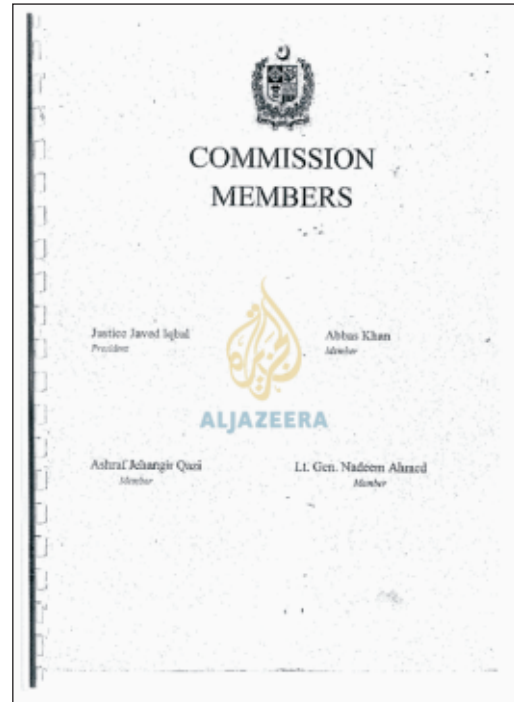
Seymour Hersh's Report: Yet another perspective on the Bin Laden Raid

Four years later and a recent report by Mr. Seymour Hersh on the Bin Laden raid in Abbottabad,⁸ showed that the matter was still a subject of endless controversy and speculation. The report's salient assertions included:

- i. A Brigadier level officer of the Pakistan Army contacted the American Military officials to inform them of Bin Laden's presence in Abbottabad.
- ii. Pakistan's Military establishment had been keeping Bin Laden captive to use as a negotiating tool in its discussions with either the Taliban, or the American Military leaders.
- iii. Pakistan and America's Military leadership had been in contact and coordination regarding the raid on the Bin Laden compound. However, the plan fell apart at the last moment due to some concerns of the American President, Mr. Barrack Obama.

Without commenting on the contents of the Report, PILDAT would emphasize that the State of Pakistan has already initiated an inquest into the raid through the Abbottabad Commission, formed on June 21, 2011. It is rather unfortunate that the contents of its findings have not been made public yet. Rather, the Report surfaced through efforts by Al-Jazeera's Investigative Unit on July 08, 2013.⁹ Because of this opacity on the part of the Government, no accountability has resulted after the raid.

PILDAT believes that not only should the Prime Minister release the Abbottabad Commission Report after redacting the parts sensitive for national security, but also a Parliamentary Committee should take up the subject itself. That way, not only would accountability ensue, but also the matter, and the controversy surrounding it, would be laid to rest once and for all.



The Abbottabad Commission Report has not been made public by the Government till yet

8. The complete report can be accessed at: <http://www.lrb.co.uk/v37/n10/seymour-m-hersh/the-killing-of-osama-bin-laden>
9. Full text of the Abbottabad Commission Report can be accessed at: <http://www.aljazeera.com/indepth/spotlight/binladenfiles/2013/07/201378143927822246.html>

Pakistan holds Cantonment Board Elections after 17 years



Polling taking place for Cantonment Board election on April 25, 2015¹⁰

After a long gap of 17 years, Cantonment Board elections were held in 42 Cantonment Boards across the country on April 25, 2015. All the stakeholders involved in the Cantonment Board election should be congratulated for carrying out the exercise before the Provincial Governments of Punjab, Sindh and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa.

In the context of civil-military relations, the composition of the Cantonment Boards is worthy of consideration. Each Board primarily consists of 25 members, 12 of whom are elected, and the Station Commander, who is the Chair of the Cantonment Board, appoints the remaining 12. Many observers believe that the veto power that resides with the Chair of the Board, and the equal number of elected and non-elected members in it is contrary to principles of popular control. The perception was perhaps best captured by an Editorial published in Dawn on April 27, 2015 that stated that *'the nature of garrison areas has changed and many of them are now very much part of the urban environment, with large civilian populations, hence the input of civilians in their administration is as important as of those in uniform'*.¹¹

However, there is a plausible justification for the current dynamics of the Cantonment Board, considering that the areas even today primarily remain a conserve of Military related activities. It is also undeniable that civilians living in military-administered areas have a voice so that they can raise these issues. Lastly, the mantle falls upon the elected representatives to ensure effective performance of the Cantonment Boards so that complete civilian control can be introduced in the areas gradually.

10. Picture courtesy The News

11. The piece can be accessed at: <http://www.dawn.com/news/1178376>

Memorandum of Understanding signed between the ISI and the NDS



In what was considered to be historic visit by many, the Prime Minister and the COAS visited Kabul on May 12, 2015 for a one-day visit to meet with not only the Afghan President, Mr. Ashraf Ghani, but also the Chief Executive Officer, Mr. Abdullah Abdullah.¹²

Apart from the new policy statement that emerged in Pak-Afghan relations,¹³ perhaps the highlight was the Memorandum of Understanding signed between the Inter Services Intelligence Agency and Afghanistan's National Directorate of Security. According to a Press Release issued by the ISPR on May 18, 2015, the MoU would entail '*int [intelligence] sharing, complimentary and coordinated int [intelligence] ops [operations] on respective sides*'.¹⁴

Although the coordination between the ISI and CIA in the past is well-known, no publically announced MoU has been signed between these two decades-old collaborators. Therefore, signing of the agreement between the ISI and the NDS, which have traditionally been at odds with each other, and its public announcement, is indeed a novel and welcome development, and signifies moves towards improved relations between the two countries.

National Security Committee fails to meet, yet again

Even though the Prime Minister and COAS met for a total of six times during the month of May 2015, no meeting of the National Security Committee was held. Considering that the month saw significant national security developments such as the Safoora Goth tragedy, and the Prime Minister and COAS' visit to Kabul, no meeting of the NSC was held for the 8th month in row. The dormancy of the forum comes amidst calls for weekly meetings of the Apex Committee of Sindh, an institution

12. For details, please see Nawaz, Raheel off to Kabul, The News, May 12, 2015, as accessed on June 01, 2015 at: <http://www.thenews.com.pk/Todays-News-13-37429-Nawaz-Raheel-off-to-Kabul-today>

13. This primarily included:

1. Strict adherence to policy of non-interference in each other's affairs
2. Not allowing each other's territories to be used versus the other
3. A commitment that Afghanistan's enemies will be treated as Pakistan's enemies and vice versa.

14. The Press Release can be accessed at: <https://twitter.com/AsimBajwaISPR/status/600361808981929984>

that has not even been formalized, as emphasized during a 'special' meeting of the Apex Committee on May 14, 2015.

The latest meeting of the NSC was held on October 15, 2014. Apart from holding regular meetings of the NSC, PILDAT also believes that the decision-making role of the NSC, in comparison to a consultative or facilitative one, is immediately required to be reviewed. The elected Government should also consider the peculiar composition of the NSC, given the full-time membership of CJCSC and the three Services Chiefs.

Premier-COAS Interactions



The Prime Minister and COAS in a meeting with the DG ISI at the ISI Headquarter.¹⁵ Does the seating arrangement reflect the proper protocol?

During the month of May 2015, the Prime Minister and the COAS interacted face-to-face, for a total of six times, with the details as follows:

1. The first meeting was held between the two on May 11, 2015 'to discuss Pakistan-Afghanistan relationship in all dimensions'¹⁶ before the visit to Kabul.
2. Both of them visited Kabul together on May 12, 2015 to meet with the top Afghan leadership.

15. Picture courtesy the Express Tribune

16. The meeting was also attended by Federal Minister for Finance, Senator Ishaq Dar; Advisor to Prime Minister on National Security and Foreign Affairs, Mr. Sartaj Aziz; Special Assistant to the Prime Minister, Mr. Tariq Fatemi; Chief of General Staff, Lt. Gen. Zubair Mahmood Hayat and Secretary Foreign Affairs, Mr. Aizaz Ahmed Chaudhry. For details, please see the Press Release issued by the Prime Minister Office on May 11, 2015, which can be accessed at: http://www.pmo.gov.pk/press_release_details.php?pr_id=953

3. The third meeting between the two was held on May 18, 2015, when the COAS called on the Prime Minister.¹⁷
4. The COAS called again on the Prime Minister on May 25, 2015 '*to discuss internal and external security of the country*'.¹⁸
5. The two met again on May 27, 2015 during a meeting called by the Prime Minister to discuss '*progress on National Action Plan and measures for its more effective implementation*'.¹⁹
6. Both the Prime Minister and the COAS also visited the ISI Headquarters on May 29, 2015 where the DG ISI, Lt. Gen. Rizwan Akhtar briefed both on the internal and external security situation of the country.²⁰

For the six times that the Prime Minister and the COAS met during the month of May 2015, the Federal Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, MNA was present in only one of these meetings.

17. For details, please see the Press Release issued by the Prime Minister Office on May 18, 2015, which can be accessed at:

http://www.pmo.gov.pk/press_release_details.php?pr_id=971

18. For details, please see the Press Release issued by the Prime Minister Office on May 25, 2015 at:

http://www.pmo.gov.pk/press_release_details.php?pr_id=994

19. The meeting was also attended by Federal Minister for Interior, Chaudhry Nisar Ali Khan, MNA; Federal Minister for Finance, Senator Mohammad Ishaq Dar; Federal Minister for Defence, Khawaja Muhammad Asif, MNA and DG ISI, Lt. General Rizwan Akhtar. For details, please see the Press Release issued by the Prime Minister Office on May 27, 2015 which can be accessed at:

http://www.pmo.gov.pk/press_release_details.php?pr_id=997

20. For details, please see PM Nawaz, COAS visit the ISI Headquarters, The News, May 30, 2015, as accessed on June 01, 2015 at:

<http://www.thenews.com.pk/article-186456-PM-Nawaz,-COAS-visit-ISI-headquarters>