

افغانستان آزاد – آزاد افغانستان

AA-AA

چو کشور نباشد تن من مباد بدین بوم ویر زنده یک تن مباد
همه سر به سر تن به کشتن دهیم از آن به که کشور به دشمن دهیم

www.afgazad.com

afgazad@gmail.com

European Languages

زبان های اروپایی

<http://strategicstudyindia.blogspot.in/2016/09/raheel-sharif-disaster-for-pakistan.html#more>

Raheel Sharif A Disaster For Pakistan

By RSN Singh

9/12/2016



The people of Pakistan owing loyalty to the State hail General Raheel Sharif as some kind of a Messiah. Such messianic inflection moments are endemic phenomenon, given the construct of the country. Pro-Pakistan citizens in Pakistan are a rapidly dwindling commodity. They are confined mainly to Punjab, partly Khyber-Pakhtunkhawa and to even lesser proportion in Sindh. Having completed his tenure, General Sharif is to demit office, if at all he does. It is nevertheless an appropriate juncture for appraisal of his impact on Pakistan internally and externally. It is

particularly critical for the people of Pakistan to realize as to what sort of Pakistan, the very powerful army chief Raheel Sharif is leaving behind.

The Army under General Sharif has descended professionally to a new low.

Soon after General Sharif took over, there was a terrorist attack in an Army School in Peshawar in mid-December 2014. 132 school children were killed. The incident shook the nation including the Military. Consequently, a comprehensive National Action Plan (NAP) was initiated. The objective was to purge Pakistan from all facets of terror. Another important objective was to supplement the ongoing military operations Zarb-e-Azb in North Waziristan, an operation which as per Pakistan sources has claimed lives of more than 500 soldiers and 4000 civilian casualties. No weapon system sans nuclear in the armoury of Pakistan has been spared and yet for last one year General Raheel Sharif has been claiming that the Operation is in its final phase. If nothing else, it exposes the inability of the military to fight insurgencies within, notwithstanding Pakistan's ability to use terror against its neighbours as an instrument of State Policy.

General Raheel Sharif was invested with extraordinary powers in deciding life and death of citizens of Pakistan. By the 21st Constitutional Amendment, Military Courts were setup in January 2015 for speedy trial of terrorists. General Sharif was empowered to sanction death sentence, on which there was a moratorium since 2008. The Military Courts have so far executed nearly 400 Pakistan citizens including those who were under 18 years of age at the time of crime.

The executions have hardly made a dent in the terror narrative incubated in Pakistan over the years. General Sharif's idea of 'good terrorists' and 'bad terrorists' has recoiled viciously. The General could never control the series of blowbacks of his duplicitous policies. The terrorist attack at Peshawar was a blowback of Operation Zarb-e-Azb and thereafter there has been a series of such blowbacks, in every single region of the country including Punjab. Recently in August 2016, the terrorist attack in Quetta Civil Hospital, wherein 70 lawyers were killed was also a blowback. Had the General tried to salvage Pakistan from the strategic philosophy of using jihadis selectively, Pakistan would have been a much safer and secure country. General failed to do so and pandered to the jihadis like his predecessors and politicians.

No weapon system sans nuclear in the armoury of Pakistan has been spared and yet for last one year General Raheel Sharif has been claiming that the Operation is in its final phase.

Under the General's nose, the military-intelligence establishment and also civilians cut deals with jihadis and made compromises with the extremists. The Punjab government continued to pour money into Hafiz Saeed's Jamaat-ul-Dawa (JuD). The Khyber-Pakhtunkhawa government gave \$ 3 million grant to Saimul Haqqani Madrassa. The assassins of Benazir had planned her assassination in the same madrassa. Saimul Haq in his new book maintains that Afghan-Taliban provided good government, Osama bin Laden was an ideal man, and Al-Qaeda was a figment of Western imagination. The infamous cleric of Lal Masjid Abdul Aziz Ghazi, who has been supporting the Islamic State, is back in favour, being indulged by the military-intelligence establishment.

General Sharif's indulgence with Afghanistan centric proxy jihadi organizations like the Haqqani group and India specific groups like LeT, Hizbul Mujahideen, Jais-e-Mohammad (JeM) indicates that the military has been rendered so weak over the years that it cannot jettison the jihadi groups, some of which have acquired almost the status of regular army. Without these jihadi groups, Pakistan's survival seems to be in question. Some of these jihadi groups are also being used for agendas within the country. The Islamic State group Lashkar-e-Khorasan is operating directly from the camps of Frontier Corps against the people of Balochistan, whom it considers as 'Apostate Muslims'. The Army therefore under General Sharif has descended professionally to a new low.

The military, since inception, has dominated or influenced the politics of Pakistan. General Zia-ul-Haq even hanged his Prime Minister Zulfikar Bhutto. The military ensured that Benazir did not remain alive to be a factor in Pakistan politics. General Musharraf hounded Nawaz Sharif out of the country. General Raheel Sharif went beyond and did the unthinkable. He summoned the entire Nawaz Sharif cabinet for a meeting at the GHQ in Rawalpindi in June 2016 to discuss the country's external and internal security situation. The institutional fabric of Pakistan has therefore been no less undermined by this General. This is Raheel's contribution towards depoliticisation of the Army!

Pakistan was an important player in the conflict resolution in Afghanistan. General Sharif spurned all reconciliatory moves. Today Pakistan is the most hated entity in Afghanistan.

Internally the map of Pakistan portrays a grim picture of the country. Balochistan continues to be on boil. The Pak Rangers under the military continue to be deployed in Karachi, wherein despite suppression of political voices like the MQM, the security situation remains unabated. Violence and terror in fact is now making inroads into the Sindh hinterland. Waziristan continues to be pounded by fighter aircraft and tank guns. The Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) has hardly been tamed. Pashtuns, across the Pakistan-Afghanistan divide are joining forces for Pashtunistan. General Raheel Sharif has therefore shown very poor understanding of the nuances and the balance between internal and external security.

The worst damage that General did to Pakistan was in the domain of foreign policy. Whenever the Prime Minister of India, Narendra Modi initiated friendly moves towards Pakistan, it was torpedoed by the military-intelligence establishment under General Sharif. It took many forms like the attack on Indian Consulate or attack on Pathankot Airbase or perpetrating terror in the Kashmir Valley. It may be recalled that the President of Afghanistan Mr. Ghani in an unprecedented gesture went to the GHQ and met General Raheel Sharif. The Pakistan ISI and the NDS (Directorate of National Security) of Afghanistan signed a treaty for cooperation on terror. Pakistan was an important player in the conflict resolution in Afghanistan. General Sharif spurned all reconciliatory moves. Today Pakistan is the most hated entity in Afghanistan. Border tension prevails on various points on the Af-Pak border. The Afghan establishment has again repudiated the Durand Line. The Police Chief of the Kandhar Province of Afghanistan, General Abdul Razaq, has banned Pakistani currency in the region.

Exasperated with Pakistan's support to Afghan-Taliban, the US after 10 years has resumed Operations by B-52 bombers in Af-Pak region. It may be recalled that Raheel Sharif had been

invited to the US in November 2015 in the wake of PM Nawaz Sharif's visit a month ago, and yet never before in the history of US-Pakistan relations, Pakistan was castigated and almost labelled a 'Terrorist State' in the proceedings of the Foreign Relations Committee of US. Some Congress members also demanded imposition of Economic Sanctions. Pakistan once the third largest recipient of US assistance is expected to receive less than \$ 1 billion in 2016. Senator Bob Corker, Chairman of Foreign Relations Committee said that he would seek to bar \$ 430 million funding to Pakistan for purchase of F-16 aircraft. Another Congressmen Matt Salmon went to the extent of saying that giving aid to Pakistan is like paying the mafia. The continued support by Pakistan to terrorist groups hostile to US in Afghanistan has made the US policy makers to embark on very definitive and very sharp reorienting US policy in South Asia. It is again during General Raheel Sharif leadership that a US drone travelled deep inside Pakistan to eliminate the Afghan-Taliban Chief Mullah Mansoor. It was an ultimate humiliation to any sovereign country.

If Pakistan today stands completely circumscribed in the International arena, it is Raheel Sharif, who is responsible for its current pariah status.

In the West-Asia, Pakistan military's decision to join the Saudi sponsored military coalition of 34 Muslim countries to fight terrorism has nearly ruptured Pak-Iran relations. This coalition, which excludes Iran, is seen essentially as a Sunni coalition with the underlying purpose of checkmating Iran and its Shia partners. This Shia-Sunni divide in West-Asia has growing reverberations in the internal security discourse of Pakistan. Shias in Pakistan are compelled to lead an existence of apprehension and anxiety because of the increasing attacks by sectarian jihadi outfits, enjoying the patronage of Pakistan military.

It's a well-known fact that Pakistan military controls the nuclear weapons programme of Pakistan. Raheel Sharif by preventing Nawaz Sharif to attend the Nuclear Security Summit in April this year has further disconcerted the international community with regards to safety and security of Pakistan's nuclear arsenal.

In the final analysis Raheel Sharif is majorly responsible for the decay of political narrative of Pakistan. He is also responsible for undermining all civil institutions and weakening the only pillar, i.e. military by failing to harmonize internal security and external security. If Pakistan today stands completely circumscribed in the International arena, it is Raheel Sharif, who is responsible for its current pariah status. The only sort of achievement that Gen Sharif is peddling to internally wrecked Pakistan is the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), which is far from realization and fraught with uncertainties. Overall, Raheel Sharif has been disaster as an Army Chief.