

Prospects of Civilian Rule in Pakistan

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Abstract

In direct contravention to founding fathers' envision, Pakistan was ruled, by the military for much of its existence. Whenever civilian rule manage to come about has been compromised at best and distorted at the worst, at the behest of the men in Khaki. The Pakistani military is often held responsible for and accused of undermining institutional growth. Moreover political representatives when in power did not deliver on 'stability' and 'development' front due to ideological and structural inadequacies, giving an excuse for military to intervene. Besides the power relations that Pakistan inherited – feudal dominance – continued unabated even after independence, establishing its iron hold onto state institutions including that of the military. In fact, social composition of feudal elites did not alter all these decades, pushing majority of people out of the corridors of power. Even presently unraveling social, economic and political upheavals, it seems not powerful enough to rupture and debase elites. Given these socio-political and economic realities prevalent in Pakistan as to what are the prospects of civilian rule in the country? This paper explores answers to that question in a context of renewed optimism that is sweeping the country at present - because a democratically elected government is completing its full five year term (2008-2013) - a rare political achievement; and argues that civil-military relations shall continue to radiate disappointment in view of ever growing role of security establishment on account of extremely volatile neighborhood and violent politics within.

Keywords: Military rule, Civilian rule, Institutional development, democracy, Pakistan

Introduction

Mohammad Ali Jinnah, the Father of the Nation of Pakistan was a peculiar political breed of the time, who in his initial career championed social causes of united India, democratic living and secular politics. Jinnah who eventually proceeded to demand separate homeland for Muslims of the subcontinent, however never was found of a polity denying fundamental rights to its people on any ground citing any political excuse. Pakistan he often claimed would be a separate home of

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Muslims but not exclusively for Muslims and categorically stated that in Pakistan no one would be prevented from going to Mosque, Temple or Church,

“You are free; you are free to go to your temples, you are free to go to your mosques or to any other place of worship in this State of Pakistan. You may belong to any religion or caste or creed that has nothing to do with the business of the State.”¹

He articulated Pakistan as a political community, truly liberal-democratic having due regards for individual liberty and freedom of belief and conscience. Moreover his national articulation was deeply pacific in intent and progressive in dynamic, going far beyond borders and pleaded for ‘peace’ everywhere². But he was similarly emphatic on issues of national ‘identity’ and ‘politics’ where Islam would act a guide. Because he believed that Islam is a synonym of peace, equality and mutual well-being which cannot be but more egalitarian than often propounded western philosophies and held Pakistan as non-theocratic:

“The great majority of us are Muslims. We follow the teachings of the Prophet Mohammed (PBUH). We are members of the brotherhood of Islam in which all are equal in rights, dignity and self-respect. Consequently, we have a special and a very deep sense of unity. But make no mistake: Pakistan is not a theocracy or anything like it”³

For Jinnah western democratic philosophies and Islam were complimentary and said that “democracy is in the blood of Musalmans, who look upon complete equality of manhood [mankind]... [and] believe in fraternity, equality and liberty”⁴. Neither was he found of seeing the men-in-khaki getting involved in politics:

“Do not forget that the armed forces are the servants of the people. You do not make national policy; it is we, the civilians, who decide these issues and it is your duty to carry out these tasks with which you are entrusted.”⁵

The implied suggestion was that prospective rulers would be civilians not the men-in-khaki, better transform themselves for national requirements - taking along all social segments howsoever small and preserving national integrity.

Given the prevailing geo-political circumstances Jinnah was however aware of the fact that the Military establishment would receive increasing prominence in nation-building as well as in national politics to come. In fact, it was a strong and well trained military that sustained India as a critical colony of British Empire and large numbers of the recruits were Muslims and upon partition, chunk of them chose Pakistan as their new home. Jinnah was alive to this fact and generously

acknowledged their contribution in realizing Pakistan and expected more of the same in future. Noteworthy here is a fact that the military has always enjoyed peculiar popularity and Pakistanis always looked at them as the ultimate 'savior' of the nation⁶, right from the days of partition. Jinnah's party, the Muslim League which successfully championed the cause of Pakistan did expectedly show regards to Military establishment as a consequence. It was none other than the Muslim League which has actually started paying disproportionate regards to military establishment which later emerged as a standard political precedent.⁷ This precedent latter so acquired the madness, that not only national but international political pundits started advertising 'support of the military' as one of the imperatives for successful politics in the country, virtually lending informal legitimacy to Military's involvement in politics⁸. Later in the course of time other political actors followed suit and accorded prominence to their connections with military headquarters. Expectedly the military on its part spared no efforts to seize the moment and emerged as fortune-teller of governments in the country with devastating consequences: a crumbling economy and a pernicious ethnic insurgency, humiliating defeats by India and struggling to meet its population's basic needs even after six decades of independence - more than half its population faces severe poverty, which fuels resentment against the government and feeds political instability.⁹

The Military vs. Civilian Rule

Civilian rule in Pakistan has been very short lived every single time and the military had to intervene and takeover the reigns due to historical, socio-political and economic reasons than any inherent dislike of democracy in general¹⁰. More significantly it has nothing to do with Islamic nature of the people or polity. Because the generation that demanded separate homeland was the one who had received liberal education in English and often displayed deep dislike for dictatorial /theocratic states and envisioned their would be state as 'a democratic republic'.¹¹ Not surprisingly therefore, the first constitution and subsequent ones had all the characteristics, conveying the intention of establishing a polity, where people shall be looked upon as dignified individuals, having some inalienable rights. At the same time, the constitutions were equally categorical in saying that the polity shall be an Islamic republic with adequate safeguards for ethnic/religious minority groups. The preamble to Pakistan Constitution (1973) is an incontrovertible testimony of the same:

"Whereas sovereignty over the entire Universe belongs to Almighty Allah alone, and the authority to be exercised by the people of Pakistan within the limits prescribed by Him is a sacred trust; And whereas it is

the will of the people of Pakistan to establish an order:- Wherein the State shall exercise its powers and authority through the chosen representatives of the people; Wherein the principles of democracy, freedom, equality, tolerance and social justice, as enunciated by Islam, shall be fully observed; Wherein the Muslims shall be enabled to order their lives in the individual and collective spheres in accordance with the teachings and requirements of Islam as set out in the Holy Quran and Sunnah; Wherein adequate provision shall be made for the minorities freely to profess and practice their religions and develop their cultures;...Therein shall be guaranteed fundamental rights, including equality of status, of opportunity and before law, social, economic and political justice, and freedom of thought, expression, belief, faith, worship and association, subject to law and public morality; Wherein adequate provision shall be made to safeguard the legitimate interests of minorities and backward and depressed classes;... ”¹²

The following sections deal with historical, socio-political and economic reasons for frequent military intervention dislodging civilian rule only to be restored after some years - the civilians again taking the centre-stage politically but remote controlled by the men in Khakis, leading to a vicious cycle of the military vs. civilian rulers.

Sociologically speaking the military is not a distinct entity but reflect mirror-image of society as other state institutions in the country. The English speaking elites, as known then and now, had led the demand for separate homeland for Muslims and this social reality has not really undergone any considerable transform in last six decades - almost all the state institutions have been under iron control of the elites (feudalistic) including the military. A recent account reads:

“Pakistan is controlled and ruled by ashrafiya (elites)—comprising indomitable military complex, civil bureaucracy, higher judiciary, landed aristocracy and its cronies, industrialist-turned politicians, religious and spiritual leaders (sic), media tycoons and some of their powerful employees, and unscrupulous businessmen. The economy of ashrafiya-controlled-Pakistan, thus, serves the interests of the privileged classes. The ruling classes, representing only 2% of entire population, own 95% of national resources...”¹³

Politics, bureaucracy and business in particular have been the most favored destinations of elites to perpetuate their power over people and it were these very actors – bureaucrats, corporate, politicians and media persons - the enthusiast of military intervention as it suited their interests. No military dictator who captured political power displeased these constituents and hence could hold over state apparatus. On the contrary these constituents incited the military to step into political fray and later

offered uncritical support for its continuance. Putting it differently, the entire security establishment is full of those who are nothing but clones of the same, present in other state institutions - and therefore when military in Pakistan takes over political reins it means extension of the same elites' hold – anything more but not less of it.

Of course there have been social changes in overall composition and/or character of ruling elites in Pakistan, due to host of factors and new entrants can be seen sipping in the loop. However the new entrants increasingly acquire similar behavioral orientation and display near similar tastes of erstwhile feudalists. Thus remarks Nicolas Cristof on feudalistic hold over politics in Pakistan:

“you should know that in remote areas (of rural Pakistan) you periodically run into vast estates — comparable to medieval Europe — in which the landowner runs the town, perhaps operates a private prison in which enemies are placed, and sometimes pretty much enslaves local people through debt bondage, generation after generation. These feudal elite have migrated into politics, where it exerts huge influence. And just as the heartlessness of feudal and capitalist barons in the 19th century created space for Communists, so in Pakistan this same lack of compassion for ordinary people seems to create space for Islamic extremists...”¹⁴

It is true that there appears some difference but that is of more style not the substance. The old order with all its habits and preferences continue unabated without causing meaningful ruptures in ruling elites. Given these sociological realities and almost nil possibility of being challenged by the majority, military interventions in Pakistan is unfortunately an ever likely scenario and therefore prospects of meaningful civilian rule in the country is as problematic as ever. In this connection, it is also significant to note that in any society it is the elites cutting across socio-political, economic and cultural spectrums comes to occupy the seat of state power/authority and there is nothing surprising; but in this case the elites seemingly prevent and/or disrupt meaningful sharing of the political pie with the majority commoners, which has acquired frightening proportions, causing immense socio-political instability and potentially can dissolve the nation itself, if not arrested immediately.¹⁵

Politically speaking the military in Pakistan has been disproportionately politicized like no other. Pakistan's army and its intelligence wing, the Inter-Services Intelligence (ISI) have long been at the helm of affairs in the country. They have directly or indirectly held onto power using coups, religious extremists/militants and weakness of the existing political parties and have been at the center of decision making since its creation in August 1947. Due to host of reasons the Pakistani security establishment in general and the military in particular

have been pulled into political arena on the back of issues like cleansing politics, restoring stability, protecting national security, upholding sovereignty and self-respect. In its six decades of existence Pakistan has been ruled by four powerful military rulers: Ayub Khan (1962 – 1969), Yahya Khan (1969 – 1971), Zia-ul-Haq (1978 – 1988) and Pervez Musharraf (2001 – 2007). In fact, the military including its intelligence wing, the ISI, over the decades, have come to occupy central position in political calculus, to the extent that now it has profound business/economic interests well beyond permitted precincts. Actually the political actors – political parties – did win over the electorates and captured the state institutions initially but gave in to socio-political and economic pressures later; in the process, rendering themselves discredited and/or impotent to continue in office. Each time political parties won elections with handsome ruling majority, later could not fulfill the promise made to their constituencies, leading to social unrest, political violence and economic breakdown – the classical cocktail on the back of which the military rode and took over political power (Rizvi 1998). It is rather surprising that the civil society in Pakistan did not really assembled enough muscle to challenge disastrous military takeovers. Civil society in Pakistan largely comprises non-governmental organizations (NGOs), community-based organizations, think tanks, trade unions, cultural groups, and informal citizen organizations. Reports say there are about 12,000 active and registered NGOs, 8,000 trade unions and but due to limited political space afforded to civil society organizations in the country, they have had limited impact on politics, polity and policymaking and/or implementation. According to Civicus, an international alliance of civil society groups:

“Pakistan’s civil society is characterized by hybrid forms, multiple inheritances and the unresolved struggle between the practices and values of pre-capitalist society and new modes of social life, between authoritarian legacies and democratic aspirations. Its cultural manifestations appear as a collection of incoherent voices, conflicting worldviews and opposing interests. While some social forms such as councils of elders, neighborhood associations and shrines continue from previous phases of society, many new groups have been created ‘organically,’ to borrow a Gramscian term, through the development of capitalism. Such are the dynamics of an evolving civil society, caught between the throes of a dying social order and the birth pangs of a new one.”¹⁶

Even the liberal media did not sufficiently depict the disastrous consequences repeated military takeovers can inflict on the nation and galvanize matching popular support to demand quick reversal to civilian rule. Factually Pakistan has a vibrant media - electronic and print both,

which has thrived in spite of political pressure and direct bans that were sometimes brought to bear from state authorities. Nonetheless the media in Pakistan enjoys independence to a large extent. After liberalization in 2002, the television arm experienced a boom. However, the resultant fierce competition brought commercial considerations at the center-stage and quality journalism was being replaced by sensationalistic sound bites. The radio sector too experienced similar growth and independent radio channels are numerous in the country today and have gained considerable importance in the countryside and have become only source of information especially in far-flung areas. Furthermore, though the media reflects multi-lingual, multi-ethnic and multi-religious character of the society but displays class bias, favoring the haves' over the rest. There is clear division between Urdu and English language media and the former dominates the rural areas while the latter is urban and elite-centric and smells more liberal, professional, comparatively. The Urdu media has greatest number of audience; but the English variant has far greater leverage among the opinion makers, politicians, the business community and the upper strata of society. More importantly, media in Pakistan have been caught up in violent conflict among several ethno-religious groups on the one hand and in a war of words, ideologies and accompanying propaganda on the other. Hate speech, extremism, fanaticism - religious and political, are routine in sound-bites and press-words these days. In fact, even the coverage of regional conflict, like in Afghanistan and Kashmir is being portrayed stereotypically without bring-in contextual background. As a cumulative effect, the media has lost credibility in the eyes of the commoners and has also lost faith of the democratic forces. The media has always provided cushioned treatment to the ruling elites especially the military rulers is no longer a secret to be unveiled.

Additionally, the political parties in Pakistan whether liberal or conservative did not convince the hopefuls either. What is more political parties became more of a private structural entity to perpetuate prevailing power relations - it was as if parties want to ripe harvest of democratic apple without sowing it within and elsewhere. The incumbent president of Pakistan Mr. Zardari is an exemplar product of such political-mongering in the country. Such compromised and distorted political culture, faithfully watered by feudalistic parities, produces now visible culture in Pakistan, which led to popular disenchantment with the system and the politics in their name. The Pakistan Weekly writes:

"We have to make sure we move beyond political parties that run as family properties. We should get rid of those... politicians who perpetuate family controls on political parties. They are the ugly creatures of Pakistani politics...Due to these ugly creatures of

*Pakistani politics... almost all political parties are being run like family properties. Can there be a bigger tragedy in the life of a nation that the leadership of its largest political party is transferred through a will by deceased party chairperson? With this kind of political culture, is there any hope that these parties will reform voluntarily? There is a remote possibility that the leaders of political parties will act on their own and turn their parties into true political parties? Bilawal Zardari's example is enough to predict the hereditary nature of future of political parties."*¹⁷

In such despair, common Pakistanis look to the military as the 'supreme savior' of the nation when all else is failing/cheating them. In other words, politicians and the kind of politics their privately control parties display have very thickly contributed to political crisis one after the other, lending handy excuse for the military to takeover political reign and divert – at the expense of social development – national revenues to themselves, riding on popular fears of national security and/or political stability. Today politicization of the military is such that most of the military officers have lucrative career only after retirement, as bureaucrat, minister, ambassador etc.

Economically speaking, Pakistani military has acquired, over the decades, huge economic and commercial interests spread throughout the country. This phenomenon is now popularly known as 'military-industrial complex'¹⁸. According to Dr. Ayesha Siddiqi the Pakistani military's private business empire could be worth as much as £10bn. Retired and serving officers run secretive industrial conglomerates, manufacture everything from cement to cornflakes, and own 12m acres [4.8m hectares] of public land. The Khaki conglomerates tagged as 'welfare foundations' said to have been running thousands of businesses, ranging from street corner petrol pumps to sprawling industrial plants. The main street of any Pakistani town bears testament to their economic power, with military-owned bakeries, banks, insurance companies and universities. It is estimated that the military controls one-third of all heavy manufacturing and up to 7% of private assets. Asama Jahangir, one of the most vocal public voices questioning the perks enjoyed by the military recently commented:

*"These military generals play golf all the time... and then they talk about where they will get plots [of land]. Please tell me how a marriage hall can operate in a sensitive [military] installation such as the [naval base] that was attacked in Karachi recently. Have you heard this happening anywhere else?"*¹⁹

Generally speaking Pakistani military seems to have two pronged strategy to meet ever growing resources requirements – (a) national

revenues component and (b) self-finance component. Let's go into some details of it and comprehend entailing consequences. It is no longer a secret that Pakistan military has been the biggest receiver of national revenue over the decades. The defense budget (2012-13), is \$2.8 billion to the Army, an increase of \$128 million; \$1.2 billion for the Air Force, an increase of \$64 million; and \$562 million to the Navy, a \$1.4 million decrease from the previous year. The defense budget does not, nevertheless, usually includes procurement funding and is comprised mainly of wages and running costs of ongoing counterinsurgency efforts.²⁰ The figures are staggering to say the least in a country that has been grappling with every conceivable socio-economic inequality. The military leadership riding on the back of imperatives like – maintaining balance of power, fostering dispute of Kashmir, strategic depth doctrine and nuclear deterrence have had managed to siphon off a disproportionate chunk of national revenue largely because it defined – overtly or covertly states' economic priorities either by arm-twisting incumbent government or actually dislodging it and becoming government itself. Given the popular frustration with political class and their repeated failure to propound political resolutions on pending issues – domestic as well as international- political class as a whole did not really rise to the occasion, paving the leeway for military takeovers. Once in power the military have had supreme say in resource allocation, eventually leading to huge expansion of its reach well beyond security requirements. However later it was realized by the military that national revenue allocation would always fall short of desirable requirements and therefore some self-financing ways to be developed which shall keep its coffin ever green. This has resulted in huge expansion of military stipulated projects onto other arenas with active collaboration of corporate entities. Today Pakistani military has very substantial commercial stakes in several sectors of the economy whereby it strives to meet sizeable expenditures. This is perhaps one of the major reasons that the military maintains tight grip over its balance-sheet and if forced to make public, hides more than reveals. It is because of the nexus of military with industry that gives a strong incentive to remote manage civilian governments and/or become government itself and protect its commercial interests. So long this nexus continues it would have one more compelling reason to trespass onto politics which may lead to military micro managing politics – both overtly and covertly.²¹

Last but not the least, history and historical factors have played a prominent part in military takeovers in the country. Here it must be mentioned that Pakistan was a product of a bitter rivalry for political dominance between two differing religious communities of British India. The rivalry was and still continues to be so vicious that even well after

six decades of existence India and Pakistan struggle to make sense of their relations. In fact, they have fought three full-scale wars – 1948, 1964 and 1972 besides continuing proxy battle in disputed territory of Kashmir. Additionally, it is rightly or wrongly perceived by Pakistanis that New Delhi is trying to encircle Pakistan geo-strategically by expanding its presence in Afghanistan, which Pakistan considers to be a strategic-depth territory. The communitarian bickering between Hindus and Muslims in British India and continued geo-strategic rivalry between India and Pakistan actually offer historical basis for ongoing arms race in the region and thereby inducing fear of insecurity among masses. All these facts have been so used by Pakistani military establishment that it justifies huge defense expenditure saying - India wish and someday can dismantle Pakistan, if not deterred comprehensively. Moreover this puts the military at the center of national politics, weakening bargaining power of the civilian governments to such an extent that civilian leaders accept whatever the military perceives best to mitigate looming India threat. Citing this very Indian threat the military have justified, several times over, its action of dislodging civilian governments. This may not have been ‘the’ excuse of military intervention but certainly has been one of the most widely used in conjunction with other domestic ones. History unfortunately has not been on the side of civilian rulers of Pakistan and the military had made most of it to perpetuate its hold onto civilian governance like no other.

Given all of the contributing factors alluring the military to intervene in politics and inability of the civilian actors, cutting across political divide to run governments on desirable lines, the now infamous phenomenon called ‘the military vs. civilian rule’ got prominence in political discourse of the country. As we have pointed out earlier it is a socio-political-economic dilemma that has been haunting both the military and civilian rulers of Pakistan which they have so far been not able to resolve. This is largely so because, the fundamental questions regarding their respective role in the system have not been effectively dealt with citing excuses like ‘systemic break-down’, political instability’ and ‘threat of subsistence from India’. Interesting is also the fact that even judicial branch of the system could not effectively influence either legislative or executive actions, in spite of getting several opportunities to do so. Instead, the judiciary itself displayed a poor understanding of political law and/or political environment and became significant part of the problem than solution. The presently enraging (seemingly legal) fight between the Supreme Court of the Pakistan and federal executive is more of a political game being fought to establish their prominence to national politics than to restore equilibrium in the polity – a classical case of ‘clash of institutions’.²²

Institutional underdevelopment

In the broadest sense, institutions are visible structural entities enforcing rules and as such, they are the foundation of the political community. Some rules are formal (constitutional) some are informal (cultural norms), but without institutions there could be no organized politics. One of the imperatives of smooth functioning of the political system is either embrace separation of powers with viable checks and balances as in the US or fusion of powers as in UK – the US and UK are the most celebrated examples of political system. Else a country can have a workable blend of both with requisite local spins put on it, as in case of India or South Africa. And such systemic arrangement ought to be an integral part of constitutional scheme. Strictly speaking Pakistan too has had such constitutional scheme right from the beginning – even when Pakistan broke-up, the subsequent constitution (1972) was unambiguous while spelling responsibilities of key state institutions including the military. However governing institutions in Pakistan did not stick to their constitutional assignment, instead overstepped the scheme by suspending it, overlooking it or stitching it to their individual requirement. The removal of the prime minister of Pakistan by its Supreme Court is the latest round of a long struggle. This time, however, it is not the military but rather the judiciary which is directly confronting the democratically elected government. The military of course has been at forefront in doing so but other institutions, - executive in particular and judiciary in general has been culpable partners in the game.²³ In the words of a scientist:

“If we look at the history of Pakistan, we see that we unfortunately failed to establish both the supremacy of parliament and supremacy of the Constitution. Historically speaking, these two concepts failed to assert as a political system in the country. In addition, the debate or clash among political institutions over the supremacy issue is irrelevant and premature. The real issue is the supremacy of the civilians over the armed forces. In a strong and stable democracy, the armed forces are under the control of civilian leadership. The military could take over if the clash between these two civilian institutions persists.”²⁴

Institutional development is typically a long and bumpy exercise. This process acquires more complexity if such development has democratic and/or pragmatic expectation to be realized in an underdeveloped or conservative social environ as is the case of Pakistan. Furthermore institutional development demands unflinching commitment by the political actors -exceedingly determined to press ahead systemic entrenchment as well as enhancement. Besides such exercise must be non-corrupt to the core and continue uninterrupted, firmly grounded in constitutional principles and/or promises. Moreover key governing

institutions – the Legislature, Executive and Judiciary – would have to hold their ground and stick to respective domain in face of even the gravest of provocations for the sake of systemic tranquility, survivability and continuity. On top of these if any particular institution develops weakness and engender imbalance in the polity other institutions would have to show determined willingness to remedy and /or fill the gap and restore balance to the system. Actually it is when a key institution falls short of expectation that others will have to demonstrate exemplary acumen and/or maturity and bring back confidence to under performing wing of the system. Act of balancing between/among key governing institutions and bailing out each other, in the time of crisis, however inadequate and/or imperfect, out to be vivid for all to see, particularly for those who think that they will be the prospective gainer if the system malfunction. Sadly in Pakistan this did not happen or more precisely, prevented from happening – some time by the military, some other time by executive or judiciary and as a consequence governing institutions could not hold the ground, leading to political decay, social upheavals and economic impoverishment in much of its existence. The military in particular has been an initiator of crisis – directly or indirectly – simply for the fact that it was the military that marched to political offices claiming the mantle of ‘ultimate savior’ of the nation and ordered bureaucracy to back it up besides jailing others and forcing few others into exile (typically former prime ministers). It sheds poor light on Pakistan’s military mindset, including its intelligence wing the ISI, knowing well that military’s prime duty is to protect the country not police the nation by micro-managing polity on daily basis. In other words, underdevelopment of institutions is a result of bad performance by the military, supported by the bureaucracy and propelled by repeated failures of political parties in Pakistan.

Prospects of Civilian Rule

It is in above analyzed context that we would have to view the prospects of civilian rule in Pakistan. Civilian rule or democratic rule in the country would require strict implementation of not only constitutional letters but spirit with utmost sincerity and commitment by the governing elites. Besides, the military establishment must realize that its role in political scheme of things is minuscule and confine itself to securing borders. Even in the gravest of provocations the military in particular will have to maintain and respect given constitutional expectations by performing the role assigned to it. The military in Pakistan must digest the fact that if a political crisis develops in the system due to any reason it is up to people’s representatives to sort things out and bring back normalcy. Of course the military as the prime pillar of security

establishment would occasionally be called upon to render advice, execute decisions of the executive relating to war and peace, and upon request aid civil administration in quelling domestic unrest. In case of Pakistan however the military seems to have wrongly assumed and/or presumed to be the 'supreme guardian' of the nation, showing disregard for civilian authorities. The political history of Pakistan unfortunately is marred with frequent military interruptions leading to more instability causing immense damage to the system and to national reputation.

Significant nevertheless is the fact that military rules are history now; and presently democratically elected government is in charge and completing the full term of five years – a rare achievement by Pakistani standards. As a consequence a renewed optimism has gripped the country saying - this is a historic democratic development, having potential to usher in the era of uninterrupted-civilian-rule. Given the bitter memories of military takeovers/dictatorships of the past such optimism is not entirely unfounded but this may not be the sole and safe conclusion. Simply because civil-military relations from last year or more has not been that cordial and speculations were in abundance of military taking over political reigns. Besides, prevailing socio-political environ inside the country and geo-strategic transforms in the neighborhood would certainly push the security establishment (read the military) to the centre of it all and civil leadership would find it very difficult to reign on military's maneuvers, real or imagined. In fact, social unrest inside Pakistan has acquired extremely violent attire and the neighborhood – Af-Pak region in particular – has become a theater of Islamic terror enraging the whole world and Pakistani nation-state would increasingly rely upon its military establishment to ward off threats to national assets whether conventional or nuclear. The situation shall become more volatile after NATO folds-up combat duties in Afghanistan (2014) and Pakistani military tries to fill the vacuum. Considering all of the above it is clear that the civil-military relations in Pakistan shall continue to be rocky in the short run, though it may not necessarily mean military dislodging civilian rule in the county. However, so long as underlying reasons remain un-addressed – social unrest, political turmoil, perceived threat from India, vulnerable nuclear assets and regaining strategic-depth in Afghanistan, the military can pose a challenge to civilian governance. In view of weak political institutions and absence of mature political culture, the military may continue to perceive itself to be the 'lone guardian' of the nation. However we conclude with an advice of a Pakistani to the bosses of the military commanding the men-in-khaki:

"Our soldiers are like walkie talkie robots ... They do what they are programmed to do. They don't have a mind of their own - they are programmed to follow orders. Having said that, Our Army is known by

*its conduct and results. Both have been disasters. The poor soldier gives his life without knowing that he is not fighting for Islam....he doesn't know that he is fighting for the enemies of Islam and Pakistan. Dictators who have ruled us forcibly were agents of our enemies - Ayub Khan, Musa Khan, Yahya Khan, Zia ul Haq and Musharraf....this Kiyani too. It is time that Army does what it is supposed to do i.e. protect Pakistan and its borders. We are witnessing rape of our sovereignty day in day out by foreigners....drone attacks, USA funded TTP, etc. Our Generals have allowed our land to be used for state sponsored terrorist activities killing innocent Pakistanis and Afghans. Truth is always bitter, but should be spread."*²⁵

Notes & References

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³ Jinnah's Broadcast talk to the people of Australia, February 19, 1948

⁴ London, December 14, 1946

⁵ Jinnah to Armed Forces; Aug 14, 1947

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⁸ Several policy think tanks in the US and UK in particular (Brookings Institute for instance) have been arguing that support of the Army and the ISI in Pakistan is the best bet to seek and sustain stability inside the country and on the so called ongoing war on terrorism.

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¹⁷ “Pakistan Must Reform its Political Parties”, *The Pakistan Weekly*, September 6, 2011, available at <http://www.pakistanweekly.com/Archive1/Ashraf130.htm>, (accessed on 12 October 2012).

¹⁸ For more on this see, Ayesha Siddiqi, *Military Inc: Inside Pakistan's Military Economy* (London: Pluto Press, 2007)

¹⁹ Asma Jahangir criticizing Pakistan Army, a full video may be watched at <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=eIRleH65G5E>, (accessed on 11 October, 2012).

²⁰ See the full report, “Pakistan Budget Up for Army, Air Force; Down for Navy” *Defense News*, June 6, 2012, available at <http://www.defensenews.com/article/20120606/DEFREG03/306060006/Pakistan-Budget-Up-Army-Air-Force-59-Down-Navy>, (accessed on 15 October, 2012).

²¹ Siddiqi Ayesha, “Military’s Economic Role and Beyond”, *RUSI Journal*, 152:6 (2007): 64-67

²² See Mohammad Waseem, “Clash of Institutions in Pakistan”, *Economic & Political Weekly*, Vol - XLVII No. 28, July 14, 2012, available at <http://www.epw.in/commentary/clash-institutions-pakistan.html>, (accessed on 15 October, 2012).

²³ Nazir Islam, “Democracy and Governance in Pakistan’s Fragmented Society” *International Journal of Public Administration*, 24:12 (2001): 1335-1355.

²⁴ Shabbir Khan, “Clash of Institutions”, *The Express Tribune*, August 24, 2012, available at <http://tribune.com.pk/story/425703/clash-of-institutions-2/>, (accessed on 12 October, 2012).

²⁵ This is a quote of Mohsin Ikram, interestingly posted on Pakistan Defence, website and available at <http://www.defence.pk/forums/pakistans-war/205287-nice-quote-pakistan-army.html>, (accessed on 12 October, 2012).