

US-NATO Aggression against Pakistan

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On the night of 25/26th November, the American and NATO aircraft and gunships attacked the two Pakistani border posts in Salala area of Mohmand Agency and killed 28 Pakistani soldiers, including two officers – a blatant violation of Pakistan’s territorial sovereignty and the terms of cooperation, with the International Security Assistance Forces (ISAF).

In fact, this incident is part of a conspiracy, against Pakistan, growing from frustration of the ISAF, who having lost the war, have begun to leave from Afghanistan without guarantee for a safe exit. The Salala incident explains their desperation and the sinister design.

The Pakistani troops operating in the Salala area, on the night of 25/26 Nov, had trapped the Tehrik-e-Taliban-e-Pakistan (TPP) militants, about 50 strong, belonging to Waliur Rahman/Fazalullah group, engaged in anti-Pakistan activities.

The militants gave the SOS to ISAF and NATO and American aircraft and gunships rushed to rescue the trapped militants. The two Pakistani posts came under intense fire. The Pakistani officer commanding the posts, immediately contacted the ISAF and warned them that, it were the Pakistani posts, under attack, and fire must stop, but the message was ignored and the attack continued for over two hours, till the militants were rescued to the safety of Afghan territory. This brutal act of the ISAF was not the only incident, because earlier on our border posts had been attacked by the militants, supported by ISAF, killing many of our troops. This was the third time that ISAF violated Pakistan’s territory.

Last year in September 2010 a similar incident had occurred on our border, killing a number of our soldiers. The second time, they intruded deep inside Pakistan, to kill Osama near Abbottabad and got away with it. A few months back, in a meeting of senior officers in GHQ, I had warned that ISAF would ‘again test our nerves’ and we better be prepared to retaliate against such intrusions, and recommended that they should have a look at the “Selective Punishment Concept” of 10 Corps, implemented by Major General Safdar, SJ, GOC 12 Division in 1990, who silenced the Indian guns along the Line of Control, through bold and “prompt retaliatory actions”. But in this case, at Salala, such a ‘prompt retaliatory action’ could not be taken, therefore, we now have to consider choosing the next best option to ensure that such incidents do not occur again. A retaliatory action, ‘to draw blood for blood’, is the best option, but the enemy is on high alert now.

‘Retorsion’ would be the next best policy i.e., “to return upon the assailants with sharp punitive moves”. In this regard some of the actions have already been initiated by the government such as: rejection of the expression of regrets; the ISAF supplies through Pakistan have been stopped; no more drone attacks; Shamsi Air Base to be vacated; Pakistan not to participate in the Bonn Conference on 5th December; cancellation of all

visits, tours, sports events etc involving the US and EU; diplomatic engagement with friendly countries to solicit support; no more business as usual and the need to re-evaluate ties with the US.

Since the occupation forces are operating under the UN mandate, therefore, Pakistan has taken-up the matter with the UN to investigate and punish the perpetrators of this crime. Despite 10 years long struggle by the occupation forces, they find themselves, trapped in a 'nut-cracker situation' of having lost the war, and unable to retain control over Afghanistan, with no guarantee for a safe exit. And yet ISAF want to have their way, forcing Pakistan to eliminate the support bases of the Taliban on Pakistan territory and force Mullah Umar to negotiate peace, "on the losers (ISAF) terms".

This illogical demand is not achievable either, therefore, the ISAF may decide to leave Afghanistan in a state of panic. In 1990 the Americans induced a civil war, which led to the rise of the Taliban, who were attacked in 2001 and the country was occupied on the flimsy charge of sheltering Osama and his gang of al-Qaeda. Afghanistan, once again will be in a state of turmoil, with no peace in the region. The Salala incident has provided the opportunity to correct the course of Pak-US relations and indemnify the past losses.

Pakistan's priority therefore could be:

"Re-evaluate ties with the US and establish relations based on equality and mutual respect. "US must not be allowed to establish Indian hegemony over Pakistan and Afghanistan, because that would amount to changing the geo-historical reality, confirmed by Quaid-e-Azam, to guard Pakistan's security interests." Pakistan must bring to an end the running battle with its own tribals and establish peace on the borders and eliminate the ingress made in these areas, by foreign agencies."

The ISAF is likely to leave Afghanistan in a state of disorder. It is therefore our bounded responsibility to help our brotherly neighbour, to eliminate the traces of deceit, intrigues and divisions created during the last 30 years of foreign occupation."

In 2001, we joined ISAF, in their war against Afghanistan and committed the greatest sin. We must correct this mistake, by establishing our relations with the people of Afghanistan and engage with them whole-heartedly to rebuild the country and its traditional way of life. Pakistan is passing through very difficult times, which demand the best, from the nation. The nation will not be wanting in resilience and response, to face these challenges. Pakistani nation's geo-historical heritage is drawn from the Indus Civilization, and also imbibes the élan and ethos of the great civilizations with whom it shares the borders. Let nobody take Pakistan lightly and let there be no doubt in any body's mind that out of such depths of sorrow and sacrifice, Pakistan will rise into a vibrant and progressive country, to claim its rightful place in the comity of nations.

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