CONCLUSION
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U.S.-Pakistan security relations have had a chequered history and a peculiarity of their own. Pakistan’s foreign policy has largely been determined by its obsession with India. From its very birth as a nation, its entire foreign relations have hinged on one desire -- to attain military and economic parity with its dreaded, and more powerful neighbour, India. As a result, the entire gamut of its foreign relations have been conducted in a manner so as to achieve this sole objective. Whether it was the Pak-U.S. bilateral agreement of 1954, its membership in SEATO and CENTO, or its policy to foster close relations with China and the Islamic World, were calculated moves to improve its position vis-a-vis India. All other factors were subordinate to or even irrelevant to this paranoia. It may sound preposterous but it is a truism that minus the Indian factor, Pakistan’s foreign policy could have been totally directionless.

The motivating factors of the U.S. were, however, different and not so Indocentric. Washington did not share Pakistan’s phobia for India. Its only objective was to strengthen Pakistan with a view to creating a buffer and use it as a surrogate for an effective role in containing Soviet influence.

Pakistan on its part was not concerned with the success of America’s encirclement strategy or for that matter how and where the
Soviet Union succeeded in frustrating U.S. moves. From the very outset, it was manifest that Pakistan did not share the U.S. phobia for communism. Nor did the U.S. share Pakistan’s distrust and dread of its big neighbour, India. The two nations because of their paranoid obsession with containing their respective adversaries, sought each others cooperation not to achieve a common objective, but to join as allies to bridle the separate sources of their insecurity. Thus, the strategic interests of both the nations converged in their desire to align with each other, but diverged as the objectives sought to be achieved through it were different. In this lack of commonality of interests lay the hidden cause for the flickering strength of the Pak-U.S. alliance. Indeed, the security alliance contained within itself the seeds of ephemerality.

The Pak-U.S. alliance was an unequal equation between the two -- one being a great power and other its surrogate. This relationship had an imbalance intrinsic in the security relationship continuously. The U.S. with its awesome military power and economic strength, capitalized on the susceptibilities and weaknesses of Pakistan, to serve the strategic requirements of the United States. This, Washington did with apparent unconcern for the consequences such a relationship spawned for the fledgling nation, abandoning it with extraordinary ease in times of crisis. It was as if the U.S. had mothballed Pakistan using it whenever the contingency arose. It was no better than a pawn in U.S. hands for the
larger part of the years of their security relations.

But there was a distinct change in the second phase of the U.S.-Pak security relations in the 1980s. Unlike in the years of the past, Pakistan under President Zia-ul-Haq, was able to effect a reverse flow of influence. Until now, it was Pakistan which was at the pleading end. The Afghanistan crisis provided Islamabad with a rare opportunity to turn the tables and dictate terms to Washington. Though at the end of it, Pakistan could turn out to be a looser, it was still able to beget in international relations an uncommon instance of a small power influencing the policies of a great power!

It may be worth while to mention that Washington treated Islamabad in a manner unbecoming that of an ally. In 1947 when Pakistan was born of the debris of the communal conflagration that had engulfed the subcontinent, the United States treated it with arrogance and disdain. Pakistan’s pleading and overtures to allow it to join Washington in its Cold War containment schemes were dismissed as pleas of an insecure nation. Pakistan was not then important in U.S. strategic calculus. It was neither a great economic power nor was it located in an area perceived to be threatened by Soviet influence. But no sooner did the fear of Communist ideology spreading in Asia begin to loom large -- with China going Red in 1949, the Korean War of 1951, the defeat of the French in Indo-China in 1953, and similar other events -- than the U.S.
approach changed in sharp contrast to the earlier trend. The U.S. concluded a series of defence agreements with Pakistan and made it the beneficiary of substantial economic and military aid. But, the strategic relationship did not endure and was buffeted in the vicissitudes that characterised international relations.

The alliance also resulted in negative consequences to Pakistan and generated a destabilising effect on the security environment of the subcontinent. The arms supply to Pakistan that accompanied the alliance, had the effect of lending more respectability to the military establishment which portrayed itself as the vanguard of Islamabad’s polity. The U.S. “military assistance to the military regimes of Ayub Khan and Zia-ul Haq has been seen by many of the more liberal and democratic groups in Pakistan as support not for Pakistan as a whole but for the regimes in power.”¹ It also weakened the civilian structures and inhibited the growth of democratic institutions in Pakistan. Washington also did not distinguish between military dictatorships and civilian governments that came to power in Pakistan from time to time. Its relationship was conducted irrespective of what form of leadership held the reins in Islamabad. In fact, Washington-Pakistan axis was at its acme during the rein of military

dictatorships in Pakistan. The U.S.-Pakistan relationship during the phase of General Zia was a case in point. It did not matter to the U.S. whether the Pakistan Presidents came to power in a coup, or otherwise, in terms of affecting a democratically elected government. It also did not matter to the U.S. that Zia had enunciated Draconian measures and had promulgated special laws that reduced civil liberties to a sham. Political persecution and arrests were common place.

Zia consolidated his power by sending to the gallows, the former Prime Minister and the person who was responsible for the General's meteoric rise, Zulfikar Ali Bhutto. But despite Zia's abominable record as a dictator, he became a hero in the U.S. In an editorial in the Forbes titled "Fact and Comment II", written one day short of three months before Zia's death on 17 August 1988, the journal hailed\(^2\) the General as "A Hero" -- perhaps an undeserving comment for a person who ran the country for eleven years as if he were running an army and was responsible for several political deaths in Pakistan. Thus, Pak-U.S. relations were a resplendent instance of the conduct of U.S. foreign relations unmindful of the kind of regime it was supporting. This nailed the claims of Washington that it was championing the cause of democracy and that its alliances were aimed at the promotion of representative

The U.S. aid programme also had the effect of strengthening the nation vis-a-vis India and upsetting the security balance in the subcontinent. It introduced into the region the Cold War animosities and the consequent enmities it engendered, pushing the superpowers into a region that was hitherto of scant interest to them. The result was that South Asia also became a region of superpower rivalry.

Pak-U.S. security relations, thus triggered a costly arms race in the subcontinent. Once Islamabad became a beneficiary of the U.S. arms, it began to conjure up visions of building a powerful nation that could achieve military and economic parity with India. This culminated in a growing anxiety in neighbouring India which also embarked upon a search for friends for a possible source of military hardware. New Delhi was always apprehensive about Pakistan's motives and as a reaction to Pakistan's re-armament programme, India also undertook a massive effort to modernise its armed forces. The net result was that the U.S. aid locked India and Pakistan in an unending arms race increasing tensions in the Subcontinent.

An analysis of the defence expenditures of both India and Pakistan clearly revealed that there had always been a sudden spiralling of defense expenditure whenever U.S. undertook military aid to Pakistan. For instance while Indian defense expenditure as a percentage of the central...
government expenditure increased by 25 percent during the period 1970-1979 (the low phase of the bilateral relations) it doubled to 50 percent during the period 1980 to 1988 (the high mark of the relations). As a consequence, despite the professed U.S. concern for free societies, its aid programme resulted in the diversion of scarce economic resources, required for the strengthening of democracy, in the two infant nations.

The U.S. aid programme to Pakistan also emboldened Islamabad to resort to the use of force to settle outstanding issues with India. Washington’s claims that its arms would not be used against India was belied. The fact was that in actuality, the U.S. was not concerned with the purpose for which the arms were being employed. Pakistan’s main objective was to strengthen itself vis-a-vis India. The United States also became aware of the proclivity of Pakistan but its frequent pronouncements continued that the arms supplies to Pakistan were meant to fight communism.³ For the United States, these weapons were being supplied to an ally that was playing a link function between the SEATO and CENTO and helping Washington to strengthen/safeguard U.S. interests in the proximity of the oil wells of the world. But in the 1965 and 1971 wars between India and Pakistan, Islamabad used the arms supplied by Washington. The U.S.-Pak security relationship was based on the

³ President Dwight D. Eisenhower had at one point assured that U.S. arms supplied to Pakistan would not be used against India.
tenuous assumptions of the varying threat perception of Washington. Pakistan as a nation was not important for the U.S. Therefore, just as quickly as the U.S. had rushed to align with Pakistan in the 1950s, it began ignoring the nation when its threat perception changed. When the fear of communism enveloping Asia waned in the 1960s, along with detente and rapidly approaching near-nuclear parity between U.S. and U.S.S.R, Pakistan was downscaled in its importance.

Pakistan’s declining importance was evident during the Indo-Pak war of 1965 and the Bangladesh War in 1971. Washington was a mere spectator in these wars. Moreover, once the wars broke out, the U.S. immediately imposed arms embargo in the subcontinent affecting Pakistan more severely than India for latter’s better weapons were all American made. This revealed starkly the unconcern with which the superpower was treating an ally when it was no longer useful for its security interests.

It could also be concluded that had it not been for the strengthening of Pakistan, it would not have ventured to embrace such precipitate actions that led to the two wars in the region. The two wars that were fought also had a significant impact on the economy of both the nations. In addition, as a result of these two wars the already embittered relationship between the two nations worsened. This in turn increased the dependency of Pakistan on the superpower for arms.
The period of neglect continued to characterise U.S.-Pak relations throughout the latter part of the 1960s and until the end of 1979. Thus, for a decade and a half, Pakistan which had, in the words of Pakistani Prime Minister Hussein Shaheed Suhrawardy, boasted of being the Washington's "most allied ally in Asia" was left out in the cold to fend for itself. The U.S. did not even extend any substantial economic aid to the nation during this period.

The situation continued until 1979, when the U.S. in a sudden change of policy, spawned by the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan in December 1979, embraced Pakistan in a new security relationship. Once again Pakistan was catapulted into the American security schemes, but this time as the kingpin in the new Cold War. For, now Pakistan became the new front line nation for U.S. defence planners just as West Germany was during the Cold War years. The U.S. moved swiftly to assist Pakistan in a substantial way to induce it to play a significant role in the subcontinent. During this phase of the relationship Washington virtually ignored all other considerations and showed no concern for the adverse consequences that would affect the nation and the subcontinent by its involvement in the region. If in the past the U.S. military aid programme had contributed to the waging of two wars in the region, the new aid programme had opened the possibility of a greater tragedy befalling the subcontinent if India and Pakistan were to go to war again.
The U.S. arms supplies to Pakistan in the wake of the Afghan crisis were much more substantial than had ever been extended to Islamabad, during the heydays of the first Cold War. The arms supplied this time was also top-of-the line defense products and of a level of sophistication that was normally allowed to be shared only by close NATO allies. Besides, this arms aid programme also had a disturbing element in it. It has also increased the possibility of the use of nuclear weapons in any future conflict between India and Pakistan.

Nuclear nonproliferation was declared to be one of the important cornerstones of U.S. foreign policy. During the presidency of Jimmy Carter, critical importance was attached to promotion of nuclear nonproliferation goals. Before the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the Administration refused to ignore Pakistan's nuclear efforts and even cancelled all aid programme in 1979 upon evidence that Pakistan was attempting to produce nuclear weapons. Even after the Afghan crisis, the Carter Administration's response was more measured and balanced than that of the succeeding Reagan Administration. Washington attempted to balance the nonproliferation goals and the U.S. defense interests and refused to recommend an aid package exempting Pakistan for more than two years from the Symington amendment.

But once Reagan occupied the White House, all other constraints were brushed aside and strategic considerations were given utmost priority.
Soon Pakistan was identified as the new linchpin in the U.S. policy towards South Asia. What helped the South Asian nation was the myopic and paranoid obsession of the new Administration with anti-communism. If any single factor could be identified as the main catalyst of this development, it was the election of Ronald Reagan, characterised as the "Rambo" of American politics, as the President. He capitalised on the prevailing sense of insecurity begot by an assertive Soviet Union to revert to the policies of the Dulles era. All other issues that determined U.S. policy towards Pakistan ceased to have any significance. The issue of Human Rights was ignored, despite the fact that Pakistan was being administered by a ruthless dictator. The role that Pakistan could play in "punishing" and "bleeding" Moscow, became the only factor influencing Washington's policy. Most conspicuous was the U.S. effort to ignore Pakistan's nuclear efforts.

In the face of the Afghan crisis, Washington chose to subordinate this policy to its strategic interests. Its importance was further relegated once Ronald Reagan was elected to the White House. The new American President was hardly concerned with the consequence of large-scale arms aid to Pakistan and chose to ignore its nuclear quest. Despite the best efforts of President Reagan, the nuclear issue became a subject of acrimonious debate during the decade long strategic honey moon between the United States and Pakistan. But at the end of it, Pakistan emerged
as the true victor, exhibiting great diplomatic finesse and elan in its handling of this sensitive issue. For a change, it made the world's greatest superpower look like a pygmy in front of Islamabad's international manoeuvring.

The two aid packages of $3.2 billion (1981) and $4.2 billion (1987) were approved totally ignoring Pakistan's nuclear ambitions. The growing evidence of Islamabad's unbridled attempts to acquire a nuclear-weapon capability and the adverse public opinion of the international community were altogether ignored by the Administration. On the other hand, it attempted to conceal the seriousness and the extent of Pakistani efforts. Even the smuggling of the krytrons and the futile attempt by the Pakistan born Canadian, Arshad Pervez, in 1987, to illegally export maraging steel which could only be used in nuclear plants, were not convincing enough for the Administration to terminate aid to Pakistan. On the other hand, the Administration blocked every effort of the Congress putting forth the argument that any strong reaction from the U.S. would only compel the South Asian nation to step up its campaign for nuclear weapons -- a rather transparent and weak argument because Pakistan had never made any serious attempt to slowdown or abandon its nuclear weapons programme. Pakistan was evidently willing to "eat grass", to borrow the words of the late Prime Minister Bhutto, to acquire a nuclear-weapon capability.

An analysis of the U.S. arms aid to Pakistan during the Reagan
Administration also revealed that Washington was only interested in supplying arms to Pakistan to keep the nation satisfied to play the "conduit" role and assisting U.S. in its effort to bog down the Soviet Union in Afghanistan. U.S. was also not concerned with the kind of weapons that Pakistan was requesting for. The Howitzers, the F-16 aircraft and the Harpoon ship to ship missiles all revealed the U.S. unconcern for the nature of the weapons it was selling to Pakistan. Several of the arms were ill-suited for the Afghanistan border. The most telling is the case of the U.S. sale of the frigates and Harpoon missiles. Even in regard to the supply of the F-16s, it had been revealed that the sale of these planes was made ignoring the assessment of the U.S. defense department that the aircraft was not the ideal one for the Afghan border. During the hearings before the various Committees of the Congress, it also came to light that the choice of the aircraft was that of Pakistan and not that of the United States. The situation was that Pakistan was not willing to sell its services if the price was not right and the U.S. was willing to give Pakistan what it wanted.

The sale of the F-16 also added yet another dimension to the U.S. aid package -- the danger of the aircraft being used as a nuclear delivery vehicle. This dimension is perhaps the most dangerous of the outcome of the arms aid programme to Pakistan. At the same time this is an angle that for some inexplicable reason has not received serious attention of
defense scholars.

In 1987, Leonard S. Spector, Senior Associate, Carnegie Endowment for International Peace assessed that if Pakistan were to continue its nuclear activities at the 1987 level, it would have a nuclear arsenal of nearly twenty devices at the end of six years. For a nation like Pakistan which does not have a missile delivery capacity, it is essential to rely on advanced combat aircraft to achieve deep penetration of the enemy air defenses and to ensure the accuracy of delivery of the weapon. Accuracy is an important factor for nuclear-weapon-threshold nations in view of the limited number of nuclear bombs they would have in their arsenal.

The F-16 aircraft could with slight modification be used as a good nuclear delivery vehicle. Pakistan had not given the U.S. any explicit assurance that the aircraft would not be used for nuclear purposes and nor did the Reagan Administration seek it. Even if it did, the reasonable inference would be that such assurances were aimed at only obviating the possibility of the termination of the aid programme by the U.S. Pakistan has a past record of violating assurances. Therefore, it was difficult to give credence to any such assurance. It would only be naive to take at

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face value the pledges of a nation that unmindful of the prospects of a
cancellation of U.S. aid, went all out to even smuggle critical equipment
for the manufacture of nuclear weapons in the mid-80s. What made the
effort specially note worthy was that the Pakistani attempt was made when
U.S. aid was at its highest level. The fears had to come true. It was
submitted during a Congressional hearing\(^5\) that a source in the Reagan
Administration had revealed that Pakistan without even waiting for the
U.S. aid programme to end, initiated steps to modify the aircraft in the
mid 1980s. That this could happen was also averred in several
Congressional hearings.

The arguments of the Reagan Administration that it would not be
easy to make the modifications required to carry the nuclear weapons, is
at best perfunctory -- a nation that had despite all odds developed/stole
the capacity to manufacture nuclear weapons could easily be credited with
similar capacity and doggedness to effect the required modifications. The
Reagan Administration was apparently unconcerned.

The respected journal, *Arms Control Today*\(^6\), reported that the U.S.
continued to sell to Pakistan spare parts totalling some $100 million in
1990-91, including parts for the F-16 aircraft. It was admitted by the
Pakistani Foreign Secretary, Shahryar Khan, in September 1991, that

\(^5\) Ibid.

Pakistan had the components to produce a nuclear weapon. The Pakistani attempt to modify the aircraft and the admission of the Foreign Minister taken together may be an indication of the events to follow. Pakistan was also provided large quantities of economic aid by Washington which would have helped Pakistan to divert more of its resources to satisfy its nuclear quest. At the same time, the U.S. also aided the effort by providing Islamabad with a delivery system for the nuclear weapons it produced.

The Pakistani nuclear programme would also have not gone unnoticed in India. India already had the ability to produce nuclear weapons. There was hardly any doubt that India also would have taken necessary steps to counter this perceived threat. This had, therefore, opened up the possibility of a nuclear conflict erupting in case of another war between India and Pakistan.

Pakistan's American connection had always bristled with complications. The United States has never been a dependable ally as far as Pakistan was concerned. Washington had regarded Pakistan as a tool to checkmate Moscow in the latter's efforts to strengthen its position in the region and had thus been at best unconcerned with the security goals of its ally. It had been virtually a one-sided security relationship. In 1962 when the Sino-Indian War broke out, the U.S. rushed arms to India ignoring the protests from Islamabad. In 1965, when the Indo-Pak
hostilities started, the U.S. imposed an arms embargo in the region affecting both India and Pakistan alike. The ally and the non-aligned nation were equated alike and both were subjected to the same treatment.

In the same vein the refusal of the U.S. to substantially lift the arms embargo that was imposed on Pakistan during the 1971 war, also illustrated the lack of concern that Washington exhibited for its ally that was pervaded by the feeling of insecurity spawned by the dismemberment of the nation. Pakistan's pleas to the United States for spare parts and arms to modernise its armed forces, went largely unheeded. The 1981 U.S.-Pak strategic alliance was like the security relations of the 1950s and conferred on "Pakistan the same old stooge status." 7

The U.S.-Pakistan strategic alliance also had the effect of undermining Pakistan's position in the non-alignment movement. Pakistan's military links with Washington made its claim ineffective and proved it to be a pawn on the chessboard of superpower rivalry.

After the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan, the United States undertook large-scale arms aid programme to Pakistan. The arms bought were also used by Islamabad to protect the over 3.2 lakh refugees who had flocked to Pakistan and whose presence served the U.S. strategic interests. But, in effect, Pakistan was paying for the arms that were being supplied to serve U.S. strategic interests.

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U.S. arms aid to Pakistan had another consequence. Pakistan which was a nation that harboured the dream of achieving military parity, if not technological superiority over India, was allured by false hopes to the pursuit of this illusory goal. As a result, as soon as the U.S. arms package was formally concluded, Pakistan began entertaining the belief that it would now be in a position to achieve its long cherished goal of military parity with India. Islamabad also made an all out effort to make a technological leap in the modernisation of its defense forces. For this purpose, expenditure on socio-economic programmes was substantially reduced. Therefore, once the U.S. aid programme to Pakistan was approved, Islamabad was spurred into an escalating defence and military related expenditure.

In the ultimate analysis, the U.S.-Pakistan relationship has left the nations of South Asia poorer in socio-economic terms, heightened tensions in the region and has opened the possibilities of a nuclear war between India and Pakistan. This futile exercise on the part of Pakistan in the name of its security interest has been substantially counterproductive to the stability and intra-regional security of the subcontinent and also that of South Asia. When judged in this perspective, the U.S.-Pak security relations have increased the dependence of the weaker nations on the support of superpowers -- a fact that unanimously is to the dislike of intellectuals, ideologues and political pundits of modern world.