

# The Business

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## Our national hero no more

Dr Abdul Qadeer Khan, known as a national hero for transforming Pakistan into world's first Muslim-majority nuclear power nation passed away at the age of 85. Admired and respected across the nation, Dr Khan was given a State funeral at Faisal Mosque and buried in Islamabad. He was the first Pakistani who was awarded three presidential awards. He has been awarded the Nishan-e-Imtiaz (Order of Excellence) twice, and the Hilal-e-Imtiaz (Crescent of Excellence) once. Dr AQ Khan was born in 1936 in Bhopal, India, and migrated to Pakistan with his family in 1947. He did a science degree at Karachi University in 1960, then went on to study metallurgical engineering in Berlin before completing advanced studies in the Netherlands and Belgium. He acquired his engineering degree from a university in the Netherlands in 1967 and later went on to secure a doctorate in metallurgical engineering from Belgium. Khan, who held a doctorate in metallurgical engineering from the Catholic University of Leuven in Belgium, offered to launch Pakistan's nuclear weapons programme in 1974 after neighbour India conducted its first nuclear explosion. He reached out to then-Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto offering technology for Pakistan's own nuclear weapons programme. Dr AQ Khan was instrumental in setting up Pakistan's first nuclear enrichment plant at Kahuta near Islamabad. Pakistan had conducted its first nuclear tests on May 28, 1998 during the second Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) government.

Dr Khan is widely regarded as the "Father of Islamic Nuclear Bomb" or founder of gas-centrifuge enrichment technology for Pakistan's nuclear deterrent programme as he developed the Muslim world's first atomic bomb. Coming shortly after similar tests by India, Dr Khan's work helped seal Pakistan's place as the world's seventh nuclear power and sparked national jubilation. He helped us develop nation-saving nuclear deterrence, and a grateful nation will never forget his services in this regard. The nation expressed heartfelt condolences over the demise of Dr Khan. Dr Khan was loved by the nation because of his critical contribution in making us a nuclear weapon state. It seems that all the nation is sad and gloomy and all our national leaders, including President Dr Arif Alvi, Prime minister Imran Khan and ministers sent their condolence messages on his death but one question arises that why prime minister did not attend his funeral prayers. No doubt he was given the state funeral. The last but not the least question is had we given him due regard and reward which he deserved being father of our nuclear programme? After the external and internal pressure our rulers gave him shocks for making our defence impregnable. At a time he was humiliated to the extent that he had to tender apology for the reasons known to those sitting at the helm of affairs.

## National security: Our challenges and prospects — I

PROF. DR. MUHAMMAD KHAN

While defining security, an immediate response one gets is a state of freedom from insecurity, danger and threat. Conceptually, security is a contested concept, having wider meanings at different levels and under different scenarios. At the social level, security is about protecting people from all forms of prevalent and perilous threats which emanate from uncertain political situations, social inequities and uncertainties, economic vulnerabilities, environmental hazards or cultural relativism. At the state level, security is used in a wider concept where the state is concerned as well as responsible for the safety and protection of its masses from all threats, especially rival forces (competing states). It is called wider national security, which also encompasses the concept of human security. National security, at the state level, is a comprehensive security concept indeed which takes into consideration all aspects of a state. There is yet another concept of security; international security, also known as global security. The concept is broader in scope and superior in epitome. Global security refers to measures taken by states and international organizations for ensuring mutual survival, safety and security of the international society as a whole. The concept is closer to the core values of human security which means "protecting the vital core of all human lives in ways that enhance human freedom and human fulfilment." It is built on those measures and progressions that accentuate people's strengths and desires.

**Linking the state and security:** The state is a basic unit in International Relations and the prevalent international system. Theoretically, the international system is composed of sovereign states (nation states) as its actors. The concept has its origin in the Peace of Westphalia, 1648, with the uniqueness of state's sovereignty over its territory and its domestic affairs. Indeed, this is the binding principle of the Charter of United Nations Organisation (UNO) and International Law, gaining wide-ranging international recognition upon the conclusion of World War II (WWII) and establishment of UNO in 1945.

The establishment of UNO was a well thought out phenomenon in the context that even the victors of this war were not in a state to fight another devastating war similar to WWI and WWII. Nevertheless, in order to maintain the perpetuity of wars, there appeared another format of warfare with the name of Cold War. The beginning of this

exploitative natured war was between the two former allies and victors of WWII. The two dominant superpowers of this war were the United States of America and former Soviet Union. There existed political hostility between these two superpowers, and countries of their respective camps, for over forty-five years (1945-1991).

**Chronological Order of Security Threats:** The Cold War was mainly characterized by proxy wars; provoking insurgencies; military and nuclear threats short of a major war; well-articulated propaganda; and provocative military invasions. There were two major features of the Cold War: geopolitical influence into each other's areas of influence and attempts to ideologically dominate and reject each other's political philosophy. During the entire Cold War period, both superpowers made excessive use of the geopolitics of their allies for attaining political mileage and strategic advantages. Pakistan was a state whose geopolitics had great significance and strategic attraction for both superpowers. Former Soviet Union made successive attempts to reach over to warm waters through regions that now form part of Pakistan during British rule in the Indian subcontinent and even thereafter. On the other hand, as guardians of the Capitalist ideology, United States found Pakistan's geopolitics as most suitable to counter the influence of the Communist ideology. The origin of security issues, for the state and society of Pakistan, have their roots in the Cold War conflict between the US and Soviet Union. The investigation and provocation for creating various forms of instabilities within Pakistan were planned, funded and executed from outside the frontiers of Pakistan, making use of its neighbourhood.

The strategies used against Pakistan were mainly in the form of initiation of revolts and subnationalism, especially in the province of Balochistan. The process is still being continued with an enhanced number of insecurities and subversive activities, all backed and controlled by various power centres, located regionally as well as globally. In Khyber Pakhtunkhwa (KP), former North-West Frontier Province, separatist movements like Pashtunistan were initiated and constantly triggered for decades.

Although Pakistan's borders were very well defined at the time of partition, such movements were specifically aimed to destabilize the state of Pakistan. As a buffer state, Afghanistan became a hub for conspiracies against Pakistan, much before the decolonization of the subcontinent. Afghanistan was the first country which refused

to recognize Pakistan upon its independence in 1947. In former East Pakistan (now Bangladesh), hatred against the state and sub-nationalism was systematically sown among the local masses until its separation in 1971. The foes of Pakistan did not spare the well-read and most patriotic people of urban Sindh (Karachi and Hyderabad) either. In the decade of 1980 and 1990, foreign spying networks misled the devoted youth in the metropolitan city of Karachi and Hyderabad to undertake subversive activities and vicious violence against the state, innocent masses and state institutions. Unfortunately, there has been active participation of some local political forces which were motivated, backed and funded by the same elements that sponsored militancy against the state of Pakistan in the form of violence and subnationalism. While enjoying the perks and privileges of the state, these political-cum-militant forces have been overtly demonstrating their allegiance to their sponsor states, whose historical animosity with Pakistan has never been a secret.

Causative features challenging the security: confluence of geopolitics and ideology. The security challenges facing the state and society of Pakistan can largely be attributed to the geopolitical location of Pakistan and its ideological basis. Indeed, Pakistan ideally fits into the Pivot State concept, which is based on the Heartland Theory of Sir Halford John Mackinder, an English geographer. As discussed above, the security challenges faced by Pakistan today have their origin in the Cold War era, where the United States and former Soviet Union used the geopolitical location of pivotal states under their influence for their respective national and strategic interests. Since Pakistan was a key ally of the United States, under various agreements and military pacts during critical stages of the Cold War, therefore the opposite camp and its allies made all efforts to destabilize Pakistan from all possible avenues of security. Apart from the anti-US Cold War alliances, which considered themselves duty-bound to exploit Pakistan's vulnerabilities, Washington and other Western powers did not spare any opportunity to negatively affect Pakistan's interests regionally and globally. In the disintegration of Pakistan in 1971, the U.S. played a pliant role by not supporting Pakistan militarily (the scandalous 7th Fleet), neither did they make any attempt at the political and diplomatic level.

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Courtesy Monthly Hilal

# Time of peril



MALEEHA LODHI

Much of the international community saw the Trump years as deeply destabilising for the world. The former US president acted not just irresponsibly and unpredictably but was intensely divisive both for his country and the world. His brand of populism was infused by xenophobic and racist views with his 'America First' slogan shaping his unilateralist foreign policy. At home he mainstreamed and emboldened the far right, fringe extremist groups and white supremacists who have become an enduring part of the American political landscape.

The world watched in horror when Trump refused to accept the results of the November 2020 presidential election, declined to cooperate in the transfer of power and incited a violent mob to storm Congress to prevent it from certifying the election result. This was followed by his historic impeachment on the charge of "incitement of insurrection", becoming the only president to be impeached twice. Bob Woodward's new book, Peril, co-authored with Robert Costa, chronicles these dramatic events and much more. It is

the third in his trilogy, the first two being Fear and Rage about Trump's turbulent time in office.

Woodward writes the ultimate 'insider' accounts about American presidents, politics and foreign policy. His 2010 book Obama's War has lost little of its relevance, and is worth revisiting after America's chaotic withdrawal from Afghanistan. It shines a light on the internal 'wars', policy rifts and personality clashes in the Obama administration over the course to follow in America's longest war. The policy muddle and strategic flaws in Washington's approach to Afghanistan are persuasively recounted based on authoritative sources.

His new book is just as compelling. The most sensational disclosure for which it received much pre-publication publicity is how the senior-most US military officer assured his Chinese counterpart that America wasn't about to attack his country given the alarm both in China and elsewhere that an increasingly unhinged Trump might "go rogue" and order a military strike. This episode forms the book's prologue. Another chapter describes this in more detail as also Gen Mark Milley's conversation with Nancy Pelosi, Speaker of the House of Representatives, during which she sought assurances that Trump would be prevented from any reckless course including resort to nuclear weapons.

These disclosures triggered intense controversy which echoed in recent Congressional hearings on Afghanistan when Milley, chairman of the joint chiefs of staff, was asked if they were true. He acknowledged he made two calls to Gen Li Zoucheng of PLA, one before and another after the election, because the Chinese were worried about a US attack. But he said

this with the knowledge of top Trump officials and also because he was mandated to ensure "strategic stability". As for the conversation with Pelosi he told lawmakers he had "sought to assure her that nuclear launch is governed by a very specific and deliberate process". He also acknowledged he had been interviewed by Woodward. In fact, the book seems to rely heavily on Milley's accounts of events. He was among more than 200 people interviewed by the authors.

The book's short chapters go back and forth between Trump's erratic conduct and Biden mulling over whether to run for the White House a third time and how he wanted his family to make that call given the many tragedies it had faced. Several chapters offer vignettes of both men in the eventful days leading up to the election and insights into how they ran their campaigns. Trump's attempts and failure to challenge and delegitimise the election is also dealt with in great detail. The role of US military chiefs looms large in the treatment of Trump's reaction to the protests against racism that erupted after the death of George Floyd in police custody. They resisted and foiled his attempt to deploy troops on the streets and deal with demonstrations by invoking the Insurrection Act.

The Jan 6 violent assault on the US Capitol is described by an almost minute by minute account. Days after the attack, Milley, says the book, noted in his daily diary: "Big Threat: Domestic terrorism." He identified the attackers as far right militias, extreme Tea Party and new Brown Shirts, a US version of the paramilitary wing of the Nazi party. And he concluded it was a planned revolution. In fact, US security agencies had been warning earlier

— this is not mentioned in the book — that armed white supremacist groups had emerged among the most lethal threats to the country. In Congressional testimony in October 2019, the FBI director had revealed that "racially motivated violent extremism", principally from white supremacists, represented "the majority of domestic terrorism threats". It is these groups that Trump encouraged.

Readers in Pakistan will be most interested in Chapter 60 which deals with Biden's review of Afghan policy. This goes over familiar ground of how as vice president he opposed Obama's troop surge. Now as president he wanted to hear a range of views on this although everyone knew he wanted since 2009 to end US involvement in Afghanistan. In two months, there were 25 National Security Council meetings among others in one of "the most wide-ranged policy reviews ever held".

Biden was "determined not to be jammed" by the military as Obama had been. This chapter has him asking a series of key questions — had the US not long gone beyond its original aim to defeat Al Qaeda? Was the nature of threat such as to require keeping thousands of troops there? The answer came in his decision to completely pull out and end America's 'forever' war. The book claims that the Pentagon and Nato ministers argued for a slower "gated" withdrawal to provide leverage for diplomatic efforts for a political settlement. But when Secretary of State Antony Blinken proposed a delayed pullout to the Taliban in Doha they rejected it and warned that if this happened, they would attack US forces and provincial capitals. Biden then stuck to his decision and "seemed at peace" with it. And the rest, as they

## Classroom bias

Sometimes what it takes to create a star is to treat people like stars

NEDA MULJI

"Where's your brain?" a frustrated teacher asked a cheeky student who had asked the same question for the fourth time. Other students laughed at the obvious sarcasm in the question. The child to whom the question was addressed did not react, neither did he think twice about it. Communication loaded with bias is so deeply ingrained in some of our educational institutes, students have not only become desensitised to it, but also talk to each other like that. Many teachers voice their emotional stress without filtering out the negative ring in the message; sometimes the impact is strong enough to stay with the child for life.

Inclusiveness in classrooms is not just about teaching a localised curriculum, with representation of different ethnicities nor is it only about catering to special needs. Inclusiveness is often embedded in the very culture of an institution where kindness towards each other and regard for the other's cultural and emotional sensitivity teaches students life skills that equip them to become global citizens.

Unfortunately, bias in a society operates at multiple levels in the education sector. From those who usurp another's rightful seat due to nepotism, to those who can jump the queue for an appointment with the head of department, bias operates with its multiple invisible faces. Most of it may not be intentional — we are all simply part of a system that inculcates a code of behaviour that sweeps us along. So when we hear 'where's your brain?' from those in authority, we learn to shrug it off as part of a system we have learnt to accept. If we can't beat them join them. Next time we are faced with frustration when dealing with a subordinate, we might be guilty of repeating that exact phrase.

The cycle of bias, lack of inclusivity or lack of kindness — as it wouldn't be unfair to call it that — starts in the classrooms. The child's mind is programmed, in the early years, to receive information and respond to it. How they receive information and how they choose to respond to it is determined by those in authority who the child will most often mirror, and this creates a domino effect. Research shows that if the teacher's care and compassion doesn't get communicated effectively, students suffer from low motivation and under performance.

Most of us are aware of the negative impact of bias, so what does it take to bias-proof our classrooms? As a start, we might want to stop pointing fingers at parents for our students' mediocre performance. Next, we might want to consider that it is not



enough to care — expressing care and affection through words and action is perhaps even more important now as students have had a fair bit of time away from their teachers during the pandemic. To become contributing members of a class, a household, or society, individuals need to feel valued and cared for.

Children come to school with much more baggage than their backpacks. Classroom disruptions and behavioural problems are mere symptoms of that baggage. Understanding the emotions that underlie the disruption may be a good start. Encouraging student motivation isn't an easy task — it requires sustained effort at recognising ability and potential, maintaining an open and fair learning environment and withholding judgement when students cannot meet the teacher's expectations.

In the 1960s, a Harvard professor Robert Rosenthal conducted an experiment where he proved that students performed well if teachers expected them to. He tested students' IQ at the start of the year, and then at the end and told elementary schoolteachers which students were likely to experience high growth in IQ during the year. It wasn't a coincidence that those randomly selected students performed better at the end of the year.

Implicit bias is a real thing and it affects students at every level as it often operates in subtle ways. For example, teachers tend to make eye contact more often with the more motivated, or eager students, acquire a more positive tone in conversation with them, give them greater responsibility in class and kinder feedback on assessments. Much of it may be unconscious bias, but it is equally damaging as the message relayed to the student may be that the teacher has comparatively lower expectations of them — a belief that they will most likely mirror.

Sometimes what it takes to create a star is to treat people like stars — they often rise to expectations quicker than we can imagine. With belief, care and equitable treatment in class and outside, we can boost our students' self-motivation. And teachers, with their inherent altruistic tendencies, do have a magic wand with the power to change lives.