**War Against Pakistan**

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A special meeting of the corps commander was convened to deliberate on the horrendous events of May 9 when workers and leaders of PTI, reacting to the arrest of Imran Khan in a criminal case, attacked GHQ, Corp Commander House Lahore and other military installations. Not only did they condemn the attacks in the harshest possible terms but also decided to make an example out of those responsible for executing, planning and conceiving those acts of terrorism and trying all those responsible for this dastardly acts under the Army Act. The National Security Committee, in its meeting on 16th May, has also endorsed the deliberations of the Corp Commanders huddle besides deciding to observe May 9 as black day. It also emphasised the need to regulate the social media and showing zero tolerance to violence. The cabinet has also endorsed the foregoing decisions. Nobody in his right mind and imbued with love for the motherland can take an issue with these decisions.

Pakistan Army is the pride of the nation and a protector of the ideological and physical frontiers of the country. The nation is greatly indebted to the Armed forces for their sacrifices in ensuring existence of Pakistan as a sovereign entity and warding off the existential threats to its security both internal as well as external. In fact Pakistan Army is the actual red line for the nation.

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The attacks on military installations were attacks on the writ and integrity of the state. The pre-dominant public view is that it was war against Pakistan. Only the traitors and enemies of the country could indulge in such acts. The way these attacks were executed proved beyond any iota of doubt that that they were pre-planned and not a spontaneous reaction to arrest of Imran Khan. The audio leaks of PTI leaders have confirmed the authenticity of these claims. One is however amazed at the audacity of Imran who first expressed ignorance about the attacks before the court and after his release on bail has come up with the allegations that these attacks were carried by the agencies to find an excuse to ban PTI and convict him. That tells how devious the man is. What happened at Zaman Park when the police went to arrest him on the basis of an arrest warrant was a premonition for the things to follow. Imran Khan persistently fomented anti-Army rhetoric. The PTI social media mangers worked on it round the clock.There were already intelligence reports regarding presence of some terrorists at Zaman Park. The arrests made in the backdrop of these attacks indicate that more than nine hundred of them were foreign nationals having connection with a terrorist entity.

These incidents have not only made Pakistan a laughing stock for its enemies and ill-wishers but has also sent a very wrong message to the global community in regards to its ability to safeguard its nuclear assets. It is pertinent to point out that some countries have been persistently propagating that there was a danger of Pakistani nuclear assets falling in the hands of terrorists. Army has a key role in the Command and Control structure for the safety of our nuclear assets. If the Army headquarters and military installations are attacked it goes to strengthen that nefarious propaganda against Pakistan. What happened on May 9 is fraught with serious consequences.

Politics must be done and practiced in line with limits set by the constitution and laws of the land in this regard. Expressing dissent with the government policies and protesting against it is a democratic and constitutional right of the opposition and must be exercised within the permissible legal limits and in line with the internationally recognized norms of democracy. Violence has no place in politics. The politicians and leaders of the political parties need to understand that whatever they do or say has profound implications both good as well as bad depending on the nature of their messages and acts. The nation has witnessed several agitations and political movements during its 75 years history when the mob turned unruly and destroyed some public as well as private properties but neither any leader incited sentiments against Pakistan Army nor their followers ever thought of hitting the military targets in spite of the fact that the military dictators deposed elected governments four times.

The defence forces of Pakistan are viewed as saviours of the nation. Because the people know fully well that the Army was their first and last line of defence and to live as a sovereign nation it needed to be respected as an institution as well as strengthened to thwart designs of the enemies.

It is really regrettable to note that since the emergence of Imran Khan on the political landscape of Pakistan an element of violence has crept into politics. The ugliest manifestation was witnessed when during 126 days sit-in at Islamabad the supporters of Imran Khan and Tahir ul Qadri attached the parliament, TV station and the Prime Minister House while the two brothers standing on the container made victory signs. Imran used abusive language against senior police officers, threatened them of dire consequences. The SSP Islamabad was badly beaten with sticks. He incited people to civil disobedience and even asked them to refuse paying their taxes; surely anti-state fulminations.

During his three and half year power stint he pummeled all democratic norms, refused to develop working relationship with the opposition. His resorted to unprecedented political vendetta by implicating the opposition leaders in cases which were never proven in the courts of law and the High Courts and SC repeatedly observed that the government was using NAB for political engineering. He insulted the opposition leaders incessantly by hurling derogatory epithets on them. Those who brought him in power after witnessing his incompetence to rule and inability to deal with economic challenges withdrew their unqualified support for his government and decided to become apolitical. The opposition parties got their chance to depose him through a no-confidence motion, a constitutional way of regime change.

He was so incensed and confused after his removal that he started blaming USA, establishment and the PDM for the alleged conspiracy against him. Down the line he also blamed a number of other people. He kept shifting the targets. However in the end he started a tirade against General Bajwa holding him solely responsible for the regime change. Actually he was angry why the General did not help him in torpedoing the no-confidence motion. What he and his party has done to Pakistan is inexcusable.

*The writer is a former diplomat and freelance columnist.*