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Why should Pakistan need a bailout package?

August 21, 2022, 5:24 PM IST / Jagdish Batra in Cultural Inputs, World, TOI

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The Pakistan Prime Minister Shahbaz Sharif has claimed that his country does not want another war with India. Sure enough, the people of Pakistan do not favour war, nor do the people of India. Our Prime Minister Narendra Modi had asked Pakistan to compete positively in eliminating poverty and providing employment to youth, and Sharif's comment seems inspired by it. But the fact is that Pakistan government is not

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ready for peace with India. There are telltale indicators of contradictions between profession and practice on Pakistan's part. Even as it talks about peace, it continues to follow Zia-ul-Haq's policy of inflicting a thousand cuts on India seen in the form of terrorist attacks.

Sharif's comment is necessitated by the impending IMF bailout package due to be released soon for which it is doing cosmetic operations. Its policies make one wonder as to why exactly Pakistan needs financial help. It seems to be a rich country. How, otherwise, could it afford to maintain a huge 6.4 lakh-strong army that is disproportionate to its size and strategic needs. That the Pak army calls the shots in that country also means it takes away a big chunk of budgetary finances. Its track record of running private businesses acquired through contacts and influence is too well-known.

Apart from the regular army, maintaining the huge number of terrorists, spending on their training and upkeep and trying every trick to push them into India requires sizeable funds. Regular supplies of arms and drugs with the help of drones, from across the border into India requires a good amount of money. Add to it, the regular expenditure that it has to incur on the large number of sleeper cells in India, the stone-thrower throngs kept

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in abeyance for use at times, moles on its payrolls who work in various institutions here, supply and communication chains to keep in touch and activate its agents. How these elements are used in times of unrest or agitations became glaringly evident during the anti-CAA protests and even farmers' agitation wherein these agents tried to fish in troubled waters.

Not only in India, even in other countries, Pakistani intelligence agencies work incessantly to neutralize Baluch and Pashtun nationalists, to encourage Khalistani and pro-Pakistan elements and to organize anti-India rallies and protests. The so-called Khalistan referendum in UK last year and the one slated this year in Canada are examples, besides the car rally in the US in support of the farmers' agitation when it was taking place in India. Pakistan must be spending huge amount on lobbying with the legislators in the US to keep them in good humour. Such a lobbying is acknowledged to be a costly affair. Looking at all this, it appears Pakistan is simply feigning poverty to get money from donor countries or the IMF. This is in line with its past record of milking America in the name of fighting Al Qaida while at the same time grooming and providing safe sanctuary to the latter. Looking at all this, one would conclude that Pakistan is pining for

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punishment and not peace overtures from India!

The problem with Pakistan is that it is still stuck in 1948-time warp when its army camouflaged as tribals raided Kashmir and held on to a part of it and our naïve politicians fell into the UN trap, consigning the posterity to unending misery. Having suffered severe drubbing at the hands of India in several wars, Pakistan chose the treacherous path of secretive attacks through brainwashed terrorists. If Pakistan wants, way out of the Kashmir issue problematized by it, it can still be found. There was a time when it was believed that an agreement had been reached between the leaders of the two countries to treat the present LAC as legally demarcated line of division. Surely, it requires foresight and guts on the part of leaders, but the public will welcome it if the move in this direction is initiated. But so long as the Pakistani leadership does not rise above the mindset with religious bias and chooses to work for the economic and social welfare of the people; also so long as the Pakistan army does not give up its greed and allow democratic institutions to work freely, there cannot be hope of a better future for the Pakistani people.



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