

US Sanctions on Pakistan's Missile Program: A Strategic Maneuver in Global Geopolitics

By Abdul Majeed Bhatti

Since the Obama administration, Washington has imposed six rounds of sanctions on Pakistan's missile technology, citing concerns about perceived threat posed by Islamabad's advancements against American security. However, such contentions appear misconstrued and conceal a hidden agenda. A closer examination reveals they are part of a broader strategy to contain China and bolster India's position as a regional counterweight. Pakistan's missile and technological capabilities, particularly its partnership with China, challenge the balance of power in South Asia, making it a central point in the US's strategic calculus.

At the heart of US policy in South Asia is the goal of countering China's growing influence. India, with its economic and military potential, is seen as a natural counterbalance to Beijing. Strengthening India through direct support and indirect measures—such as curbing Pakistan's strategic capabilities—has become a cornerstone of US efforts in the region. By weakening Pakistan, the US effectively bolsters India, allowing New Delhi to focus on countering China's rise.

A key factor driving these sanctions is Pakistan's progress in hypersonic missile technology, which took on new meaning in 2022 after India fired its BrahMos supersonic missile "accidentally" towards Pakistan that Islamabad failed to intercept. Subsequently, Pakistani endeavors to make strident progress in missile technology pose a direct challenge to India's defence systems. Hypersonic missiles, with their ability to accelerate several times the speed of sound, dynamically change paths, and evade existing Indian defence systems, could shift the regional balance of power. Inhibiting Pakistan from achieving technological parity ensures India retains its military dominance. This is particularly significant in the context of India's nuclear and conventional deterrence, which could be undermined by advanced Pakistani missile systems.

The sanctions also address the growing militarization of space. India has invested heavily in its space programme, developing technologies for strategic surveillance and communication. Meanwhile, Pakistan's efforts in this domain remain constrained by limited resources and international restrictions. By targeting Pakistan's missile capabilities, America is making certain that Islamabad cannot develop the necessary rocket technology to compete with India in the weaponization of space. This technological gap further cements India's position as a dominant power on the subcontinent, aligned with US interests in offsetting China.

Another dimension of the sanctions is the effort to minimize Pakistan's role as a strategic threat for India. Historically, Pakistan has diverted Indian attention and resources away from broader regional challenges. The war in Kargil in 1999 illustrated the potential strength of Pakistan in taking on its might neighbor. By weakening Pakistan militarily, technologically and economically via the IMF, the US

aims to enable India to concentrate on the growing threat posed by Beijing. Thus India is a critical actor in America's plan to encircle China.

An important aspect of these sanctions is their impact on Chinese entities supporting Pakistan. China has been a key partner in Pakistan's missile and defence development. By penalizing Chinese companies involved in these collaborations, the US targets both Pakistan's progress and Beijing's influence in the region. By doing so, Washington, not only sends a message to other nations about the risks of aligning too closely with Beijing but it also disrupts China's global reach.

Hence, contrary to the official US narrative, these sanctions are not about protecting US security. They represent a premeditated move to shape the regional balance of power in South Asia. By curbing Pakistan's strategic capabilities, the US ensures that India remains the dominant player, capable of countering China effectively. This policy underscores Washington's long-term vision for the Indo-Pacific, where India's role as a regional hegemon augmented by QUAD is a strong bulwark against Chinese aspirations to displace America in the Pacific rim.

So, Pakistan's leadership faces a similar conundrum to that of Tipu Sultan. The Sultan of Mysore invented the rocket technology to end the British occupation of India and died valiantly in this cause. Will Pakistani leadership acquiesce to US demands or use its newfound missile technology to end US dominance over the Sub-continent and liberate its people from American subservience.

This is not possible under the current political and military leadership of Pakistan, as it is a leadership subordinate to America and is not able to challenge America or deviate from its policy and achieve its interests. The challenge and liberation from the grip of colonialism and Western hegemony, headed by America, requires a principled leadership that emerges from the womb of this great nation. This will happen soon, Insha'Allah, under a Khilafah Rashidah (rightly guided Caliphate) based on the prophetic method, established in Pakistan or united with it, employing its missile, nuclear and military capabilities. Then the Ummah will break the shackles that were placed on it by these traitorous leaderships and return the Indian subcontinent to the fold of the Islamic nation and complete what the leader Qutaybah bin Muslim al-Bahili did not complete. The caliphate will tread on the soil of all of China and its ships will dock on the eastern coast of China. If this is not done through Chinese agreement with the caliphate state to be freed from the common American enemy, then it will be done through divine conquest and victory for the caliphate. ﴿وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هُوَ قُلْ عَسَىٰ أَنْ

﴿وَيَقُولُونَ مَتَىٰ هُوَ قُلْ عَسَىٰ أَنْ يَكُونَ قَرِيبًا﴾ **"and say, "When is that?" Say, "Perhaps it will be soon –"** [Al-Isra: 51]