**Diplomatic relations with Israel**

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These days one important question which has left Pakistan in a state of quandary, is whether in the changed scenario of international politics, it would be feasible to recognize the state of Israel.It is essential to know the background of Pakistan-Israel relations in the past to answer this question. Pakistan and Israel almost simultaneously appeared on the map of the world on the basis of their religious identity. Pakistan, on the basis of two nation theory, and Israel for a separate Homeland for the Jewish people. Israel made a request for bilateral relations with Pakistan, but the Quaid e Azam ignored that request, more probably because the new state of Pakistan was beset by major problems of mass cross emigration of Hindus and Muslims from the countries of their origin, and their subsequent settlement in their new homeland.

The Palestinians had lived for centuries on the bank of the Mediterranean, surrounded by Lebanon, Jordan and Egypt, when the United Nations at the behest of U.S approved a plan to partition Palestine into a Jewish and Arab state in 1947, but the Arabs rejected it. From a small speck around the present Tel Aviv, the Jews fought internecine battles with the Muslim population with arms supplied by U.S and other allies and pushed back the unarmed Palestinianstowards Gaza and beyond, which in history is remembered as Zionism. Hence the creation of Israel took place by their unlawful occupation of Palestinian area and subsequent declaration of a sovereign state of Israel.

The truth of Israel’s expansion, at the cost of Palestinians   Homeland, Noam Chomski, the great American philosopher regarded it as “Mass murder of Palestinians” with western armament

Since Israel’s establishment in May 1948, Pakistan, being a Muslim country, has refused to establish diplomatic relations with it. The agreements that Israel signed with Egypt in 1978, the PLO in 1993, and Jordan in 1994 brought no change in Pakistan’s policy. However, Israeli and Pakistani officials maintained clandestine contacts over the years. Pakistan’s non-recognition of Israel was mainly due to keeping religious solidarity with the Arab-Muslim countries and the fear of  reaction by radical Islamic groups. Pakistan’s political and military leaders always try hard  to get along well with its radical clergy, however reactionary or ill-advised they may be. Our efforts to frame our policies guided by our religious leaders has many a times beguiled us from seeking to follow policies which have the potential to uplift our economy or strengthening our defense needs.In today’s world better and prosperous economy is the only viable step which makes us known to the world community as a nation to be reckoned with. This gives us an enviable image of which we can be proud of as a nation.Rational and pragmatic approach to resolve the problems faced by humanity could earn us dignity and respect of other nations.None of our decisions should be based on vacuous emotional grounds.Standing clear of these considerations will work to the betterment of our country both in internal and external fronts. The reason why we are passing through a crisis of our image is that we are guided by falsely religious propaganda and have failed to see things as they are.We don’t follow the pristine teachings of Islam and are led away by the herd instincts of so-called religious groups.

The hostilities perpetrated on Palestinians  were resented by the entire Muslims of the world. The U.S which had the main role to create Israelcould not prevent the exodus of Palestinians from their motherlandwhich made them shelter less. This was a gruesome tragedy wrought by the combined might of allied forces which now appears irreversible. Now recognizing or not recognizing Israel is unlikely to restore the rights and land of the Palestinians. There are about 13 countries which have not so far recognized Israel, Saudi Arab being one of them. If Pakistan being a nuclear power and a strategic partner of U.S in this region  leads the consortium of countries who have not so far recognized Israel and impress upon the U.S to guarantee better financial aid and housing facilities to the Palestinians in lieu of their recognition of Israel, I feel it will certainly achieve the desired results. The retrieval of the lost Palestinian territory to its rightful owners looks impossible.

Later Six days war in 1967 caused further fissures in the unity of Palestinians and they were forcibly occupied by Egypt. Under the reign of Hosni Mobarak they faced their economic blockade and further political repression. Today they have been rendered homeless and are subjected to extreme poverty. This detail was essential to know the truth of Israel’s expansion, at the cost of PalestiniansHomeland.Noam Chomski, the great American philosopher regarded it as “Mass murder of Palestinians” with western armament.

Thus in the background of these hostilities and their unauthorized occupation of Palestinian lands, it was not easy to recognize a state built on human genocide. But since new realities had emerged after 1967 war therefore gradual recognition of Israel became a reality.

Since 1980 onward, Pakistan engaged itself in covert diplomacy with Israel for which Embassy of Washington was used.In 2020, Israel signed agreements establishing diplomatic relations with four Arab League countries, Bahrain, the United Arab Emirates, Sudan and Morocco.

As of December 2020, 164 of the other 192 UN member states recognize Israel,only 13 countries do not recognize Israel.

There is no likelihood that Pakistan and Israel will go to war. They do not share borders, and do not have a direct conflict. As nuclear powers, both Israel and Pakistan are aware of the need to manage any misunderstandings between them. Pakistan is in no way a less strong nation militarily. But for Pakistan to subjugate Israel is not possible because it is a satellite state of the western super powers which will not let Israel come to any harm. However the recent accord between Israel and the U.A.E is not a happy sign for Pakistan.

In a prepared speech, Imran Khan said that it is in Pakistan’s interest to neither condemnnor commend, but stay clear of creating troubles for itself with the Gulf state, while still recovering from the diplomatic fiasco with Saudi Arabia. Recently the Foreign minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi said that international relations are above religious sentiments. It was a bold statement.

And finally the question whether in the scenario discussed above, Pakistan should recognize Israel or not? Rationally speaking, we cannot possibly retrieve and restore the Palestinian territories to them on which Israel has made their large Jewish settlements. We have upheld their cause as our political stance, but have not been able to practically do anything about them. Mere emotional attachment with their cause will neither benefit them nor us. All our vital decisions have so far been made on religious considerations. Other Islamic countries have become wiser to take decisions on pure economic and defense considerations. The question is how long we will remain tied to the petard of our own self-destruction? No decision, as I have already said, should be based on vacuous emotional grounds. If our prime Minister who is already engaged in many sensitive administrative matters is afraid of the radical religious elements, then the matter may be entrusted to the Parliament. If we have diplomatic relations with countries like India and Bangladesh with whom we had open wars, then what prevents us from recognizing Israel from whom we can benefit more than losing anything?