

Media the most effective weapon

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AFTER World War-II, the media has emerged as the most strategic weapon of war. Particularly, the media of newspapers and radio have been effectively used by the rival countries. And in the recent past, dish antenna has also become an important too in the media war technology. However, the fact remains that in spite of video facility available on the mini-screen, television has proved ineffective in most developing countries while on the contrary, radio and in several countries, print media have been more effective.

Pakistan has always been facing a threat from its eastern neighbour whose hegemonistic designs in the region are no more a secret. India has indigenously developed the most sophisticated weapons and has entered into defence agreements with different countries particularly Israel, France and Russia under which it receives the latest version of their defence products, conducts training of its personnel in these states and also invites specialised foreign military experts to suppress the indigenous uprisings in different parts of the country (Indian defence ministry has early September admitted presence of such experts in held Kashmir to tackle the hostage crisis). It detonated its nuclear device in 1974 and since then, was working on a comprehensive plan to produce nuclear weapons and to prevent any check, it is refusing to sign the nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty.

Realising the importance of media, India has also launched 'an airwar' against its smaller neighbours particularly Pakistan by using its satellite channels through Dur Darshan and All India Radio since the very first day of its emergence onto the world map. According to an Indian daily, Telegraph, the aims and objectives of an agreement recently concluded between Dur Darshan and CNN were to extend India's influence to neighbouring countries particularly Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the newly-emerged Central Asian Republics.

Before imposing the 17-day war on Pakistan in September 1965, India had carried on a systematic campaign of misinforma-

shoulder with the armed forces. Within minutes, poets, composers and singers appeared on the mike and their poetic contents and compositions were so effective and motivating that they captivated our body and souls. The poets and singers devoted even their taranas to the defenders of the geographical frontiers. Taranas like Maray naghmay tumharay leay hain, Apni jan nazar karon, apni wafa pesh karoon, Sathio Mujahido jag utha hai Sara wattan; Eh dushman-e-deen too nay kis qaum ko lalkara hai; and Eh rah-e-Haq kay Shaheedo, wafa ki tasveero, tumhain wattan ki hawain Salam Kethi hain in those eventful days, became our national sonic heritage and contributed an unprecedented deal to boosting the morale of both the masses and the troops and at last, we were able to repel the enemy's aggression. These were the days Radio Pakistan as a responsible media established its validity and reliability and the world instead of relying on the Indian media, started believing in the accurate news and facts broadcast by Radio Pakistan. However, after the war was over, India intensified its disinformation operation against Pakistan.

TODAY again, Pakistan is confronted with the same situation. Indian leaders are hurling threats to outrage the sovereignty of Pakistan and have concentrated their troops along the borders. India has sent its agents in Sindh to fan ethnic feelings and carry out subversive activities. Besides, its media has launched a full-scale proxy war against Pakistan. A former Indian diplomat, Mani Shanker Aiyar who is now a member of parliament, while analysing different options to destabilise Pakistan, writes in Chapter 3 of his book, Pakistan Papers, that "the rationale of first option is that the ideological basis for Pakistan has been manifestly proved false, Pakistan as a nation has failed, the people are oppressed by military rules and yearning to be liberated from the yoke; the continuance of a Pakistan by an unrepresentative military coterie is a constant military threat to India because its very weakness and unrepresentative character will lead the regime into launching military aggression against the nuclear

was exporting terrorism to Kashmir, the fact remains that Pakistan has been constantly engaged in its efforts to not only familiarise the world with the ugly realities of the situation in the state but also offered all types of facilities to outsiders to assess whether or not Pakistan is actively involved. It helped all foreign journalists to visit the border areas and see for themselves the activities on this side and also allowed many mediamen to visit any of the Kashmiri refugee camps and see for themselves whether it is possible to impart armed training to old men, women and infant children who lack even the basic amenities in their camps. While India banned foreign journalists from visiting the held territory and did not allow organisations like the Amnesty International, International Committee of Red Cross and other human rights bodies access to the region, Pakistan facilitated the visits of those who wanted to tour the areas along the Line of Control.

TODAY, the responsibility of Pakistani media has increased manifold. It is not only to counter the hostile propaganda of Indian media and check the cultural offensive from across the border but is also to safeguard the country's ideological frontiers by promoting harmony among the people. Especially Radio Pakistan, which has emerged as 'morale-boosting weapon' for the Pakistani soldiers at the world's highest battlefield i.e. Siachen and for those staying along the borders to check any aggression from the enemy, is to play a role in the defence of the motherland more effectively than in 1965-War and is to prepare the nation for any eventuality, through patriotic expressions in programmes and news bulletins. Radio Pakistan is also to safeguard country's cultural values to counter the cultural offensive being carried on by India through dish antenna. It is to thwart the attempts of the Indian media designed to create doubts and suspicions about Pakistan's peaceful nuclear programme and paint Pakistan as a terrorist state.

In this connection, the government should come out with a well-planned strategy to more effectively use this important weapon of war i.e. media, with a permanent morale-boosting role and provide all necessary facilities to the media. It should lay a net-

its satellite channels through Dur Darshan and All India Radio since the very first day of its emergence onto the world map. According to an Indian daily, Telegraph, the aims and objectives of an agreement recently concluded between Dur Darshan and CNN were to extend India's influence to neighbouring countries particularly Pakistan, Sri Lanka, Nepal and the newly-emerged Central Asian Republics. ✦

Before imposing the 17-day war on Pakistan in September 1965, India had carried on a systematic campaign of misinformation against Pakistan through its air channel, Akashvani and the state-owned newspapers, and due to its frivolous allegation media policy, it had almost succeeded in convincing the world that Pakistan was responsible for all ills, that is why, as the Akashvani flashed the false news of so-called fall of Lahore, even BBC without confirmation, broadcast the same hastily. On the other hand, Pakistani radio and newspapers came out with reliable and objective reporting of the events and imbued courage, faith, devotion and determination among the people and the whole nation stood like a rock to frustrate the enemy's designs. Particularly, the speech of the then President, Field Marshal Ayub Khan aired by Radio Pakistan infused a new spirit of patriotism in every segment of society right from the urban population up to rural folk and the whole nation stood up and appeared ready to fight the enemy shoulder to

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Instead of realising the real situation particularly in East Punjab and Kashmir, India, under its above-stated option, has embarked upon a well-planned strategy of blaming Pakistan. It charged Pakistan with abetting terrorism in different parts of the world in order to get it declared a terrorist state, it involved Pakistan in happenings in Sri Lanka, it held Pakistan responsible for killing of Indian doctors in Somalia, it blamed Pakistan for the Khalistan movement in East Punjab, it painted Pakistan's ISI as an agency involved in the Hazratbal episode, Charare Sharif tragedy and now the hostages crisis. While India propagates that Pakistan

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In this connection, the government should come out with a well-planned strategy to more effectively use this important weapon of war i.e. media, with a permanent morale-boosting role and provide all necessary facilities to the media. It should lay a network of broadcasting units along the eastern border as has been done by India. It should consider introducing news bulletins and current affair programmes on Radio Pakistan and Pakistan Television exclusively on Kashmir in different international languages like English, French, Arabic and Persian. Besides, the number of existing Kashmiri language bulletins and duration of Kashmir Service of Radio Pakistan be increased. The government should activate Pakistani missions abroad and regularly provide them with the latest material on developments and events in and around Pakistan so that they can effectively counter the Indian propaganda. Besides, Inter-Services Public Relations department should arrange to constantly supply material to both electronic and print media as well as writers and motivate them to fulfil their national obligation more actively. ✦