**Magnanimity with price**

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There has been a rising trend in terrorist activities in Pakistan during past few months and some of the deadly attacks have taken place claiming scores of lives. Unfortunately, most of them were abated from the soil of Afghanistan whom Pakistan has always helped when in crises. It is needless to mention that Pakistan hosted the largest number of Afghan immigrants after Soviet invasion and post 9/11 attacks by the USA. Up till recently, when its western province of Herat was struck with the earthquake Pakistan was first to offer requisite relief items on priority.
After the Taliban took over government in Kabul, Pakistan has been repeatedly approaching them for denying use of their land for any terrorist activity against Pakistan, however they have not been able to live up to their pledges. The rise in terrorism has coincided with the frail economic indicators in Pakistan which has compounded our situation.
Pakistan’s grievances against Afghan Taliban for supporting Tehreek-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) are not unfounded and are acknowledged worldwide. For instance, the US Special Representative for Afghanistan Mr. Thomas West addressed a seminar at Stimson Centre on 12th of September, 2023 on ‘US Policy towards Afghanistan’ and acknowledged that the TTP is posing the gravest threat to the stability of the region. He further stated that since the birth of the TTP, they were pushed across the border (into Afghanistan), and became allies of the Taliban during the war who have been TTP’s financial, logistical, and operational supporters. The ties between them are quite tight.
The US representative for Afghanistan also touched upon the burning question whether the Taliban are supporting TTP attacks against Pakistan or not. He was ambivalent but accepted that it’s the primary point of concern for Pakistan. He acknowledged that Pakistan is a help in diffusing situation in Afghanistan and bringing stability there. He further endorsed that Pakistan has been supportive in handling Afghan refugees. The statements and opinions of the US representative on Afghanistan are testament of Pakistan’s positive role in Afghanistan’s condition. Pakistan has always supported Afghans in their crises not because it wanted to dominate Afghanistan but merely for being a brother, Islamic neighbouring country. Pakistan has also been facilitating Afghan Transit Trade which unfortunately has dented Pakistan’s economy more than accruing benefits. However, Pakistan endured this loss on humanitarian grounds and under the international obligations. Now that the innocent Pakistanis are being regularly killed at the hands of those who take refuge in Afghanistan, it is incumbent upon the government to take measures that safeguard its own citizens.
Pakistan is a peace-loving country and has always desired to further good relations with all its neighbours. It is committed to support prosperity in the region as a collective good. However, if some country is unable to reciprocate positive gestures by Pakistan there is always room for recalibrating the policies that serve us the best. After all, first right on the Pakistani government is of its own citizens that is, their security and safety are paramount for the government and all out measures are required to ensure this. It is also heartening to learn that the decisions of government of Pakistan regarding deporting illegal Afghan nationals has been generally lauded by the public. It will lessen the burden on our resources besides guaranteeing security in the country.
Pakistan has been magnanimous with Afghanistan throughout its history yet, there have been troubles more than help from the other side. Pakistan is still willing to support our Afghan brethren in any time of need but not at the cost of its own national security. This is our red line and must be understood by all who expect Pakistan to be humble and gracious. We are a hospitable nation but living peacefully is also our right as is of any other country around the globe.