**Reminiscing Sacrifices of 1965 Heroes**

[Naba Fatima](https://dailytimes.com.pk/writer/naba-fatima/)

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A few days ago, Pakistan celebrated its Defence Day. Every year, September 6 commemorates our defence forces’ glory, excellence, bravery, wisdom, and sacrifice. It is a day to attribute the sons of the soil and the whole generation that gave us an independent, sovereign, and empowered Pakistan. It is a day to remember the war that was imposed on us. The war was fought by the Pakistani nation with Jinnah’s motto of unity, faith, and discipline.

On 6 September 1965, Indian forces covertly and cowardly crossed the international border to capture Lahore; the final abode of Iqbal. They planned to hoist the Indian flag on the home of hundreds of millions of Muslims; the home that was incepted in the name of Islam. They intended to undo Pakistan.

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It was a time when the sky was blazing red and the air was filled with gunpowder. On the radio, President Ayub Khan announced that Pakistan was in a state of war against India. He said it was not just a conventional war between two arch-rivals. It was a war of truthfulness and justice. A war in which falcons like M. M. Alam and Sarfaraz Ahmed Rafiqui ruled the sky and combated Indian aerial intervention. With an iron wall, Major Aziz Bhati and his platoon stood in front of Indian tanks. Subsequently, the Pakistani waters were protected by naval officers like Commodore S.M Anwar. It was a war in which Pakistani soldiers defeated India on all fronts. A war fought by the sons of the soil for which Noor Jahan rightfully sang

These sons are not for sale

They are lions and Ghazies

They are undefeatable.

Why be afraid of these enemies?

When our sons are not afraid of death;

For the honour of their land

They sacrifice their lives

These sons are not for sale

After fifty-seven years of Indo-Pakistan war, the zeal of the 1965 war heroes is still flowing like inherited blood in the veins of the Pakistan Armed Forces. It is due to the precedent set by the 1965 war heroes that Pakistan vigorously fought the war on terrorism for two decades. It is due to the legacy left by the 1965 war heroes that any foreign intervention in Pakistan’s territory is counteracted with bravery and force, like on 27 February 2019.

Amid the changing geopolitical landscape, India today aims to hegemonise the South Asian region. To achieve this goal, India is trying to overshadow Pakistan at regional and global levels. In past years, a new Indian trend of countering every Pakistani initiative has been observed. For instance, to undermine China Pakistan Economic Corridor, India started working on the Chabahar Port with Iran. Similarly, the European Union’s non-partisan organization DisInfo Lab unveiled India’s global misinformation propaganda against Pakistan. The presence of Kulbhushan Jadhav in Pakistan is also evidence of India’s anti-Pakistan policy. However, it is due to the comprehensive strategic policy of Pakistan’s armed forces that all these tactics of India have been sabotaged.

While reminiscing about the 1965 war, it is the befitting time to shed light on the successful journey of Pakistan Defence Forces in expanding its defence domain. Today Pakistan’s armed forces rank 7th on the Global Firepower Index. In fifty-seven years, Pakistan has developed its aeronautical complex, improvised its ordinance factories, and established research centres to meet the evolving security threats. Pakistan established the National Aerospace Science and Technology Park (NASTP) to design and develop defence-related devices. National Engineering and Scientific Commission (NESCOM) has produced myriad indigenous weapons including unmanned aerial vehicles. Subsequently, the Defence Science & Technology Organisation (DESTO) has worked in the domain of cyber security, propulsion, and biological defence. Today, we have our indigenous aircraft the JF-17 Thunder, Unmanned Combat Aerial Vehicle (UCAV) Burraq, Main Battle Tanks (MBT) Al-Khalid, and Pak-China collaborated frigate Zulfiqar.

Defence Day is also the rightful occasion to attribute our defence forces for contributing to world peace. Pakistan leads the Muslim world by holding key positions in the Islamic Military Counter Terrorism Coalition (IMCTC). Pakistan is also the sixth largest contributor of troops in UN peacekeeping missions; having participated in 28 missions across Africa, Europe, and Asia. Pakistan armed forces are always on the front line of service whenever Pakistan is in any humanitarian crisis i-e flood, earthquake, and land sliding.

The Pakistani nation pays tribute to the heroes of the 1965 war, along with all the sons of the soil who sacrificed their lives for their motherland thereafter. We also pay homage to all those hundred million Pakistanis who stood with their defence forces and protected their future generations from homelessness and servitude. We are also resolute in standing with our defence forces like our forefathers in the 1965 war. We reflect on ourselves as individual citizens in fulfilling our duties for the prosperity of Pakistan. May Allah keep His blessings on us.

*The writer is a student of Government College University, Lahore and can be reached at nabafatima.1996@yahoo.com*