



One Day International Conference on  
**Positive Propaganda vs. Rhetoric:  
Managing Policy Perception of Pakistan**

Organized By



**Pakistan House**

Held at Islamabad

Edited by

**Muhammad Athar Javed**

**&**

**Fareeha Shamim**

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# Advisory Board, Pakistan House



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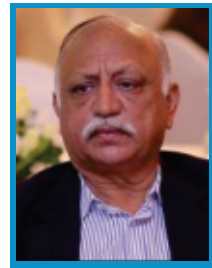
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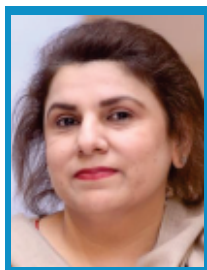
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On 29th of April 2019, Pakistan House organized an International Conference in Islamabad on "Positive Propaganda vs. Rhetoric: Managing Policy Perception of Pakistan". Ms. Sana Maqbool was the Master of the Ceremony. A book, "India's 'Surgical Strike' Stratagem: Brinkmanship and Response" by Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal was also launched during the conference.

This event witnessed the participation of ambassadors, diplomats, policy makers, academics, civil-military bureaucrats, government officials, media personnel, university students, and other dignitaries.

Mr. Rupert Stone, Journalist and Reporter, and Ms. Najma Minhas, Managing Editor at the Global Village Space honoured the occasion as Keynote Speakers.

The esteemed keynote speakers, other dignitaries, and audience members praised the event for providing eminent speakers with a platform to deliver an invaluable analysis on Positive propaganda and Rhetoric.

This report presents a summary of statements of the keynote speakers and provides a comprehensive summary of key remarks delivered by the speakers during the conference. It also presents an analysis and policy recommendations for the state institutions.

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## Programme Layout



### Keynote Session

#### ■ **Welcome Remarks by Mr. Rana Athar Javed**

Director General Pakistan House

#### ■ **Keynote Speaker 1:**

##### **Ambassador Ashraf Jehangir Qazi (Retd)**

Former Pakistan's Ambassador to the United States

#### ■ **Keynote Speaker 2:**

##### **Mr. Rupert Stone**

Journalist and Reporter

#### ■ **Keynote Speaker 3:**

##### **Ms. Najma Minhas**

Managing Editor, Global Village Space

### Book Launch

#### **India's 'Surgical Strike' Stratagem: Brinkmanship and Response**

##### **Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal**

School of Politics and International Relations,  
Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad

**Chair: Mr. Muhammad Athar Javed**

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#### **Remarks by Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal**

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#### **Review by Lieutenant General Khalid Rabbani, HI (M) (Retd)**

Former Corps Commander XI Corps (Peshawar) & Former  
Managing Director, Army Welfare Trust

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#### **Review by Ambassador Abdul Basit (Retd)**

Former High Commissioner of Pakistan to India

# Second Session \_\_\_\_\_

## Importance of Positive Propaganda

Chair: Dr. Ghulam Mujaddid  
Chair, Department of Aerospace Sciences and Strategic Studies  
(DASSS), Air University, Islamabad

Policy Projection and External Publicity	<b>Dr. Zubair Iqbal Ghori</b> Ex Member, Planning Commission of Pakistan
Tools of Rhetoric and Implications for Perception Building	<b>Mr. Imran Ghaznavi</b> Senior Executive Director, Media and Corporate Affairs, Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority
Perception Management: Pakistan's Challenges in 21st Century	<b>Mr. Muhammad Athar Javed</b> Director General, Pakistan House

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## Speaker Profiles



Mr. Rupert Stone is an independent journalist working on national security and counter-terrorism with a focus on South Asia and the Middle East. His work has appeared in Newsweek, Al Jazeera English, TRT World, Prospect Magazine, VICE News, and other publications. He has an undergraduate degree in Classics from the University of Oxford and a postgraduate degree in Philosophy from the University of London.

**Mr. Rupert Stone,**  
Journalist and Reporter

Ms. Najma Minhas is Managing Editor, Global Village Space. She has worked in New York and London with the National Economic Research Associates and with the Investment Bank, Lehman Brothers and Standard Chartered Bank. She is an analyst and appears on many national Pakistani TV channels. She has contributed pieces for The Foreign Policy, The Diplomat, Islamic, The Nation and other newspapers. She has master's degrees in international Relations from Columbia University and in Economics from the London School of Economics.



**Ms. Najma Minhas,**  
Managing Editor, Global Village Space



Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal is Professor at the School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad, Pakistan. He is a widely published scholar on Global Politics, Nuclear Proliferation, and National Security. He is an advisor on Nuclear Proliferation to the South Asian Strategic Stability Institute, Islamabad. He is a former Director of School of Politics and International Relations, QAU.

**Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal,**  
School of Politics and International Relations,  
Quaid-I-Azam University Islamabad



Lieutenant General Khalid Rabbani (Retd) HI (M) is the former 11 Corps Commander (Peshawar) and former Managing Director of Army Welfare Trust (AWT) headquartered in Rawalpindi. He is a graduate of Command and Staff College (Quetta), Higher Military Academy (Syria) and National Defence University (Islamabad).

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**Lieutenant General Khalid Rabbani, HI (M) (Retd),**  
Former Corps Commander XI Corps (Peshawar) &  
Former Managing Director, Army Welfare Trust

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Ambassador Abdul Basit is a retired Pakistani diplomat who has served as High Commissioner to India and Ambassador to Germany. He has also served as the President of the Islamabad Policy Research Institute after retirement. Presently, he hosts a TV show, "Awaz E Pakistan, Abdul Basit Ke Sat" (Voice of Pakistan with Abdul Basit).

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**Ambassador Abdul Basit (Retd),**  
Former High Commissioner of Pakistan to India

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Dr. Zubair Iqbal is an ex-member Planning Commission of Pakistan. He is also a Visiting Fellow at Sustainable Development Policy Institute. (SDPI)

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**Dr. Zubair Iqbal Ghori,**  
Ex Member, Planning Commission of Pakistan



Mr. Imran Ghaznavi is the Senior Executive Director, Media and Corporate Affairs at the Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority, Pakistan. He is also a visiting professor at Shaheed Zulfikar Ali Bhutto Institute of Science and Technology (SZABIST). Previously, he has served as the Member Advisory Committee, Federal Tax Ombusman (Wafaaqi Tax Mohtasib).

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**Mr. Imran Ghaznavi,**  
Senior Executive Director, Media and Corporate Affairs,  
Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority

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Mr. Muhammad Athar Javed is the Director General of Pakistan House- a Denmark and Pakistan-based think tank of International Affairs. He is also the Editor-in Chief of Journal of International Stability (JISS), a bi-yearly academic journal being published with the collaboration of Southern University of Denmark. His teaching experience includes: Master Level Course in Protection against CBRNe as a visiting faculty at University of Rome Tor Vergata, Italy; Terrorist Use of WMD (COE-DAT-/18), Centre for Excellence Defence against Terrorism), NATO, Ankara, Turkey (10-15 December 2018); and Visiting Faculty at Department of International Relations, National Defence University, Islamabad (2014). He is the author of “Biting the Silver Bullet: The Role of State Institutions in War on Terror” (2013).



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**Mr. Muhammad Athar Javed,**  
Director General, Pakistan House

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## Welcome Address



**Mr. Rana Athar Javed**

Director General Pakistan House

Ladies and Gentlemen, I welcome you to today's event. We selected today's topic because the term 'propaganda' is always considered to have a negative connotation to it; but this is not the case. Propaganda is a legit tool in the world of information related to the dissemination. It has a very specific purpose to express good intentions, capacity, and good performance, or in order to

perform well.

We mentioned positive propaganda because we also want to discuss another theme: "rhetoric". Rhetoric means falsifying the fact or using the information to undermine or enforce against another state, political party or an institution. Recently, we came across this book by Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal and thought that it effectively represents rhetoric. Rhetoric scattered Indian plans to further launch negative campaigns. The situation in Afghanistan, as reported throughout the world, shows the use of positive propaganda by the US portraying that they are on the course of winning and about to defeat the Taliban. Unfortunately, for the US and for the allied forces, things turned the other way round - forcing them back to the negotiation table.

The propaganda warfare, in terms of reality, remains an unexplored field. There are so many definitions when it comes to positive propaganda. China does propaganda to represent its stability, economic stability, and achievements in the field of information technology. Usually, the progress of a country or an organization is not represented through propaganda. However, a country's image



gets deteriorates when something goes wrong as often the negative moments become the source of main information about that organization or state.

In case of Pakistan, we aim to seek advice from experts and also involve students from various universities to know why is it important to project what Pakistan has achieved. The idea is to promote stability which means that if you project what you have achieved, it can help in stabilizing the stock exchange market and also provide market assurances – which, in the case of Pakistan, is a main issue.

Dr. Jaspal’s book is a classic case of Indian rhetoric and it has just come to us as a blessing in disguise. The book revolves around using rhetoric and negative propaganda, in the context of surgical strike. Moreover, he also has been very good at brinkmanship because the title of his book is very soft but it’s possible that our speakers may be not that generous towards this kind of rhetoric usage against Pakistan.

I would like to finish here by thanking our foreign guest, Mr. Rupert Stone, our honourable keynote speaker, Ms. Najma Minhas, and other speakers of this conference.

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### Keynote Speaker 1:

**Mr. Rupert Stone**

Journalist and Reporter

Today, I want to focus on Pakistan's role in Afghanistan, specifically its relationship with the Taliban; contemporary research is challenging the commonly-held misconceptions regarding this. This is, of course, a very important subject in the context of the ongoing Afghan war and negotiations to find a political settlement to the conflict, in which Islamabad is playing a major role.

The Taliban is often presented as a Pakistani, not an Afghan, organization - a group created by Pakistan in the 1990s to serve as a proxy operating at Islamabad's direction. Its leaders emerged from Afghan refugee camps in Pakistan and received their education at Pakistani madrassas. The conventional wisdom holds, and its ideology is a variant of the Wahhabism that pervaded Pakistani society in the 1980s. The Taliban is thus presented as a force external to Afghanistan, one that was imposed on the country from outside by hostile foreigners.

However, this depiction of the group is inaccurate and undermined by new research. For example, we now know from Anand Gopal's work that most of the Taliban's leadership, including prominent Talibs such as Mullah Obaidullah and Mullah Baradar, received their education primarily in Afghanistan, not Pakistan. It has often been written that Mullah Omar studied at the Haqqania madrassa in Pakistan, a claim that now appears to be false.

The Taliban, far from being Pakistani, is a distinctly Afghan phenomenon. Talibs and the hujras where they study have been a feature of the rural Afghan life for centuries. The modern

Taliban were not created by Pakistan; they emerged initially in the 1980s, when they formed fighting fronts in the anti-Soviet war. In the 1990s their militia coalesced in response to local conditions, namely the anarchy of the Afghan civil war. The Taliban may have received foreign help along the way, but they were not a Pakistani creation.

Their ideology is not Wahhabi, but a peculiarly Afghan blend of Deobandi and Sufi-inspired religiosity. Like the majority of Pashtuns, they follow the Hanafi school of Sharia, while Al-Qaeda and other Salafists are Hanbali. While Wahhabis oppose Sufism and consider it a form of idolatry, some prominent Talibs, including Mullah Omar himself, were practicing Sufis. In fact, the Taliban encouraged shrine worship when in power; Mullah Omar, who studied with a Sufi pir as a young man, regularly consulted his dreams for guidance.

For years it was assumed that Mullah Omar had fled to Pakistan following the US invasion of Afghanistan in 2001, where he supposedly stayed until his death in Karachi in 2013. However, new research by journalist Bette Dam reveals that Omar never set foot in Pakistan after 2001. Instead, he lived and died in Zabul province in southern Afghanistan.

Mullah Omar was a deeply pious and austere character almost entirely removed from the modern world. He rarely travelled, even when running the Afghan government, and preferred to remain in Kandahar. So, it is plausible that he wanted to stay in Afghanistan after 2001.

Moreover, he, like other Taliban, deeply distrusted Pakistan. Far from being an obedient proxy of Islamabad, the Taliban has a tense and often difficult relationship with Pakistan, which has imprisoned multiple Taliban over the years, despite accusations from Washington that it harbors the movement. Most of the leadership council was arrested in a 2010 sweep, including deputy emir Mullah Baradar, who was only released last year.

In the 1990s the Taliban rejected Pakistan's requests to hand over Osama Bin Laden and spare the Bamiyan Buddhas from destruction. They never recognized the Durand Line, the disputed border between Afghanistan and Pakistan. Indeed, multiple Talibs

interviewed after the 2001 invasion said they believed the Pashtun areas of Pakistan belonged to Afghanistan.

Moreover, while the Taliban's relationship with Pakistan is strained, it has formed growing ties with other powers, particularly Iran, where it reportedly has a shura in Mashhad and training camps. The Taliban opened their political office in Doha in part to reduce Islamabad's influence. It now has a broad array of diplomatic contacts, including with Russia and China.

While foreign sanctuary has been important to the Taliban's campaign, they are not puppets of foreign interests, but Afghan nationalists. The insurgency has been successful in part because of their social roots and understanding of local conditions, which has benefited them in a number of areas, including intelligence and information operations. Their propaganda is steeped in Afghan culture and history.



The Taliban increasingly present themselves as representatives of Afghanistan as a whole, not one particular ethnic group. And while they remain predominantly Pashtun, and are certainly no multiculturalists, they have promoted minorities, with around a quarter of the leadership shura and commissions consisting of Tajiks,

Uzbeks and so on. They have even recruited some Hazaras, who were brutally persecuted under their rule pre-2001.

Misconceptions about the Taliban must be seen in the context of the propaganda war raging in Afghanistan. Both sides portray the other as hostage to outside powers, reflecting a distrust of foreigners that has deep roots in Afghan culture. While the Afghan government presents the Taliban as proxies of Pakistan, the Taliban present the Kabul administration as a puppet regime of the US.

This propaganda will not subside until the war ends. As long as the fighting rages, Islamabad will be blamed for supporting the Taliban, harming its image internationally. It is therefore in Pakistan's – and everyone else's - interest to facilitate a political settlement to resolve the conflict. And, according to reports, the current Pakistani government has been instrumental in the current negotiations.

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## Keynote Speaker 2:

**Ms. Najma Minhas**

Managing Editor, Global Village  
Space

After 9/11 took place, Pakistan was increasingly being discussed on the American media. I have experienced that geography is not a strong area of the Americans, so twenty years ago differentiating between Afghanistan and Pakistan was quite difficult for them.

Since that event, Pakistan has been negatively portrayed in US. Especially, the Pakistani diaspora who live in America intensely feels this. Being a diaspora ourselves, we realized that we as a nation lack the accurate depiction of Pakistan; who are we? What are the challenges we are facing? What is our history? What is our culture? There is not enough insight on Pakistan, and some stereotypes have been established based on which Pakistanis are expected to be wearing black burqas, have long beards, and wear shalwar (trousers) over their ankle.

In my opinion, Pakistan does not need propaganda, it needs to explain itself. Propaganda has a negative connotation, it goes to Joseph Goebbels' Ministry of Propaganda in which he created falsehoods - and that is how propaganda is now known. Pakistan needs to explain its grey areas, as all countries have its shades of grey. In Texas, after every couple of years, some citizens start a petition of leaving US. In India, there is a Naxalist movement since the country was created. Recently, in Assam, India a citizenship bill was presented which posited that only Hindus should be the citizens of Assam, not Muslims. Pakistan's shades of grey include urban militancy in Karachi, Baluchistan, and Pakhtoon Tahafuz Movement (PTM).

The main culprit in not highlighting Pakistan's real picture is the Urdu media. Even though we have PTV world in English, it lacks credibility. So, people make their opinion about Pakistan only through Urdu media. If we analyze the Urdu media, we can see that it only sensationalizes news, and lacks information. A culture of breaking news has been established, and an information is sensationalized, for example, price hike in petrol is termed as the, "petrol bomb". They will not talk about the fact that world oil prices have gone up. So, there is no effort on part of our media to inform and educate the people.

There is also another example, when a journalist reports a proceeding of the apex court, he will not analyze the judgement, but will focus on the, "juicy parts" of the proceedings i.e. what was the tone of the judge, and the accused? Similarly, in our prime-time TV (8 Pm- 10 Pm) we see irrelevant political point scoring, not genuine issues. Presently, there is a lot of discussion on the Presidential form of system, and the 18th Amendment. I haven't heard any anchor talk about the advantages and disadvantages of the 18th Amendment, but instead they have been focusing on Bilawal Bhutto's march to Islamabad to save democracy and other statements by politicians.

If you talk to the health experts, they will highlight massive issues after the 18th amendment; the government must negotiate at national level with international counter-parties, and presently they are not doing this. Similarly, multi-national companies have problems delivering goods from one province to another province, because every province has made its own regulations, and its own criteria. Hence, when we discuss superficial things, we degenerate our conversation. Hence, we need to talk about real issues and explain them to the people, so that they too start discussing them in a nuanced manner.

Several years ago, at one point, people were claiming that forty thousand people have gone missing in Baluchistan and media reported this without analyzing the credibility. The, then, Chief Justice of Pakistan, Mr. Iftikhar Muhammad Chaudhry finally took notice of it, and after investigation it was found that only couple of hundred people were missing. Although, maybe the number would have been higher, but it was no way near the forty-thousand figure propagated widely.

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Right now, another topical issue is PTM, some people are in favor of PTM and some are against it, but nobody is discussing the past situation when in 2009, the media, the civil society, and all circles of society were asking the government and the Armed Forces to go into the tribal areas and take out Taliban. So, today we need to remind PTM, what is the origin of issues at hand. I am not saying that PTM is wrong, but I am highlighting the failure of media to hold discussion on this, as they are too busy discussing minor issues and matters while neglecting serious issues.

The importance of analyzing serious issues is that you can then reach out to diaspora communities and inform them about the issues that matter to Pakistan, while also analyzing them. In this way, Pakistan's stance can be effectively presented to the western world. Therefore, it is more important to analyze and discuss the issues in our country, and in that case there is no need to tell a positive story, as the positive stories generate automatically. The negative stories, on the other hand, do not threaten a country's unity or its sovereignty, but it makes a nation more powerful. Hence, the stronger the nation, the more it is able to talk about its negative and positive elements.



## Noteworthy Snippets



*“The Taliban, far from being Pakistani, is a distinctly Afghan phenomenon. Talibs and the hujras where they study have been a feature of rural Afghan life for centuries.”*

*Mr. Rupert Stone*



*“The importance of analyzing serious issues is that you can then reach out to diaspora communities and inform them about the issues that matter to Pakistan, while also analyzing them.”*

*Ms. Najma Minhas*



*“The BJP has been propagating that Modi’s national security approach is ‘without fetters,’ or he capable of taking bold steps against nuclear Pakistan to muster the support of the Hindu nationalists.”*

*Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal*



*“The deep operations and deep maneuvers which India it would use again against Pakistan, as in separation of East Pakistan were curtailed, immediately, the moment subcontinent went nuclear.”*

*Lt. General Khalid Rabbani HI (M), (Retd)*



*“Pakistan obviously will do whatever is necessary to maintain the credibility of our nuclear deterrence at the minimum possible level, because it's a dynamic situation as not only Pakistan will be required to keep its nuclear deterrence intact, but also be required to think about how to deter such actions as carried out by India in Balakot because such violations of our space are unacceptable.”*

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*Ambassador Abdul Basit (Retd)*



*“Pakistan has reactive policies, some incident happens, and we react to it. For propaganda one needs to be proactive in identifying the thematic areas and then hammer around those areas.”*

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*Dr. Zubair Iqbal Ghori*



*“Our dilemma is that enormous disinformation/Propaganda about Pakistan is being carried out by our enemies and we are doing nothing to counter it.”*

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*Dr. Zubair Iqbal Ghori*



*“Two things cannot get us anywhere. One is rigidity and the second one is ignoring the power of knowledge.”*

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*Mr. Muhammad Athar Javed*



### ***India's 'Surgical Strike' Stratagem: Brinkmanship and Response***



#### **Remarks by the Author:**

**Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal,**

School of Politics and International  
Relations, Quaid-I-Azam University  
Islamabad

The incumbent Indian Prime Minister Narendra Modi frequently reiterates the application and execution of “jaw for a tooth” strategy to punish Pakistan and its armed forces. The Indian premier along with his warmongering Hindu extremist cohort openly contemplated conducting ‘surgical strike’ against

targets located in Pakistani territory.

The Indian Army Chief General Bipin Rawat and Air Force Chief Birender Singh Dhanoa (October 4, 2017) expressed their preparedness for the surgical strikes. The Indian political elite and military junta believe, “in prevailing over Pakistan by reducing it to a permanent state of chaos and debility.” They have been employing conventional and hybrid warfare means. The Indian ruling elite’s hysterical warmongering rhetoric, especially ‘Surgical Strike Stratagem,’ does not intimidate the people and armed forces of Pakistan, yet it sparks red signals about the probability of a catastrophe in South Asia.

It further manifests the devastating mindset of the Hindu nationalists and Hindutva ideology that in combination represents political Hinduism. The political Hinduism is the philosophical bedrock of current Indian ruling party, the Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP), and associated with organizations in the Sangh Parivar, especially

the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Notably, RSS is the progenitor of BJP.

“Hindu nationalists see a cohering (sticking) around a Hindu civilizational core and a more muscular military stance as being the guarantors of India’s security.”

The BJP has been propagating that Modi’s national security approach is ‘without fetters,’ or he capable of taking bold steps against nuclear Pakistan to muster the support of the Hindu nationalists.

India’s ‘Surgical Strike’ Stratagem has attracted immense attraction, especially after the Indian officials’ claimed that their elite troops conducted ‘surgical strike’ on the intervening night of September 28-29, 2016, into Azad Kashmir and killed suspected militants preparing to infiltrate in India to carry out attacks on major cities. Officially, Pakistan outrightly dismissed and rejected these false claims by the Indian side about the conduct of any such action. Many Indian security analysts also concurred with Pakistan’s stance and brushed aside the reports of the ‘surgical strike’ as fabrication of the truth.

However, the Indian military establishment made this concocted phantom ‘surgical strike’ a salient feature of the Joint Doctrine of the Indian Armed Forces-2017 (JDIAF-2017) released in April 2017. The JDIAF specifies that the Indian armed forces were determined to use ‘surgical strike’ as a part of its pre-emptive punitive destructive and disruptive strategy. ‘Surgical Strike’ Stratagem was referred to in India’s Land warfare doctrine released in December 2018.

The Indian Air Force Chief Birender Singh Dhanoa stated on October 4, 2017, that if India needed to carry out a ‘surgical strike,’ its aircraft could target Pakistan’s nuclear installations and destroy them. However, this is not a new tactic of the Indian military. Since 2004, the Indian military strategists have been struggling to institutionalize the Cold Start Doctrine, and its successor, the pro-active military operation strategy. Indian leading security expert, Bharat Karnad pointed out that, “India is widely regarded as a would-be great power with a slew of mainstream realist strategic policies. It has not shied away from the use of force nor from coercing its smaller neighbours.”

Accordingly, the Indian strategic culture progressed as an aggressive, directive and expansionist rather than absorptive, defensive and inward-looking. These characteristics are evident in India-Pakistan strategic competition, and thereby it provides a valuable insight into the analysis of New Delhi's 'surgical strike' stratagem.

India's 'Surgical Strike Stratagem' brought nuclear-armed neighbours at the brink of catastrophic war after the Pulwama incident on February 14, 2019, in the Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK). The irresponsible behaviour of both Prime Minister Modi and the Indian media ignited the situation and brought India and Pakistan at the brink of war. The primary objective of this rhetoric was not to pursue 'security' but 'electioneering'. Prime Minister Modi proudly celebrated Indian Air Force action at Balakot on February 26, 2019, as a triumphant in the election rally.

Conversely, Prime Minister Imran Khan acted maturely and confidently. He offered India assistance in the investigation and arrest of the perpetrators involved in the attack provided New Delhi shared actionable evidence. Simultaneously, he made it clear to his Indian counterpart that in case of military misadventure, Pakistan would not only think about responding but in fact it will respond.

On February 27, 2019, targeting six targets in broad daylight inside IOK and shooting two Indian fighter jets that violated the country's airspace, Pakistan Air Force verifies nations resolve to retaliate India's aggression. It also confirms that India did not conduct 'surgical strike' in September 2016. Nevertheless, the responsible behaviour and utmost restraint of the Pakistani political elite, armed forces and media has hindered the escalation of the conflict and averted a war between India and Pakistan.

India's 'surgical strike' gimmickry or publicity raises a few critical questions, i.e., did India conduct 'surgical strike' in September 2016? Why had it remerged in September 2018 and why has it formally integrated into the JDIAF-2017? What were the origins of 'surgical strike stratagem,' and to what aspects of it had referred to in the past and how it would influence India and Pakistan strategic competition? How the 'Surgical Strike Stratagem' affects the peace process between Islamabad and New Delhi? How long can New Delhi use this phantom 'surgical strike' as a viable tactical option and how it affects



deterrence stability between the nuclear-armed belligerent neighbours? What implications it holds for Pakistan and lastly, how Islamabad has dealt with this issue? Is Pakistan's armed force responses exposed the Indian ruling elite's tall, unsubstantiated, and bombastic claims about superiority? Answering these questions will better link 'surgical strike stratagem' to the lexicon of terms and definitions that guide special operations and help lead to greater conceptual clarity both among scholars and practitioners.



The term 'surgical strike' is usually used to describe a military attack involving air strikes that take place with surgical precision and is extremely target oriented to cause harm to the enemy in such a way that there is no collateral damage, but the objective achieved. The strikes are carried out covertly to destroy a specific target without harming other people or damaging other buildings near it.

The 'surgical strike' connotes small-unit raids or attacks enabled by intelligence and high technology. The strikes may achieve a tactical, decisive, or enduring effect—by destroying the will of the enemy or weakening the enemy to the point of ineffectiveness. Hence, 'Surgical Strike Stratagem' blends Special Forces capabilities with psychological warfare, air raids, and intelligence to provide a form of war closely linked to the concept of unconventional warfare.

It is a new strategy in its concentration, ancient in its origin steering operations by ambush instead of by combat, by infiltration instead of aggression and seeking victory by airstrikes eroding and exhausting the enemy instead of engaging him.

The legal status of the ‘Surgical Strike Stratagem’ is debatable. If it is part of “a pre-emptive strike, the use of force when a country considers an adversary’s first strike imminent and unavoidable, can sometimes be justified strategically and legally as “anticipatory self-defence.” India’s Surgical Strike Stratagem is part of India’s preventive war doctrine. Scott D. Sagon: The preventive war doctrine means, "starting a war to prevent another country from taking future action or acquiring a critical capability. The preventive war doctrine is rarely justified and arguably contrary to the UN Charter.”

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## Structure of the Book



This book is an attempt to examine India's 'Surgical Strike Stratagem' critically and profess its ramifications on Islamabad and New Delhi bilateral relations. The study's primary focus is on India's 'Surgical Strike Stratagem'; therefore, India's strategic philosophy and evolution of military doctrines are examined in detail. The Pakistani political, diplomatic and military countermeasures are documented only for setting the record straight and assessing the ramifications of 'Surgical Strike Stratagem'.

This book comprises five chapters besides the introduction and conclusion. The first chapter— "India's Military Doctrine: Philosophical Bedrock and Evolution"—explains the constructs of India's military doctrines theoretically and also contains discussion on the evolution of the Indian military institution and doctrine.

The second chapter—"India's Phantom Surgical Strike: Mystery Unfolded"— critically examines the reality of 'surgical strike.' While defining the surgical strike, an attempt has been made to unfold the mystery of this phantom 'surgical strike' conducted in September 2016. After critically reviewing the literature on India's 'surgical strike' claim, examining the contradictory statements by the Indian government high-ups, and Pakistan's claim, it was concluded that India did not carry out any such strikes. However, the Modi government has

been using fictitious claims of the 'surgical strike' as a potent political tool to demonstrate that it has the political courage to take a 'very bold decision' against Pakistan.



The third chapter— “India’s Surgical Strike: A Sham Stratagem”—critically scrutinizes the operability of India’s ‘Surgical Strike Stratagem.’ The Joint Doctrine of the Indian Armed Forces-2017 (JDI AF-2017) released in April 2017 indicates that India is keen to use ‘surgical strike’ as a part of its pre-emptive punitive destructive and disruptive strategy. The critical examination of the Indian armed forces striking potential and India’s strategic competitors’ defensive apparatuses reveals that in reality, its ‘surgical strike’ gimmickry is a sham stratagem. The Modi government stresses primarily on this strategy for gaining political mileage in the states and national elections and also justifies the massive fiscal spending in purchasing military hardware for the armed forces.

The fourth chapter—India’s Aggression: A Befitting cum Restraint Response—reveals the causes of Pulwama incident and Prime Minister Modi’s attempt to materialize the crisis for creating a political capital in support of the BJP at a time when his government economic record and Rafael jets corruption scandal was under attack in Lok Sabha’s election campaign. It also deliberated on India Air Force stealth

Balakot operation, violation of Pakistan's airspace and Pakistan Air Force's befitting response, which manifests that; the Indian 'Vintage Military' is incapable of conducting 'surgical strike' against Pakistan. The discussion confirms that India's 'surgical strike stratagem' is a sham stratagem.

The final chapter— 'Risky and Illegal Strike—covers the legal ambit of the conduct of India's 'surgical strike' operation. It analyses the legality and conduct of such strikes as per customary law, international law, and articles of the United Nations Charter. I am contemplating the challenges posed by such actions, which are a clear violation of international law because the threat is a clear expression of intent to intervene in the airspace and territory controlled by another state. The emphasis is that India swaps risky warfare approach with lawfare approach to avoid nuclear Armageddon between the nuclear-armed belligerent neighbours.

The conclusion underscores that the limited conventional war between the nuclear-armed adversaries is possible with a probability of its escalation into an all-out war including the nuclear strikes exchange. In such a situation, indeed, using military force or threat of military force for the pursuit of political objectives is an irrational strategy.

India's 'Surgical Strike' Stratagem had brought belligerent neighbours at the brink of war in the aftermath of Pulwama incident on February 14, 2019. Indeed, it severely endangers the strategic stability in South Asia. It mirrors the poor understanding of the nuclearized strategic environment as well as strategic insanity. Perhaps, the claim of premier Modi's government and Indian Director General Military Operations (DGMO) about the 'surgical strike' against Pakistan, the celebration of September 29, 2016 as a "Surgical Strike Day," and above all the Indian Air Force violation of Pakistan's airspace on February 26, 2019, manifest India's irresponsible behaviour as a nuclear weapon state. Conversely, Pakistan's effective political and military response to Prime Minister Modi's war hysteria and India Air Force violation of airspace on February 26 and 27, 2019, exposed the futility of India's 'Surgical Strike' Stratagem.

Prime Minister Modi's celebrating speech on February 26, 2019, immediately after the Indian Air Force violation of Pakistan airspace, and the subsequent befitting-cum- restraint response of Pakistan Air Force brought the belligerent neighbours unthinkably close to a nuclear winter. India tested Pakistan's nerves by moving on the escalatory ladder. The Pakistani policymakers correctly interpreted India's aggression on February 26, 2019, as a test of their will with the potential for confrontation and chose to reciprocate with its military move, which resulted in the extraordinary air duel. Pakistan response reconfirmed its will, capability and resolved to retaliate to India's military misadventures. It proves that in a conflict, Pakistan shall not chicken out of using its military prowess for the sake of defense due to the fear of escalation of a conflict into a total war having the probability of nuclear exchange. Indeed, it augmented the credibility of Pakistan's nuclear deterrence policy.

Significantly, Pakistan's restrained-cum-befitting response scared the Indian defense planners. Therefore, the Indian Navy directly and the Indian Army indirectly flaunted their nuclear muscle. The uncomfortable reality is that India deployed nuclear-capable delivery vehicles during the post-Pulwama crisis, but the international nuclear narrative found it more convenient not to acknowledge it. Has it remained quit because there was no cascading effect of the Pakistani nuclear weapons deployment? Nonetheless, the Indian nuclear-capable delivery vehicles deployment significantly increased the risk of misperception, miscommunication, and escalation of a conflict.

Trigger-happy warmonger, Premier Modi, and his cohorts have so far only been successful in spoiling the peace and prosperity of their own nation in particular and hampering South Asian economic cooperation in general. They seem inept to frighten or coerce Pakistani society and the military. India's 'surgical strike' stratagem has only amplified war hysteria within India and has also increased vigilance of Pakistani armed forces along the border with India.

Thus, the Indian ruling elite's manic mania of military superiority and mantra of conducting 'surgical strike' to penalize conventionally well- equipped nuclear-armed battle-hardened Pakistani armed forces would have devastating repercussions for the entire South Asian region. Thus, for the Indian political elite and military junta warmongering is easy, but the 'Surgical Strike' Stratagem is not



a rational choice against a nuclear-armed Pakistan; it is doomed to fail. However, the question is will it cause mayhem before it fails. That's the question that will determine the future trajectory of strategic stability in South Asia.

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### Review by

**Lieutenant General Khalid Rabbani,**

HI (M) (Retd)

Former Corps Commander XI Corps  
(Peshawar) & Former Managing  
Director, Army Welfare Trust

Let me thank Mr. Muhammad Athar Javed for inviting me to speak on the book launch ceremony by Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal. It's a commendable effort, in a very short span of time things were searched and compiled in a form of book. It's a point of view which normally is offered very late to the

international world. This book is very timely because what things actually are having been described in this book and, indeed, it's a post-mortem of the whole scenario and its outcome.

This book, also, essentially squashes the Indian propaganda, the so-called surgical strike. It also very critically examines the Indian stratagem in the backdrop of its doctrine. In a subtle manner, he also touches upon the Indo-Pak environment and within this nuclear overhang where does surgical strike or any such venture be placed.

I would like to discuss about the genesis of the Indian doctrine of surgical strike. India like any other country in its defence is dynamic in nature and right in the beginning there have been evolving various strategies from day one right up to today. Not many of the words are known to you but I will try to simplify it as much as possible, but beside the consideration of a continuous evolution of doctrine, India at the moment is aboding with its regional superpower status, as they like to call themselves.



And, of course, with the economic well-being in boom at the movement for which there can be many more opinion yet, going as far as their own understanding is concerned that brings them very close to step in the shoes of international superpowers, with all this stepping into their shoes they are trying to tell the world that they are capable of doing something, if their interest is not compromised.

In the early days of the military thinking, both countries, Pakistan and India, just had technical concepts and it was not supported by any doctrine for that matter, and the tactics were not integrated into the operations and also into the national stratagems. Accordingly, the war of 1948 was a defensive operation, then 1965 came in. In 1965 war, it was defensive offence, which was followed by the Indians and to some extent by Pakistan as well. While, the 1971 war is considered as a classic example of the superior conception and execution of military and operational studies.

Let me take you a little further in time. It was Krishnaswamy Sundarji, former Indian military commander, who very correctly brought the concept of a simultaneity and deep manoeuvres; those were the days when sub-continent was not nuclear and deep manoeuvres had already done damage to Pakistan by separating the erstwhile East Pakistan now known as Bangladesh. India thought that it could be done again. I am not discussing the realities as to why it happened but let us come back to this portion of Pakistan, the deep operations and deep manoeuvres which they thought they would use again were curtailed, immediately, the moment subcontinent went nuclear.

Then comes the Kargil operations, the Kargil conflict followed by the Operation Parakram and then the escalation in the year 2001-2002 Indian military strategists came up with short notice, short duration war. They thought that the objectives can be curtailed having a look towards the nuclear part. Accordingly, it adopted the 'hit and mobilize' tactics instead of 'mobilize and hit'. Those who may not exactly understand it, let me clarify a little bit more; that you mobilize your forces, bring them up close to the assembly areas and then go in for an operation that gives the adversary quite a bit of alarm and all those offensive measures are well in place before the adversary gets into your territory. And they thought that this may not be possible in this scenario with a reasonably strong Pakistan military force so, they thought to hit and mobilize.

It would surprise them and hit subsequently and in the same continuity. They called it the seamless fusion. Letting others to come and join and take the battle to the land of the adversary, they called it the Cold Start Doctrine. They wanted to have shallow objectives but with the destruction of the forces.

Now having seen that, Cold Start Doctrine may not have worked, they amended the cold start and called it the proactive strategy. In this proactive strategy was a combination of a short notice war or short duration war combined with the shallow objectives, but this time it was not the destruction of the forces, it was not destruction oriented. It actually was the dislocation of adversary, the destruction of their system in a manner that paralysis occurs in the in the corridor of the adverse country, and they may not be able to decide which site to go. Even this strategy had some unplugged holes which are is making it highly debatable even at this point in time.

When these processes of evolution were taking place and they were already at the proactive strategy, Pakistan thought of how to flex muscles; it is a huge country, five or six times greater than Pakistan. If some mischief is done on any other neighbouring land we also would like to indicate that which country has done it and then will go with the surgical strike, or in other words the US (United States) has done in many other parts of the world. Stepping into the shoes of a bigger power, India thought that there is a space while remaining within the overhang of the nuclear Indo-Pak, yet there is some space for some surgical strike.

Interesting part now starts, they wanted to create deterrence and for something happening elsewhere they blamed Pakistan and then they went into a surprise surgical strike. Rather, I must say they faked a surgical strike on the night of 28th and 29th of September 2016 in typical Bollywood style. In nature, they converted something out of nothing and the both nations (India and Pakistan) knew it very soon that nothing occurred on their borders except from firing. Pakistan negated that propaganda right after that nothing of that sort occurred. The doubts were risen in the minds of regional and international observers. Then after some time, the then Foreign Secretary of India Subrahmanyam Jaishankar said that they were low-level counter-terror operations. Within their own parliament they admitted that they were counter-terror operations not the surgical strike.



The recent Balakot incident, in the wake of 2019 Pulwama attack, they thought that their superior Indian Air Force would create deterrence in Pakistan that if Pakistan messes up with India then Pakistan has to pay for its misbehaviour on Indian land, but they failed to do so. They wanted to call it the 'new normal'. They thought that Pakistan would sit back, and watch India create deterrence. Indian air crafts came into the territory of Pakistan striking an area in Balakot. They wanted to show their might, they wanted to tell us that if you hit us, we have the power to get into your territory and target your areas. The next morning, in broad daylight, Pakistan immediately retaliated targeting six places and those were signature attacks. A signature attack is to show the enemy that we could have targeted your main areas, but we did not, intentionally. It is to show them that we have the power to take your strategic places down. Pakistan told India that we could take you whenever we like to. Immediately, the Indian media and their political personalities said that they would take it as an act of war, and they would retaliate this. So, when an act of war, as per their understanding, has occurred, they say that they want to retaliate rather than creating their deterrence. In this regard, they have also compromised their own conventional deterrence. Then after this, they realized that both nations are having nuclear arsenal so, it's better not to engage in any sort of war.



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This is the crux of this book by Prof. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal. I hope that I have delivered the main theme of this book and I really admire Dr. Jaspal for his efforts he has put in writing this book. I hope that this book will help at the national and international level to analyze the actual situations in the context of Indo-Pak history. I again congratulate Dr. Jaspal for his outstanding work.



**Review by**

**Ambassador Abdul Basit (Retd)**

Former High Commissioner of  
Pakistan to India

First of all, I must say that Dr. Jaspal has done a great job, with his book “Indian Surgical Strike Stratagem: Brinkmanship and Response”. In his book, the concepts were very difficult to define but he has covered almost all the dimensions & I strongly recommend this book to all students in audience. Because our

new generation needs to understand how our enemy is trying to harm us at different points .

To understand this dilemma, the book, “Indian Surgical Strike Stratagem: Brinkmanship and Response” is a brilliant addition to the work. After the Kargil conflict India has been trying to evolve firstly its cold war doctrine and other joint armed forces doctrine. But you must also understand the important objectives which Indians have been trying to achieve through these doctrines.

First one is obviously to promote negative narrative against Pakistan internationally. It propagates that Pakistan is, primarily, getting into stoking violence in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) and helping non-state actors to perpetrate acts of terrorism in IOK coming up with such ideas doctrines. They even say, Pakistan tries to promote terrorism inside India even though Pakistan is one of the biggest victims of terrorism. We discussed Pakistan India relations because India would not miss any opportunity to keep promoting its anti-Pakistan narrative both regionally and internationally. After the Pulwama Incident, John Bolton (National Security Advisor of Presiden Trump), said India does have the right to carry out some action across the LOC and inside

Pakistan in self-defense. So this needs to be understood. But we must also understand the important objectives which Indians have been trying to achieve through these doctrines.

Moreover, these doctrines or surgical strike, is also used to promote their electoral prospects as we saw following the Uri attack on 18 September 2016, Indian claimed that it had carried a surgical strike, this was the time of elections in Uttar Pradesh, the most populous state in India, and the BJP managed to win a majority in the state. Indian government at this point promote this kind of thinking that India is capable of this and that, despite the fact that there is a nuclear environment in the region. India would take action against Pakistan and Pakistan will not remain silent on that, there strategic thinkers know that. This was evident from the press conference of their Director General Military Operations' press conference after the Uri attack.



He mentioned that the Indian army has taken action along the LOC, not across the LOC. Subsequently, the media subverted the language. They said that India was able to carry out some action across the LOC. Similarly, when it comes to Pulwama, the providence of God was perhaps in our favour this time around, the fact that we

were able to shoot down the aircraft, also capture an Indian pilot alive that changed the entire narrative. Pakistan obviously will do whatever is necessary to maintain the credibility of our nuclear deterrence at the minimum possible level, because it's a dynamic situation as not only Pakistan will be required to keep its nuclear deterrence intact, but also be required to think about how to deter such actions as carried out by India in Balakot because such violations of our space are unacceptable. I'm sure that our strategies will greatly benefit from the work of Dr. Jaspal and his Interesting work. And Dr. Jaspal has come up with different ideas on how to counter threats from India if there are any adventures in future by India how to counter them. This makes his work immensely important.

In conclusion I would say that our diplomatic and military strategies need to work hand-in-hand, in order to counter Indian rhetoric in the shape of surgical strike or in the diplomatic domain.

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## Second Session Speeches



**Dr. Zubair Iqbal Ghori,**

Ex Member, Planning Commission  
of Pakistan

In the academic world the word “propaganda” has been taken with some negative overtones. This has been established since the Second World War. We all talk about the Minister of information’s during Hitler’s regime, Paul Joseph Goebbels, who was the master of the propaganda and advocated himself in the most propagandist fashion.

Recently, some good examples of propaganda have come up. When I was doing my PhD, in the UK, I was settled in the backdrop of Northern Ireland conflict and it ended with the Good Friday agreement in 1996. My supervisor wrote a book on that. It’s an excellent representation of the usage of propaganda for peaceful purposes. The author is Greg McLaughlin and the title is “The Propaganda of Peace: The Role of Media and Culture in the Northern Ireland Peace Process”. It does mean that propaganda can be used for any purposes.

According to Merriam Webster’s dictionary propaganda is the spreading of ideas, information or rumour for the purpose of helping or injuring an institution for a cause or purpose. It carries in itself a negative as well as a positive connotation. It has a neutral overtone. It means there can be propaganda for prosperity, cooperation, better governance, improved health, and education facilities etc. This is a good effort by Pakistan House to dispel the negative overtone of propaganda.

How can we use propaganda as a tool to pursue our purposes? Pakistan has reactive policies, some incident happen and we



squash and snooker. However, in the last 10-15 years we have thrown our sports except cricket which has become kind of a religion in the sub-continent. This is the point the youth can bring in with their energy. The policymakers can work on it too. I can understand there is frustration in the youth as well due to severe shortage of grounds and facilities. But still if we can produce world class international cricketers why can't we produce players in other sports too



Finally, I want to talk about the expertise of Pakistani in IT sector as the Pakistani IT professionals have done wonders. Two Pakistani students, nominated for Oscars, have contributed to the animated movie "Frozen". It is not a small feat rather it is a huge achievement. Pakistani animated films for example, "The Donkey Raja" and "Allahyar and the legend of the Markhor" are very good international standard movies with excellent productions. These are the areas we need to project and underneath these thematic areas we can explore more while doing external publicity. India is shining because of Bollywood movies.

Additionally, If India can project that they are the largest democracy why can't we say that we also have democratic institutions



that are being established. We have to project Pakistan in a positive light. It is the responsibility of the people, the government, and all of us to contribute in projecting Pakistan's positive image in a propagandist manner.



**Mr. Imran Ghaznavi,**

Senior Executive Director, Media and Corporate Affairs, Oil and Gas Regulatory Authority

It's an interesting topic but before barging on to the implication of perception building, I need to first highlight the academic concept of propaganda and rhetoric.

Propaganda is information, especially of a biased or misleading nature, used to promote or publicize a particular political cause or point of view. Propaganda as a concept has neither positive nor negative connotations and can be used in a positive way if it is done to promote positive change. As disseminated by mass media, it can be used by governments and other groups to promote certain message, idea or ideology etc

While rhetoric is the art of effective or persuasive speaking or writing, especially the use of figures of speech and other compositional techniques. Some academics and rhetorical theorists describe rhetorical tools as the three-primary means of persuasion used in rhetoric. These means of persuasion were first described by Aristotle, who divided the concepts into logos, pathos, and ethos. Logos refers to the use of logic to persuade, while pathos refers to the use of emotion. Ethos establishes the ethical or moral correctness of an argument, orator or writer, as a means of persuading an audience. Each of these rhetorical tools serve a specific purpose, although all three tools may be used in a single rhetorical work.

Other theorists and instructors refer to the five rules of rhetoric as rhetorical tools, based on their use in the construction of rhetorical presentations. As an orator or writer constructs a work of rhetoric, the five rules can be used like a checklist of components needed to craft a persuasive piece.

In other sense these five rules are used as rhetorical tools to help the writer or speaker develop a road map for his persuasive work. ***Invention/Creation***, the first rule, involves finding an idea on which to speak or write. ***Arrangement***, the second rule, refers to the logical order of the individual's presentation. ***Style*** is the art with which the individual chooses his words. ***Memory*** encompasses both the ability to memorize a prepared argument, as well as the ability to improvise based on knowledge of a topic. ***Delivery***, the final classic rule of rhetoric, involves the specific choice of words or how an argument is stated.

Rhetorical devices, the most common understanding of the term rhetorical tools, fall under two different standards of rhetoric. Specifically, rhetorical strategies involve both ***style and delivery***.

***Alliteration***, for example, involves style as it relates to the choice of words and delivery as it relates to how the words sound to an audience. By definition, alliteration is the repetition of consonant sounds in a sequence of words. To illustrate alliteration, in a famous radio address during the 1940s, Sir Winston Churchill was quoted as saying, “We shall not fail or falter; we shall not weaken or tire....” This is an example of alliteration used in a rhetorical speech. As one of many rhetorical tools, alliteration seeks to persuade through the use of memorable, impacting and repetitious sounds.

Similarly, ***assonance*** is another rhetorical device that uses repetitive vowel sounds, rather than consonants. Numerous other rhetorical devices are common, including the use of metaphors, satire, nostalgia, sarcasm, etc.

“Perception is the process through which the information from outside environment is selected, received, organized and interpreted to make it meaningful to you. This input of meaningful information results in decisions and actions.” For this we have to understand the basic communication model i.e. a basic communication model consists of five components: the sender and receiver, the medium,

contextual factors, the message, and feedback.



In today's dynamic environment where information follows with the speed of light and the engagement of audience with social media platforms made it almost impossible to stay aloof. Our dilemma is that enormous disinformation/propaganda about Pakistan is being carried out by our enemies and we are doing nothing to counter it. So even if we do plan to counter this disinformation it falls into the category of defensive communication strategy.

Please remember one thing: "Garbage in garbage out"; so type of input we provide for information dissemination and the level of effort we put in to execute is what get us the results and you can well imagine what are the results and our perception in the comity of nations. In the world of perception building or perception management, agenda setting or building reputational capital defensive strategies are practically useless.

We need to adopt the aggressive perception management strategies for agenda setting and developing positive perception about critical issue relating to internal security and international threats.

But the matter of fact is we first need to know our audience/ the recipients of ours messages, craft the messages to be sent across, choose the appropriate mediums and ensure that the target audience perceive as we want them to. Though this looks very simple but it requires lifetime to understand the intricacies of this simple communication model.

Pakistan has an amazing reputational capital, enormous cases for the world to know about Pakistan but the basic issue is the right people for the right job, commitment from the top is essential for aggressive communication strategies.

Policy makers need to decide about the broad outline how they want to see Pakistan being perceived by key stakeholders around the world, appropriate messages/stories to be crafted, appropriate mediums to be looped in and right messages to be disseminated to right stakeholders with continuous monitoring and feedback. This is a professional work and believe me it won't cost much but you need right type of people for this task.

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**Mr. Muhammad Athar Javed**

Director General, Pakistan House

It is very important to understand what positive propaganda, negative propaganda and rhetoric is, and how it contributes to policy perception. Rhetoric though can be based on a reality,

but most of the time it means that you are going to make and remake whatever you consider is correct.

It is important to understand the major issue regarding propaganda and rhetoric which is the responsibility of the government and the state institutions. A country cannot stop other countries or other institutions to indulge in any Propaganda or Rhetoric. We need to evaluate why this happens; when you listen to a positive thing, you want to analyse it and then you want to believe it. The reason is, rumour spreads faster than reality. To spread the facts, you have to work hard.

This is our responsibility as a think tank, of course, to generate discourse and provoke pressure points where others have to come out of their protective shells.

One of the important things which this century has witnessed is the emergence of social media, where there is no control on disseminating information. This is going to backfire. Taking example of Facebook, they have terminated several accounts in India then made an excuse and did the same in Pakistan, Russia, the United States,

England and many other countries. These social media platforms have given you a space to discuss and present every information. On social media we present our pictures, update statuses, give our ideas on various issues; this is the first impediment which would hurt us in the rest of the 21st century.

Pakistan as a developing country has tried very hard to manage against almost more than 50 countries, intelligence agencies operating in Pakistan, and fighting external pressures which is a fact not a rhetoric neither a propaganda. There is a slim minority who does have connection to extremism, and we have sacrificed thousands of lives to defend it.



There are three points which I would like to highlight: \_\_\_\_\_

1. Do not wait for someone to tell you what to do, in terms of using your right for the correct information supplying on social media.
2. Engaging yourself in a debate which matters to you. It doesn't have to be anti-American, anti-west or anything. It can be pro-Pakistan; it can be pro-democracy.
3. The last point and the most important thing is start reading. The only thing which will make a difference between Pakistani youngsters and the world youth is your reading habits and using the right forums.

The best service for your own self is to become active positively and voluntarily. Build your character in a way in which you can meet those pressures which you will face in coming 10- 20 years because we are already into the 21st century. So you have to get ready to serve your society and Pakistan as much as you can.

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In the contemporary world, propaganda and rhetoric play a central role in creating and managing perceptions about the national narrative of a country. These two tools can prove to be indispensable, especially, for a country like Pakistan which has been a target of psychological warfare, negative propaganda and rhetoric fallacies from foreign and anti-state actors in the region.

External actors have made successful attempts to proliferate rhetoric and propaganda aimed at targeting Pakistan's state institutions. Moreover, the competing regional and international powers are deliberately playing a key role in manoeuvring the national narrative of Pakistan to derail the democratic and military institutions in the country and to depict Pakistan as an autocratic state. 'Negative propaganda' and 'rhetoric' is also being used as a weapon to polarize the youth of various religious, ethnic and sectarian communities within Pakistan through the proliferation of inaccurate information.

There is a need for Pakistan's government to devise a strategy to conceptualize and construct a perception, nationally and internationally, that can illustrate an accurate narrative of Pakistan. In order to improve Pakistan's policy perception, a clear and cohesive national plan should be formulated to not only counter the existing rhetoric fallacies and negative propaganda against Pakistan, but also to overtly characterize Pakistan's national image as a democratic, united, and a credible country. For this, a comprehensive mechanism needs to be articulated to establish clarity in the methods, objectives, and platforms for positive propaganda and rhetoric in Pakistan.

To formulate a national policy to improve Pakistan's perception nationally and internationally, there also needs to develop a consensus among the key stakeholders in Pakistan on establishing a blueprint for the application and impacts of tools of positive propaganda and progressive rhetoric in the context of Pakistan's national security.

## Recommendations



### **1. Developing a Deeper Understanding of Propaganda and Rhetoric**

An analysis of the normative rhetorical practices and a nuanced understanding of discourse propaganda and the methods of propaganda production is essential for formulating a successful national policy on managing Pakistan's perception.

### **2. Establishing a Cohesive National Plan**

In order to improve Pakistan's policy perception, a clear and cohesive national plan should be formulated to not only counter the existing negative propaganda against Pakistan, but also to overtly characterize Pakistan's national image as a democratic, and a credible country. For this, a comprehensive mechanism needs to be articulated to establish clarity in the methods, objectives, and platforms for positive propaganda and rhetoric in the context of Pakistan.

### **3. Investing on our Youth**

Pakistani youth is a positive aspect of the country. The government should ensure that the youth is equipped with quality education and training through which they can develop their analytical and technical skills. This will prepare our youth in not only presenting a positive image of Pakistan but will also aid in countering any negative propaganda aimed at polarizing the youth of Pakistan.

### **4. Portraying a Positive Image of Pakistan**

Recently, Pakistan relaxed its visa policy for international tourists, who can now get an on-arrival visa in Pakistan. This is a good step by the government in place and we need to find more ways of promoting tourism in Pakistan by focusing on the diversity of Pakistani culture and society, to counter the regional and international misconceptions regarding Pakistan.

### **5. Role of Media in Countering Negative Propaganda**

The Indian media has missed no opportunity at targeting Pakistan's national intuitions and security forces by disseminating false propaganda and adopting war journalism.

Hence, Pakistani media should accurately present a counter-narrative that aims at highlighting the achievements of Pakistan on various fronts to. The government must take measures to restructure the media discourse in Pakistan and to create a mechanism for preserving the national narrative and countering negative propaganda while maintaining objectivity and independence.

**6. Coherent Military-Diplomatic Strategies**

Pakistan’s diplomatic and military strategies need to work hand-in-hand, in order to counter Indian rhetoric in the shape of surgical strike or in the diplomatic domain.



## Photo Gallery

