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ANNEX

Pakistan's War in the West--A Lacklustre Effort?

1. Since the beginning of the Indo-Pakistani war on 3 December, India has gained victory in East Pakistan while holding the Pakistanis at arms length along the western border. The Pakistanis in the east seem to have fought about as well as and held out for as long as most observers expected in the face of overwhelming odds and with almost no chance of winning. The Pakistanis now have accepted final defeat at Dacca, but have no significant offsetting gains in the west within their grasp.

2. Although there probably was little the Pakistanis could have hoped to do in the east to ward off the Indian victory, their performance in the west has been less than most observers expected and suggests the absence of an overall strategy to prosecute the two-front war. Except for the offensive at Chhamb in southern Kashmir, Pakistan's military actions have been primarily defensive with only a few feeble attacks at other places along the border with India.

3. Most observers had expected that the Pakistanis would stage a number of vigorous offensives in the west, with the intent of at least distracting the Indians from their offensive in East Pakistan. Additionally, the Pakistanis were expected to try to gain some significant territory for Pakistan in the disputed Kashmir area for use as a bargaining point against Indian victory in East Pakistan or perhaps as a trade-off against the loss of East Pakistan.

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4. Assuming this was, in fact, the overall Pakistani aim, then Islamabad has displayed little energy in attempting to achieve it. The main result of Pakistan's largely defensive posture in the west has been to facilitate the Indian strategy of gaining victory in East Pakistan while fighting a defensive action in the west.

5. The Pakistanis staged air strikes against Indian airfields on 3 December, precipitating the overt Indian drive into East Pakistan. But the Pakistanis did not follow these strikes with a large-scale offensive and the air strikes had little impact. This is especially true because the air raids did not catch the Indians unprepared, were not as massive as anticipated, and seem to have had little effect on Indian military capabilities.

6. During the days since 3 December, Pakistani military actions have been overshadowed by larger, harder-hitting Indian military moves. Such Indian tactics have deprived the Pakistanis of all but their small gain in southern Kashmir, which even now they may be losing. In any case, the Indians already hold sufficient West Pakistan territory which they can use as trade-offs for the small Pakistani gain in southern Kashmir should Islamabad accept New Delhi's call for a cease-fire in the west. Pakistan's ability to wage war is diminishing at a much faster rate than India's--due to growing shortages in such necessities as POL--and the Pakistanis probably cannot continue beyond the end of this month without massive outside assistance. None is in prospect.

7. The seeming lack of fervor in Islamabad's prosecution of its war effort is difficult to explain. Although outnumbered on the ground in the west by 270,000 Indian troops to 186,000 Pakistani troops and in the air by some 2 to 1 in fighter aircraft, the Pakistanis almost certainly had the capacity to inflict significant damage on the Indians in the west at the outset of hostilities, but did not. They also had the capability to engage and tie down larger numbers of Indian troops than they have.

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8. Islamabad almost from the beginning seems to have been put off by the larger numbers of Indian personnel and equipment it has had to face. The Pakistanis certainly have not rallied to the Indian challenge and seem to have played reluctant dragons throughout the war thus far. Islamabad seems to be left with no response should Mrs. Gandhi charge that she has met the "enemy" and they are hers.