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Pakistan's National Defense Day

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The treaty of Westphalia in 1648 led to the formal emergence of nation states in the world and established the principle of territorial sovereignty as a sacred and integral part of the modern world order. This principle, all through the era of imperialism and colonialism, constituted the quintessence in shaping the inter-state relationship. It also laid down the basis for especially the colonized and subjugated people, to yearn and struggle for territorial entity wherein they could shape their collective destiny according to their specific cultural identities and systems of ideas and beliefs.

Amidst the decolonization wave in the world, Pakistan and India emerged as independent nation states in 1947 to live as sovereign and autonomous states. The creation of both the states was a result of fundamental ideological and cultural divide between the two predominant communities of Muslims and Hindus. However, the unfinished agenda of partition of South Asia or shameful exit and the blatant violation of the "*Two Nation*" principle by the British Government led to several territorial disputes, the most flagrant of which has been the Kashmir issue. Ever since the independence of Pakistan, the violation of right of self-determination and brutal suppression by successive governments in India of the collective will of Kashmiri Muslims, continues to pose a grave threat to the territorial sovereignty and security of Pakistan. The two countries have already gone to two wars in addition to scores of cross-border skirmishes and exchange of heavy firing.

Given the historical animosity and hostility of India towards Pakistan, the size and scale of its military apparatus, and the seeds of deep mistrust and belligerence towards Pakistan, the latter has been left with no option but to be politically, economically and militarily become strong enough to safeguard its ideological and territorial sovereignty. The security and national defense, as such, ought to be the supreme most consideration all through the country's policy, strategy and development processes. Indeed, the war of 1965 provides eloquent evidence and a direct indication of India's intention to challenge and threaten the territorial sovereignty of Pakistan.

The 1965 war was imposed upon Pakistan by India when on 6 September, it dastardly invaded Pakistan and violated the sanctity of the international borders. The defense forces of Pakistan with full and zealous support of the people from across every corner of the country, valiantly defended the territorial and ideological frontiers of Pakistan and effectively thwarted the hegemonic and expansionist design fomented by India's "Akhand Bharat" ambition. Pakistanis, as a resilient and peace-loving nation, established and proved to the world that no matter if the

enemy is six times bigger or has all the deadly arsenal and weaponry at its disposal, the nation is fully prepared and capable of heroically defending its independence and territory.

In Pakistan, Defense Day is celebrated on 6 September every year in the length and breadth of the country to commemorate the sacrifices of the soldiers and martyrs and pay tribute to the bravery of Pakistani war heroes who laid down their lives and fought valiantly to defend the sovereignty and integrity of the country.

The recent atrocities and brutalities unleashed by the Government of India against the innocent people of Indian held Kashmir and the lackadaisical response and acquiescence of the international community including the United Nations is a matter of grave concern. The abolition of article 370 of the Indian Constitution and the consequent implications in terms of demographic changes, ownership of property, citizenship, status etc.; the imposition of draconian laws e.g., Armed Forces (Jammu and Kashmir) Special Powers Act, 1990 (AFSPA) and the Jammu and Kashmir Public Safety Act, 1978 (PSA); the acts of genocide, torture, mass arrests, violation of right to justice, extra judicial killings, rape and murder, media censorship and denial of right of expression; the presence of more than six hundred army personnel to perpetrate tyranny and oppression; and killing of more than sixty thousand Kashmiries besides incarcerations of many thousands has regrettably failed to arouse the world's conscience, international morality and universally recognized canons of law. "Might and Money" paradigm espoused by the major nations of the world to conduct world affairs is extremely pervert and dangerous and may push the region into a nuclear war which will be a disaster for the entire humanity. While Pakistan is committed to peaceful co-existence and to the UN Charter, let it be known clearly that the entire nation will fight to the last to secure and safeguard its borders and to ensure the right of self-determination of the people of Kashmir.

On this day, BIPP joins the nation to pay homage to the martyrs and heroes of Pakistan; reaffirm the resolve to contribute to peace, prosperity and stability of Pakistan; and express solidarity with the people of Kashmir in their heroic struggle to emancipate themselves from the unlawful occupation by India.