



Pakistan Civil-Military Relations in the Context of External Politics

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Abstract

Pakistan's military establishment defends its prominent role in society due to the set of complex threats and a series of conflicts which Pakistan has been facing. At the time of its creation, Pakistan found itself in the midst of instability due to the adverse policies of its rival neighbors. Pakistan has a decisive position in the global power politics. A disconcerting situation has developed due to the sense of guardianship. The army believes that the civilian government lacks the vision and political insight which enables the state to operate the affairs other than the security issues without soliciting military institutions.

Key Words: Military Institution, Civilian Government, Neighbors, Complex Threats

Introduction

Pakistan has been confronted with strategic challenges since it came into being (Lodhi, 2011). Today the instability of politics and the economy have enhanced both the challenges of domestic as well as foreign level, and simultaneously these challenges have to be faced by Pakistani society. Lodhi holds that by the time of its inception, Pakistan has faced strategic challenges (2011). With instable politics and economy, there is a visible inflation in the domestic as well as foreign challenges. The bitter portion of all this development is that Pakistani society has to face the music. These situations test the abilities and demands readiness from institutions like government and its public, particularly in the areas of politics and economy as these are the ones which hardens the basis of a country to the greater extent. Despite the fact that Pakistan is receiving aid and support around the globe,

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yet the mismanagement is due to less fidelity on the part of Pakistani leadership and the aid is not being employed for the right purposes. There is a greater need to reform the politics and economy (Memon, et al., 2011).

The political conflicts among politicians and the embezzlement in the given aid has left the foundations of political and economic infrastructure hollow, and this may lead to irreparable disintegration (Khalid, 2013). There is a need to understand this fact that such distressing situations give way to anti state forces working the state externally and internally (Memon, et al., 2011). Due to the extraordinary external and internal pressure in Pakistan, military service is a requisite. Keeping in view the external and internal threats the civilian government has to revise its security profile. This can be achieved while improving ties with neighbors, establishing peace on its borders and trimming the role and authority of the military.

In case Pakistan wages a war against India, successfully brings Afghanistan under its control and is able to influence Iran, the power graph of Pakistan's military will rise considerably. This all be done if Pakistan pays heed to its ultra nationalist ambition as this will boost the role of military at the cost of other considerations, ultimately influencing policy making and its related fulfillments. Civilian government has failed political vision and she has failed to improve its ability to devise solutions to the challenges. In either case there is a considerable risk that such failures may increase the possibility that the stake holders seeking the solution of these problems may end up in the lap of military setup. Any such policy which may enable to put the system on auto pilot, so to avoid the security hazards must be developed at priority to decline the military influence (The Express Tribune, Apr 7, 2018).

India

The recent statistics reported by a renowned journal while quoting the defense analyst are pretty alarming as the defense spending of 15 countries of the world exceeds four fifths of the expenditures of the whole world. In the context of Pakistan's civil military relationship India is one of such countries (SIPRI 2013-17). Pakistan stands nowhere if one considers the internal and external security threats. Pakistan bases the justification of its defense expenditures on the war she has waged against terrorism. Pakistan's war on terrorism necessitates it to enhance its defense expenditures (Memon, et, al. 2011).

The foreign policy of Pakistan and its security aspects are mainly based on its relations with India. In other words, this would be more appropriate to say that Pakistan's foreign policy with respect to the world regarding security and stability is mainly based on its relationship with India (Walcott, 2009). The ethnic and cultural differences along with geopolitical location of both the countries make them inevitable for each other. The internal policies of both the countries depend

a lot on their mutual relationship. A short-term outlook has developed while being indifferent about other important factors to base their policy and decision-making process: both the countries have become reactionary to each other, like one of a game of tit for tat, adversely affecting their foreign policy outlook. It seems that India and Pakistan as states have interlocked themselves into a chain action, reaction and interaction. It is widely understood that between both the countries Kashmir is the basic issue of contention, as it is one of the most influential factors determining the military and civilian government's policies. The military establishment of Pakistan has tried to handle skillfully the issue of Kashmir for two ulterior motives, first to engage Indian army and economy and second to strengthen itself financially as an institution to increase the defense budget. One of the reasons behind the expansion in military budget is to abide by the strategic mantra i.e. to maintain balance of power. The scenario of warfare between Pakistan and India is conventional and unconventional. It is worthwhile to mention here that the provinces of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa support the issue out of the other four provinces of the state.

In past Pakistani military establishment has been staunchly defending the issue of Kashmir, it seems that it hasn't budged a single step in this regard, historically speaking to governments of civilian setup were sent home i.e. Benazir Bhutto and Nawaz Sharif, as both had made their minds to settle the Kashmir issue. Such policy of the civilian leadership highlighted and alienated the military severely.

For an instance the Lahore resolution is a historical development between the two civilian governments: Benazir meeting the Prime Minister Rajiv Gandhi, a step to resolve Kashmir issue. These and such other pacifying steps taken by the civilian governments were not supported by the military establishment. In similar instance when Nawaz Sharif met his counterpart Atal Bihari Vajpayee and the historical Lahore resolution was signed between the two countries. All the political parties of Pakistan hailed the decision including that of Benazir government who was sitting on the opposition benches, Ashraf Mumtaz (19 February 1999). It has been widely reported in the Pakistan's media that after the Lahore declaration Pakistan's army sabotaged the deal while infiltrated into Kargil adjacent to Line of Control (Baloch, et al., 2013)

Afghanistan

If Indo-Pak relationship is tense ever since the start, among immediate neighbors Pakistan's relationship with Afghanistan is based upon three major objectives. The first and foremost objective of Pakistan's foreign policy with respect to Afghanistan is to hold the strategic depth.

An amiable regime in Afghanistan is one of the ultimate objectives of Pakistan. Rubin & Siddique believe that a friendly government in Afghanistan will help Pakistan to achieve strategic depth (2006). Pakistan has been cautiously

monitoring Indian supremacy in the region and for this purpose she keeps her military on alert (Hussain, Dawn, February 2, 2010). The strategic depth provides to Pakistan an opportunity to avail the fall back option. Nevertheless, the Pakistan army despite her less strength and logistic capability can counter attack even if chased from Pakistan's territory and in such scenario the utility of support and fall back remains an option (Hussain, 2016).

Despite the utility of strategic depth, the whole idea can be a mere frustration if the danger is posed from Afghanistan and from the Western border. A far greater Pakistani force can equally match India in this case on the eastern border. In case of hostile regime in Afghanistan, Pakistan will be definitely encircled by its enemies. In such a case there is a possibility that India will be present in Afghanistan and will try to encircle Pakistan from all sides, as this is an imminent threat (Lieven, 2002). India since 2001 has been proactively involved in diplomatic and humanitarian efforts which has also provided her with countless opportunities to hatch conspiracies against Pakistan. India is trying to establish herself in Afghanistan while spending multibillion dollars in the guise of developmental projects. With such spending they have established hundredths of consulates.

But it is also notable that all such speculations are based on the military perspectives, opposed to this, as a matter of fact there is only one Indian embassy all over Afghanistan (Mushtaq, et al, 2010). In the views of the chief of army staff no one can allocate 1.3 billion dollars for a project unless there are ulterior motives behind it. In this context the west needs to ensure that under such circumstances any adventurism on the part of India will not be acceptable to Pakistan. Historically speaking Afghanistan has rejected the presence of Durand line which is an open challenge to Pakistan. The historical background to the Durand line is that it was drawn in 1890 by the British government but it has been clearly rejected by the Afghan government right from the start. The reason behind this rejection is that Afghans believe that the areas populated by Pashtun and Baloch on the both sides of the Durand line are part of Afghanistan (Johnson, et al, 2008).

That's why Afghanistan right from the time of Pakistan's independence as a state hasn't accepted it. Pakistan devised a new strategy to counter the Afghanistan persistent animosity and opposition against herself and in this regard, Pakistan supported those groups with in Afghanistan politics who supported Pakistan but this strategy had its risks as well. Benazir Bhutto as the prime minister of Pakistan supported the Taliban who mostly comprised of Pashtuns because these Taliban favored security in Pakistan (Shaw,et al, 2014).

Post September 11 the strategic vision respecting Afghanistan evolved completely when on 2001 September 11 Al-Qaida attacked New York and Washington. Pakistan has to change her policy post 9-11 when United States and leading world powers pressurized Islamabad to abandon her support of Taliban. In this context the Pakistan cooperated with US and withdrew all sorts of support. Pakistan could not withstand the pressure of international communities. Two

prestigious institutions the Belfer Center for Science and International Affairs and the Harvard Kennedy School held that the Pashtuns and Northern Alliance dominated Hamid Karzai's politics (Johnson & Mason, 2008.)

Pakistan supported Haqqani network to maintain the strategic depth in Afghanistan (Shah, 2010). Besides supporting Haqqanis Pakistan has been supporting the militant's faction led by Gulbaddin Hekmatyar (Mazzetti, et al. 2010). All these and other policies have been developed by Pakistan's security establishment. Pakistan's support for the insurgents is based on strategic gains which ensures the security of Pakistan's interest after US pulls out from Afghanistan. Pakistan denies these allegations however it is fair enough to say that Pakistan carries multidimensional interests in Afghanistan.

Iran

Among all the next-door neighbors Pakistan-Iran relations are good natured. Pakistan and Iran share numerous commonalities like religious, cultural and civilizational. Among the countries which foremost came to recognize Pakistan as an independent country in 1947; Iran tops that list. According to an estimate the trade volume between both the countries goes beyond \$ 1 billion dollar (Kutty, S. N. 2014). Despite the fact that International comity of the world had placed sanctions on Iran, Pakistan categorically stated that it will purchase natural gas from Iran. In this regard both the countries agreed to build gas pipeline from Iran to Pakistan (Shah, et al., 2015). Among the references to Iran-Pakistan relationship one notorious chapter is that of A.Q Khan. In history it is known as A.Q Khan fiasco and it spans over the time period of 1980s to 1990's (Peritz, et al., 1977).

The emergence of Jundullah an anti-Iran, militant organization, bearing separatist agenda, the relationship between Pakistan and Iran deteriorated over the passage of time. Iranian president Mahmoud Ahmadinejad accused Pakistan of supporting Jundullah. Jundullah has been accused of organizing terror bids against the Iranian public and revolutionary elite guard officers. In December 2010, reported the Iranian media that 39 people were killed outside Iranian Mosque in Chabahar. Iranian sources held Jundullah responsible for it (Reuters, December 22, 2010). It is also believed that Jundullah after carrying out the attack took sanctuary in Pakistan. Such incident has been attributed to anti-Shia outrage and sentiments in Pakistan for the Iranian Shiites. Pakistan-Iran relationship could have been utilized to take collective actions against Baloch insurgents. Both the countries face the insurgency concomitantly. (Radio Free Europe, October 23, 2009) at their particular borders (Tehran Times, May 12, 2010).

Iran against Pakistan's interest has been supporting Northern Alliance before 9-11 attacks. Iran's support comes in the backdrop of Pakistan's support of Taliban (Asia Times, January 13, 2006). A historical nexus exists between Riyadh and Islamabad, similarly Iran and Saudi have a prolonged history of animosity. The

protracted cooperation between Pakistan and Saudi Arabia is a matter of concern for Tehran. The bottom line of Pak-Iran relationship has seen a lot of ups and downs due to the regional security, ethnicity and the impact of international affairs on both the countries' relationship.

China

Pakistan-China relationship has been ever friendly and reliable. Both the countries hold deep cooperation and trust in all the military areas like conventional arms, nuclear technology and other military exercises. Right from the time Pakistan's independence till to date China can be termed as all-weather friend. (Zardari, 2009). China has ever sought to help out Pakistan in critical conditions and has proved to be Pakistan's closest ally. (The News, January 10, 2010).

The bilateral relationship between China and Pakistan can be taken back to the founding of Peoples Republic of China, it was the time when Pakistan became the first country to recognize Mao Zedong's government. Chairman Mao became the first President of China after the communist party became victorious.

Pakistan and China both had conflicts with India as these incidents further strengthened Pakistan and China's ties (Indian Express, November 27, 2009). The conflicts brought these two countries closer to each other in different fields like warfare and other fields. The military relationship and cooperation between these two countries brought regional stability, especially during the days when US suspended military assistance to Pakistan, China provided longest supply of conventional arms and along with this it promoted trade and defense interests of Pakistan (SIPRI, 2011). It is believed that Chinese assistance in nuclear energy while providing technology and training to Pakistan enabled her to persuade the nuclear program. Burrows, holds that in 1966 China provided the triggering mechanism to Pakistan which played a pivotal role in nuclear technology (1994).

China while assisting Pakistan sent its nuclear scientist and delivered Uranium Hexafluoride (UF₆) as it is believed that it is one crucial step while moving to uranium enrichment (Burrows, et al., 1994).

Peritz, holds that in a secret bid a Pakistani nuclear scientist tried to smuggle Chinese blue prints of atomic weapon (2009). The Chinese news agency Xinhua, holds that due to the US sanctions on Pakistan, it was Chinese nuclear support which actually completed Pakistan's goal to become nuclear (2009).

In recent times massive trade of weapons has taken place between the two countries. In this regard China has provided military technology assistance to Pakistan while manufacturing JF 17. Pakistan has obtained the Chinese aircrafts along with (AWACs) in 2009. In recent military cooperation between the two countries both the countries signed a historical agreement in which Pakistan will be assisted to develop the latest Chinese aircraft J-10. Apart from this Pakistan intends to buy F-22 frigates from China. Initially China will deliver the first

consignment to Pakistan and later on will provide the assistance to manufacture the product (Financial Times, 2009). One of these has been delivered and the remaining three will be manufactured in Pakistan with China's assistance. (Nation, 2009). Al-Khalid tank is one another prize of joint venture of both the countries. Pakistan owes to China for her support in the establishment of Heavy Industries Taxila. HIT is considered to be Pakistan's major defense, engineering conglomerate. China has shown good will in building Pakistan's domestic military capacity and increasing joint military production with her. But according to some weapon analyst Pakistan military views Chinese weapons are inferior to the western weapon system. Fazal Ur Rehman, holds that mostly Chinese weapons are copy of the advanced countries (Sering, 2012).

This means that the main idea of Chinese weapons is not original and does not represent state of the art standards. Pakistan on the other hand is purchasing these low standard outdated weapons. US officials and Pakistani military analysts believe that the vast majority of Pakistani army prefers using western weapons, due to their cutting-edge technology especially while fighting against India. Pakistan can't afford any system lapse or failure because Pakistan army has faced endless terrorism bids, its constant involvement in the war against terrorism. Several studies reveal that there are such instances which are worthy sharing in which we see Pakistan not finding Chinese military technology up to the standard. One such case has been reported where Pakistan had to replace Chinese ejection seats because this technology is considered to be less reliable as compared to Western technology. (Waldman, 2010; Chaudhuri, et al, 2011). Having said so, yet China is considered to be Pakistan's best bet in the current scenario where Pakistan-America have seen the latest relationship dip. As a matter of fact, China is considered Pakistan's force multiplier against western support (Rahman, 2010). Pakistan and China have held several joint military exercises, i.e. in 2004 and 2006 both the People's Liberation Army and Pakistan Military held joint exercises (accessed June 21, 2011). China Military Online suggests that China prefers to participate with Pakistan in naval based on search and rescue drills (2008). In the days when Pakistan army conducted operations in tribal areas, China's advice was sought. China has always expressed her concerns over the military presence in her western provinces and ensuring regional security for her economic progress.

There are numerous such instances where we see China supporting Pakistan. China and Pakistan have resolved many economic and security concerns with bilateral assistance. Pakistan values China's support in various developmental enterprises and it seems that both are interdependent on each other. While keeping a check and controlling cross border terrorism Pakistan and China in 2007 signed an extradition deal (Daily Times, 2007). Those Chinese who violated Pakistani law were sent back to China, legal case was registered and they have been put on trial in China (The News International, 2009). In a bid to support the Chinese communist party's stand on Xinxiang Uyghur an autonomous region in China a memorandum

of understanding has been signed in 2009 between Chinese communist party and Pakistan's main religious parties (The News International, 2009). Briefly Pak-China relationship is tried and tested and a deep level of understanding exists between the two countries on security, economic development and technology advancement. Historically speaking China has stood side by side with Pakistan through thick and thin especially in the times when Pak-US relationship has wavered.

Port of Gwadar

In this dissertation the researcher has tried to explain the dynamics of civil military relations in Pakistan has assured the continuity of policy towards China. Gwadar port project epitomes the vitality of Pakistan-Chinese relationship over the last 15 years. The paradigmatic shift in Pakistan's foreign policy in the scenario of post 9-11, nonetheless expresses policy of Pakistani army's top brass. As a matter of fact, civilian say in the policy matters is more a myth than a reality.

The researcher has found out that the succeeding civilian government has followed and adopted the foreign policy of General Pervez Musharraf, as this clearly indicates control of the military establishment on foreign policy.

The civilian and military establishments have unanimously developed this policy that Chinese investors should be provided with security and authentic investment in Pakistan. This all has been felt because of the role China has been playing while supporting Pakistan's strategic stance. China's developmental contributions and assistance in the development of military technology has gained popularity both at civilian and military levels. A semi structured interview conducted in early 2017, revealed that the civilian military relations revolve around these main points, port Gwadar, economic and foreign policy and domestic security measures.

Both the military and civilian establishment have agreed to support the Chinese in the development of Gwadar project, as a matter of fact the development of Gwadar project depends on unanimous narrative and mutual cooperation between the sectors of establishment.

United States of America

The political instability in Pakistan especially with respect to the differences between ruling and opposing party, along with price hike is main reason why military establishment keeps meddling in the political affairs of Pakistan. Besides these few other contributing reasons could be weak foreign policy and extending undue favor to the western world. Prominent military leadership of Pakistan Iskandar Mirza and General Ayyub Khan in 1958 conveyed to the US ambassador that only dictatorship has the capability to provide the best viable government

system to Pakistan (Gilmartin, 1992). Although there is no such evidence against US available where she has consented in favor of dictatorship in Pakistan. Despite the fact that Ayyub Khan was in good books of the US administration and same goes in the case of two other coups whose main leaders had support of the US administration and these took place in March 1969 and in July 1977. It is pretty interesting to know that both the military regimes in Pakistan had full ethical and ideological support from the US state department which includes the Zia Ul Haq regime. It is believed that the Zia regime extension took place because of the American support both from military and economic point of view. The major factor in the case of Zia regime was the ongoing Soviet military invasion of Afghanistan. Zulfikar Ali Bhutto claimed that US supported his political opponents who due to this support started mass protests against his rule in 1977. He raised serious objections on the US diplomats and rejected to mold his nuclear and foreign policy. It is unlikely to say that Capitol Hill conspired or supported Zulfikar Ali Bhutto regime change but there is considerable evidence of indirect involvement of US administration to imbalance the Bhutto government in those times when Bhutto's government was facing mass protests organized by right wing party and the army. There are numerous facts supporting the view point that US sabotaged Bhutto regime which resulted in his eventual execution. US government successfully encircled the Bhutto government, complicated political matters for him and there was a consequential downfall.

During the cold war days Pakistan military establishment tried to develop warmer relationship with the west. These warm relations they thought would help them attain certain goals like military equipment, assistance and considerable transfer of military technology.

Pakistan military establishment was in favor of resisting US pressure and toeing her line while developing the atomic program. In this regard they enhanced their relationship of trust with the civilian set up to detonate a nuclear bomb on 28th and 30th May 1998.

The senior commanders of Pakistan military views cordial relationship with US administration a priority. The military establishment believes likewise as such an approach is considered mandatory for maintaining security in the region. The senior commanders while exercising their discretionary powers develop policy related to the security of the region. The senior command is fully aware of the latest global trends and developments. The newest trends emphasize over democratization of the society, better government, economic freedom and liberal trade. These developments at the international level oppose the concept of military establishment. These latest political trends have discouraged Pakistani military establishment to interfere directly in power and to hold constitution and democracy in high esteem. Nonetheless if Pakistan's political situation worsens and social order and stability falls below the average level and the top military brass starts

realizing that professionalism and corporate interest has been undermined, in such situation the international trends will lose its controlling effects.

The Post September 11 world

Post 9-11 attacks General Musharraf fully consented to join the world comity on permanent basis against war on terror. He categorically condemned Taliban and vowed to start a full fledge war on terrorists. In this endeavor he held the support of US. Many Taliban militants and members of Al-Qaeda fled to Tribal areas. These were the days when Pak-US relations were perfect. According to an analysis during these days Inter -Services Intelligence provided maximum benefits to Afghan Taliban. It is also believed that ISI supported the Afghan Taliban in reorganizing and rebuilding themselves as a more solid operational force.

Taliban were driven by the US army across the western border (Rashid11March 2010). In these days, militants supported various attacks in Kashmir. On December 13, 2001 brazen attack on the Indian parliament was carried out by the terrorist in day time during which 14 people were killed. The terrorist involved in this attack is were Pakistan based. (Brussels, ICG, 2009). Musharraf dismissed the allegations made against Pakistan (Watson, et al., 2015). Pak-India saw the lowest dip in their mutual relationship, at such time US administration tried to pacify the agitation between the two countries (Brussels, ICG, 2009). President Musharraf in reaction launched military operation in the tribal areas, nevertheless the operation failed to dismantle the strong hold of the militants in the area. According to Khalid the militants and insurgent grouped in Quetta (2010). It is alleged that Lashkar-e-Taiba an Islamic terrorism militant organization carried out attacks on Indian institutions across the border, as it is based in Muridke, Lahore.

The US administration demanded from Pakistan to curtail the cross-border attacks while launching operation against the Taliban militants located in North and South Waziristan. During these operations Pakistan army suffered great human loss, resulting in a peace deal between Pakistan army and the militants who later came to be known as Pakistani Taliban. In reaction to the failure of the agreement between the Pakistani Taliban and Pakistan army large scale offence was launched by the Pakistan army in 2009 against the militants present in Federally Administered Tribal Agency, on the other side political conditions worsened when President Musharraf sacked the chief justice of Apex court.

Due to such confusing situation Pakistan's legal community went on strike and large-scale street protests were held across the major cities of Pakistan. These protests were rampant with sloganeering against President Musharraf while demanding his resignation (Asia Report, ICG, 2009). President Musharraf put the constitution of Pakistan in abeyance and declared a state of emergency, on the other side he arrested the protestors and imprisoned them. He promised to hold

fresh elections in January 2008, but these were delayed due to the assassination of Benazir Bhutto on 27 December 2007, consequently he shifted his political moves and doffed off his army uniform on November, 28, 2007 (Nawaz, 2008). General Ashfaq Pervaiz Kiyani filled the shoes of General Musharraf as the Chief of Army Staff. President Musharraf held the portfolio of presidency later on Asif Ali Zardari the widower of Benazir Bhutto became the president of Pakistan (Perlez, 2008). General Kiyani held his vision to rebuild image of the army. He ensured that civilian officers fully served the country and discouraged those who wanted to become part of the Pakistani politics (Masood, 2008). He received a warm welcome for the paradigmatic shift. The reason behind this change in underlying assumptions was the active engagement of Pak army in different operations against terrorist militants in various parts of the country. The army remained engaged throughout all the Pakistan. One of the famous milestone army achieved under the command of Kiyani was emancipating the scenic valley of Swat from Taliban stronghold. This historic achievement made General Kiyani a hero not only at institutional levels but also among the masses (Sehgal, 2010). General Kiyani was given three years extension, as the continuity of his policies was necessary. General Kiyani's performance was lauded nationally and internationally. Acknowledging the efforts of Pakistan army against terrorism, US held out logistic and financial support. Despite all caution Pak-Army could take, the losses were significant. Pakistan fully appreciates the importance of war against terrorism, as it is essential not only for her survival but also important for her positive international image.

Pakistan lost her children in this war but has inflicted heavy losses on the militants as well. Over the passage of time she has made significant gains against the militants and terrorism and has successfully managed to push out these militants to Pak-Afghan border area (Alam, 2010). Pakistan was praised in its war on terror while the sacrifices it made were internationally acknowledged, Pakistan became a blood shad battle where both militants and army received great losses. But the army, to a great extent, seemed to overcome, these insurgents and drove them out of the country across the border to Afghanistan (Alam, 2010).

Conclusion

The researcher comes to the point where it can explore Pakistan's strategic context. Over the passage of time Pakistan army went through the developmental stages while facing threats against her security and overcoming these. It is widely believed that the source of these threats has been mostly external from anti Pakistan forces. This article has tried to assess Pakistan military's ability to address the terrorism and other related security issues. The researcher has come to this conclusion that it is pertinent for Pakistan to hold civil military relation in balance as this brings good name in the midst of International comity of nations. In order to make substantial gains for one's country leaders have to think objectively and selflessly.

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