

“Fighting for Economic Gains”

Beware of the Modern Economic Great Game

“FIGHTING FOR ECONOMIC GAINS”

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ECONOMIC warfare, as old as customary military combat, has been waged in recent years to secure financial gains.

There are various arsenals employed in economic conflict, including sanctions, boycotts, customs barriers, monopolies and mergers. Economic defense means confronting any peripheral menace, while economic offensive to destroy and corrupt economies include dumping manipulation of drug wars and money laundering. Economic wars, like traditional military ones, are based on surprise, deceit and surveillance in order to acquire information about to foe.

In the 21st century, economic wars are acquiring new features depending more on advanced technologies and modern communication. With military conflict an unrealistic option, espionage will centre more on the economic power of the state and the economic activities of large companies and institutions.

Experts predict that the future of nations in the coming decades will depend on the intelligence of their spies and the ability of their business people to master the art of espionage in the world of economics.

These wars are taking place between the major industrial powers of the world. And less developed countries will have to wrestle with each other and the industrialized countries for a place in the world economy.

As large areas of the world have become industrialized, the fight for copyright and the defense of intellectual property have assumed more importance. The fight for exclusive control over certain types of technology, productive activity and commodities has intensified.

Among the economic wars witnessed between Europe and the United States is about unsuitability of the Siberia gas pipeline. There has also been an economic war between the United States on one hand and China and Japan on the other.

Due to the wide stretch of technology, computers are used as efficient tools; vicious programs and viruses are used to demolish the enemy and intelligence bodies maneuver stock markets to destroy targeted economies. About 95 per cent of large US companies use economic intelligence and the United States has also started to spy on all international communications in an attempt to achieve its economic interests.

According to press reports, CIA has been asked to protect the economic interest of America through economic counter intelligence activities mainly directed against its own allies which include Britain, France, Germany and Japan, in space technology, aeronautics, chemistry, biotechnology and arms industry.

The United States is seeking redress through WTO and this is classic protectionism accomplished through novel means. So far such disputes have not spilled over into the area of foreign policy where the US needs the cooperation of Japan in order to manage the Asia Pacific region.

The GCC states plan to forge new relationship with European Union, Japan and regional economic groups. The recent scenario is that developed countries are looking for customers and under-developed and poor countries are looking for technology. For several years now, these countries have been locked in a struggle to get hold of technology crucial for building an industrial base in order to diminish their reliance on oil earnings, which are so easily manipulated in world market.

For them re-export trade is not a way out for a long-term. So for industrialized countries are not inclined to transfer the technology to the Gulf, arguing that the region is too small to sop up industrial projects and that its industry should be limited to small and medium units.

It is more likely that one or the other member will transfer the technology to the Gulf and GCC also wants the EU to lift custom barrier for GCC for petrochemicals, aluminum and other non-oil export. On the other hand, EU has free access to Gulf markets, the biggest consumers in the Middle East.

As industrialized countries adjust into a competitive mode, an increasing number of developing countries are seeking trade concessions and access to various kinds of technology, hitherto denied to them. It is necessary for those countries that have been denied trade concessions and technology transfer for decades to realize that the economic environment of the world has changed. Now these countries have to compete with developed countries in technology as well as in products.

Conventional cost-effective partnerships must not be allowed to work against a state's people. EU has reacted sharply against protectionist policies of US after 9/11 attacks and EU imposed tariffs and fines on US goods.

American attacks on Muslim states like Iraq and Afghanistan are a part of their US-strategy to control China economically. America wants to have control over oil reserve of Iraq and Iran. The war on terror is actually an economic war for controlling energy resources. Our leaders should not follow blindly the US policies and should be aware of the economic war and its consequences.

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