

## The Sino- Pakistan Defence Deals: A Factfile

Debalina Chatterjee, Research Associate, Centre for Air Power Studies, New Delhi.

This article takes a brief look at the Sino-Pakistan defence deals, listing important Chinese military trade and collaboration between China and Pakistan. Over the years, China has been an all-weather friend of Pakistan in supplying defence equipments. China considers Pakistan an ally for geo-strategic reasons. China fears that the rise of India will constrain its own growing ambitions in the Asian periphery. Hence, China has strategised the ‘pincer movement’, befriending India’s neighbours, including Pakistan, and proliferated weapons to them. This also allows China to earn hard cash through sale of defence equipment.

### *Pakistan’s Army*

China has provided Type 56 assault rifles to Pakistan which is a copy of the Soviet AK-47s, but is relatively cheaper. China has also provided armoured vehicles to Pakistan. The Chinese Type 90II main battle tank and was licensed by Pakistan under the name of *Al Khalid*. China also provided Type 85 tanks to Pakistan which was a modified version of Type 80 tanks and also the Type 69 main battle tanks which was the improved version of the Type 59. The modified tanks have ‘individual dual way stabilisation and night vision’ and ‘infra red search light’. Type 59 was also provided to Pakistan which was a copy of the Type 54A built by the Soviets. The Type 63 was an amphibious tank improving the capability of Pakistan’s armoured divisions. In addition to sale of equipment, *Al Hamza* Pakistan’s Infantry Fighting Vehicle was designed by the Chinese.

China has also provided artillery equipment to the Pakistan Army which includes the Type 54 self-propelled artillery, using indigenous precision guided munitions smart weapons. Among multi launch rocket systems, China provides the A-100s which can attack ground targets like air fields, command centres, radar stations, artillery or missile batteries, areas where troops are placed and other targets which are of military significance. The latest version of A-100 is AR1A which is called A-100 E in Pakistan and has improved accuracy. The WS-1 rocket launch system provided by the Chinese has enabled Pakistan to bridge the gap between conventional self-propelled artillery systems and tactical missiles. China also provided utility aircrafts like the Harbin Y-12. Amongst anti-tank guided missiles, China has provided the Hong Jian 8 missiles which are produced in Pakistan under license as *Bakhtar Shikan*. This missile system can counter even an explosive armour reactor usually placed on armoured vehicles.

### **Missiles**

China and Pakistan have had longstanding missile collaboration in ballistic missiles. According to FAS reports, the Hatf-3 is a Chinese version of M11, while Hatf 4 is a Chinese M-9 version. Hatf-6 is M-18 version. The Hatf 3 is a solid propelled missile capable of targeting missiles during in the boost stage and is capable of carrying nuclear warheads.

### **Pakistan's Airforce**

Pakistan has jointly procured the JF-17s Thunder Multi Role Fighter Aircraft with the help of China. The *Chao Qi* is an all weather multipurpose light fighter aircraft equipped with advanced avionics and medium range missiles which enable it to carry out both air to air and air to ground operations. China has also delivered to Pakistan supersonic attack aircraft the *Nanchang A-5C* light bombers. These are designed to fly 'low and super low combat missions' providing support to ground forces attacking 'concentrated targets at land' and can be used to counter ships near the coast. The *Chengdu J-10* is a multi role fighter aircraft used in fighter and light bomber roles. Amongst high altitude air defence systems, China has provided Pakistan the HQ-2B Surface to Air Missile and the HQ-9 missiles. These are two stage missiles capable of intercepting high altitude targets like strategic bombers and spy planes and are equipped with countermeasures to defend a missile defence. HQ missiles have 'expanded operational zone', 'shortened preparation time', 'simplified and mobile launch equipment' and 'ability to attack high speed targets'. HQ-9 is a long-range Surface to Air Missile to 'counter high-performance aircraft, cruise missiles, air-to-surface missiles and tactical ballistic missiles'.

### **Pakistan's Navy**

Under the *Zulfikar class*, China developed the PNS *Zulfikar* and the PNS *Shamsher*. Pakistan's *Jalalat* class missile boats are equipped with Chinese C-802 anti ship missiles. Pakistan has also acquired the FN-6 Man Portable Air Defence System from China. It is a sophisticated infrared surface to air missile. China has also provided the *Zhi 9* multi utility helicopter to Pakistan navy.

### **The road ahead**

Pakistan could soon induct the WS-2 MLRS, the latest Chinese long-range multiple launch rocket system with more accurate guided rocket system. Pakistan is also interested in acquiring *Kong Jing 2000*, an airborne early warning and control aircraft. Pakistan is also interested in an ICBM capability. However, it would be a matter of time to see if China provides the technical assistance to Pakistan for an ICBM capability. With India developing its BMD, it is important for Pakistan to develop a BMD in order to maintain stability in the region. In this Pakistan is likely to look towards China for help.