Twitter Thread by Jai Menon



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Ah. WASP-Sunni premi is something that we use to name something which we cannot properly describe, a "mystery" of sorts. Ditto Lara Logan. In that interview (must be watched in full), she asks the question "Why"? Why is the US so indulgent towards Pakistan? 1/n

> On this equation https://t.co/ntf4Iyxjn4
>
> — Naren Menon (@NarenMenon1) August 23, 2021

She is exasperated: "the 64 million dollar question" or whatever. The answer is a simple one, one that most will deride immediately. It is India, which cannot be allowed to become a peer. Nor can it be allowed to become so weak that it cannot help against the new enemy China. 2/n

We are seeing is the same old "Jewel in the Crown" thinking which the British passed on to their former colony and protege, in a different form. So, the US will use Pakistan to keep India unbalanced, but will pay much more attention to India than it used to - because China 3/n

is the bigger, clearer and more present danger. With this current scripted fiasco in Afghanistan, that balancing act with India gradually tilting in India's favour. Here's why. I think the US has a deal with the Taliban, which boils down to the following: 4/n

The Taliban can rule Afghanistan however they want, so long as they do not threaten the US or its European/Gulf allies. Contrary to the mess it looks like now, once NATO pulls out - the Taliban will have to actually rule, and not like the last time around. 5/n

Pakistan will then have to make a choice: America or China? It will tell America that it chose America & it will tell China that it chose China. It will play that game well. It is capable of that. But that cannot last long, because the Americans are dead serious about China 6/n

They will not permit China to replace them as the No. 1. At the very least, they will make a good go of it. That is what we will see in the coming decades. And that is why they will, eventually, tilt definitively - in many ways they already have. In other words 7/n

the US will assume the old British role, minus the actual taking over and ruling of India. That era is over. From their perspective, India (because of China's ineptitude) has already taken sides. It is clear that China has made a huge mistake in it's India policy. 8/n

Pakistan will move still closer to China. And Afghanistan? The US has built up its connections to the Taliban. Contrary to popular belief, the Taliban have no special love for the Pakistanis (aka Pakjabis). I anticipate a situation where, sooner or later, the US has a better 9/n

relationship with the Taliban (as in more reliable) than with the Pakistanis. And there are a lot of Afghans who want to show the Pakistanis the same tender loving care that they got from them over the last few decades. 10/n

Remember when the Taliban say "Afghanistan", what they really mean is "Pashtunistan" with some Tajik/Turkmen/Uzbek & Hazara minorities. Also, the Durand Line is not a one-way border. Pakistan is in for some interesting times. 11/n

There are thousands of mid-ranking US officers who know what Pakistan did, and will be moving up the command chain (many are already there). Not many of them will be opposed to any difficulties Pakistan may face in Khyber Pakhtunkwa or Balochistan. It's already happening 12/n

to some degree. So, for Pakistan, closer to the arms of China. The WASP-Sunni premi will continue, but with the more traditional allies of the Gulf. There's not much love there for the Paks either. The current gloating in Islamabad notwitstanding, I suspect the more sober 13/n

officers in Pindi will be wondering whether what they have in mind for Afghanistan can be as easily achieved as the Taliban campaign success. I think not, but we shall see.

I rambled on too much... END