

Fencing border to secure Iran against threats



By Navid Kamali
Foreign affairs expert

OPINION EXCLUSIVE

In the contemporary era, border security has become one of the main priorities in the national security agenda of almost all countries. Safeguarding borders is not only essential for maintaining territorial integrity and preventing external threats but also directly impacts internal security and social stability. For this reason, many countries, especially in consistently tense regions like West Asia, have seriously prioritized the implementation of plans to seal off borders. These plans are designed and executed to control illegal immigration, prevent the entry of weapons and terrorist groups, combat drug trafficking, and curb fuel smuggling.

In general, border-fencing plans are recognized as one of the primary strategies for countering external threats and preserving domestic security in most countries. For Iran, in particular, considering its unique geopolitical position and its proximity to countries lacking sufficient political and security stability, these plans hold even greater significance. In this context, the plan to erect an impenetrable barrier along Iran's eastern frontiers, particularly those shared with Afghanistan and Pakistan, has become a central pillar of national security. This plan includes the construction of concrete walls, barbed wire, fencing, and strategic roads aimed at countering threats such as illegal immigration, the influx of weapons and terrorists, and the smuggling of drugs and fuel.



An Afghan man walks at the Afghanistan-Iran border crossing of Islam Qala on November 24, 2021.
● PETROS GIANNAKOURIS/AP

However, achieving desirable outcomes from the implementation of border-fencing plans necessitates attention to a set of factors and prerequisites. First, the utilization of advanced equipment and technologies is crucial. In today's world, such technologies play a vital role in enhancing border security. The use of modern technologies including artificial intelligence (AI), surveillance systems, and smart drones can significantly contribute to identifying and countering threats effectively. Incorporating these technologies into the border-fencing plan will markedly increase the precision and efficiency of the measures taken.

Additionally, strengthening intelligence and security capabilities is fundamental. No border-fencing plan can succeed without a robust intelligence foundation. Enhancing intelligence capa-

bilities through increased inter-agency cooperation and utilizing local and international intelligence sources can aid in the timely identification and prevention of threats.

The development of border infrastructure is another key factor in the success of this plan. Border infrastructure, including access roads, border outposts, and monitoring centers, must be developed to enable comprehensive border management and control. These measures not only increase the speed and efficiency of countering threats but also improve the living and working conditions of border security forces.

Furthermore, the development of neighborly policies and constructive engagement with neighboring countries are among the essential strategies for enhancing border security. Regional cooperation and diplomatic and para-diplomatic interactions with neighboring countries can lead to reduced tensions and increased border cooperation.

It is crucial to note that a smart and multifaceted approach to the root problems of border areas is key to the long-term success of any plan. Many border threats stem from deep-seated issues such as poverty, unemployment, and underdevelopment in these regions. Therefore, for the successful and effective implementation of border-fencing plans, it is necessary to address these problems at their core. This can be achieved through economic development, increased job opportunities, and the enhancement of social welfare in border areas.

Challenges facing plan

Iran's eastern border fence is one of its most significant national measures aimed at ensuring the country's security, having been launched in earnest since last year. This plan entails the construction of four-meter-high concrete walls, barbed wire, fencing, and strategic roads along the country's borders, especially those shared with Afghanistan, and is scheduled to be completed over the next three years.

Despite the importance and necessity of finalizing the border-fencing plan, it faces numerous challenges. One of the most significant challenges revolves around the political and social pushback it received from countries that share bor-

ders with Iran. For example, the spokesperson of the Afghan government has conditioned the execution of this plan on a joint agreement, emphasizing that Afghanistan is now secure and that there is no need for restrictive measures by Iran. Moreover, some experts argue that sealing off the border alone cannot resolve all border issues. These experts believe that in order to completely eliminate border threats, the root causes of these problems must also be addressed. For instance, controlling terrorist movements in border regions cannot be achieved solely through building border walls; it requires international cooperation and broader political and security measures. In conclusion, while the border-fencing plan is considered one of the main strategies for enhancing the national security of any country and countering external threats, achieving desirable outcomes necessitates paying attention to a set of factors and prerequisites. The use of modern technologies, strengthening intelligence and security capabilities, developing border infrastructure, fostering neighborly policies, and adopting a comprehensive and intelligent approach to the root problems of border areas are among the factors that can contribute to the success of this national plan in the case of Iran.

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Iranian military officials visit a border area where concrete walls have been constructed.