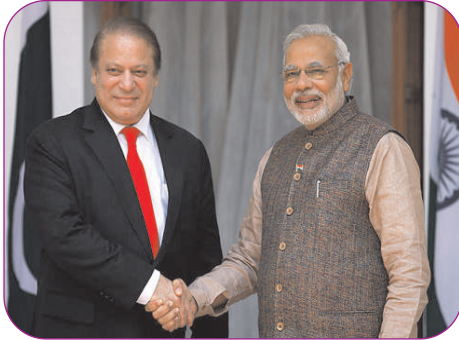




INDO - PAK RELATION --- A PRECARIOUS FUTURE



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ABSTRACT :

This paper seeks to examine major areas of conflict between India & Pakistan. An in depth analysis of these issues of these issues from a historic-analytical angle is attempted. The emphasis is being a laid on presenting the genesis of each issue with subsequent developments on the divergent perceptions of each party and the diplomatic efforts made at resolving the issue, both bilateral or through International Forums. Since each issue has its bearings on a larger scale on overall relations between two countries. These implications are also being examined.

KEYWORDS : Indian Subcontinent , historic-analytical angle , Indo - Pak Relation .

INTRODUCTION:

The Indian Subcontinent which after the British withdrawal resulted in the emergence of two Sovereign nations, which later on further resulted in the creation of one more independent nation has in over six decades been able to provide with an area of permanent peace. The tragic partition of the country by the colonial masters has left a permanent legacy of bad blood between the two (later on three) nations. The impact of cold war did not leave this area untouched. Incidentally the timings of British withdrawal coincided with an age when the discipline of international relations was further being sub-divided and a new discipline with the title of International of Politics was fast emergence. The protagonists of the realist school were advocating Power Politics as the very root of International Politics. Hans. J. Morgenthau, the main representative of this school defined International Politics as "Struggle of Power". Perhaps a great deal of logic may be ascribed to Morgenthau's theory for an understanding of the relations between India & Pakistan. One may even get inclined to distort to Kautilya's Mandala Theory for an analytical understanding of Indo- Pak relations. Whatever manner one may choose to analyze, the fact remains that ever since the creation of India & Pakistan as sovereign nations, they have not seen an eye to eye. The game of one manship has not yet ended. The contentious issues whether territorial or of any other form are more tools which the respective governments have raised in defense of their respective national interests. Although in an age of internationalism the instruments of peacemaking have remained at work. Unfortunately they do not look like working. One wonders if these nations will ever learn to live like good friendly neighbors.

An analysis of the post-colonial history of the Indian Sub-continent highlights the faith that the two major nation's states in the region--- India - & Pakistan - have had a history of conflictual or antagonistic relations since inception as autonomous entities. They have experienced various types of conflicts and hostilities. These hostilities and apprehensions led to armed confrontations and produced unfortunate consequence and left a legacy of unsolved problem. However, at every stage after the war, both of them endeavored to have normal

relations. But their basic structure of antagonism, threat and deterrence remained and both had followed policies paradoxes to the era a detente and peaceful co-existence.

While both India and Pakistan has made significant contribution to the politics of these underdeveloped and developing, third world countries during and after the era of decolonization. These tow Sub-continental countries have been caught up in one or the other types of conflict since their inception. Broadly speaking the conflict between them can be classified as Political, Economic, Social and religious or Ideological.

Broadly speaking, political conflicts can be categorized into two types, i.e. (a) Demarcation disputes and (b) Accession disputes, under economic conflicts we include sharing of cash balances and exchange of currency, distribution of military equipment's, Indus water dispute etc. Areas of societal conflicts include rehabilitation of refugees, communal riots and minority protection. Religious or ideological conflicts play a very crucial role between India & Pakistan. India is a land of many religions, such as Hinduism, Buddhism, Jainism, Islam and Christianity. From the very day of their independence both India and Pakistan have religious conflicts, as the vey principle of partition of British India was the two-nation theory. Outcome of these antagonistic and controversial ideologies between these two countries have been armed conflicts and merciless massacres.

A general review of India- Pakistan relations in the historical perspective indicates that the above mention phenomena persists due to lack of confidence and trust in each other; apprehension about each other's security; the intention to maintain "mirror images" at almost all level relationships and intention to maintain separate political, socio-cultural and ideological identities and an intention to maintain political, economic and military parity. Misperception about certain issues in the communication pattern between the two neighbours-- ---- this is purely due to lack of true and fair flow of communication, misinterpretation of information and wrong propaganda. Moreover the academies or intellectuals in both countries do not project new perceptions and new structures so as to highlight the necessity of permanent acceptance of the existing status quo in the Indian Sub-Continent.

The emergence of Bangladesh as an independent nation in 1971 altered the political structure of the Indian Sub-Continent. Simultaneously the nature of social and economic relations in this region also altered with demolition of the "two nation theory" which was the main principle of division of British India in 1947. It paved the way for the politics of negotiations, dialogue, mutual understanding, mutual confidence building and mutual Co-operation.

The Shimla Agreement envisages growing Co-operation between the two countries and enables them to achieve what may be called a community relationship. To quote David E. Lilienthal- "The real is not the plebiscite, but how best to prevent war between India and Pakistan Sub-Community in Indo-Pakistan Sub-Continent." The Shimla Agreement involved a process of genuine rethinking away from rigid positions. It resulted in a set of understanding which has to be continuously widened through diplomatic and other means relationships. While safeguarding their separate national existence both India & Pakistan will have to accept the task of narrowing the gap which has been created by negative developments over the year.

As dismemberment of Pakistan when the hostilities ended, Pakistan founded itself compelled to address the whole world about the alleged Indian design of territorial expansion and imperialism. It goes without saying that while safeguarding its strategic position, India showed scrupulous regard for Pakistani sovereignty. Indian policy was thus calculated to assist bilateral negotiations between India & Pakistan did not provide much scope to the outside powers like U.S.A Russia or China to directly affect the peacemaking and confidence building task. This resulted in creating a new psychological climate in the Sub-Continent. There is now a pronounced desire on the part of outside powers not to openly take sides with New Delhi or Islamabad, so as to widen their options. (Except China and U.S.A.)

The Shimla spirit can be used for constructive purposes. For example, to develop common ideas on disarmament. In the area of regional arms control and disarmament the Shimla process moves away from the hostile propaganda and psychological warfare. India and Pakistan on pragmatic grounds can work together for mutual understanding of enduring significance. This will course require a careful analysis of the political and economic consequences and disarmament and its positive impact on the developmental activities.

The Shimla agreement is a historic landmark in Indo-Pak relation is beyond doubt, coming exact after 25

years of independence of the two countries. Its significance of the agreement was that it was attempted to lay down a framework of peace and for the solution of disputed issues between the two countries. An attempt was also made at Shimla to have agreed principles for the normalization of relations in such areas as trade, travel, Postal and Telecommunication facilities. Bilateralism is another exceedingly significant contribution of the Shimla agreement. The Agreement provided that in future all problems between the two neighbors would be resolved only on a bilateral basis. This is an important implication to the effect that the role of outside power in the sub-continental differences and conflicts is ruled out. This was agreed upon, because third party initiative had not been helpful in the past. Thus bilateralism was made a foundation of the relations between the two countries. Never before in the history of the two countries had an agreement of such a reaching consequences had been concluded.

In spite of a degree of willingness on both sides to evolve peaceful relations, the negotiations which led to the conclusion of the agreement and once the agreement had been signed, its implementation have been by no means smooth. The Shimla spirit could not wipe out deep rooted differences in the complex relationship between the two countries.

Over thirty five years have gone by since the Shimla agreement was concluded. India and Pakistan have been proclaiming their faith in Shimla principles, through some sections in the domestic politics in Pakistan are of the view that their country had accepted the provisions under pressure. Maybe Pakistan feels threatened by Afghanistan in the West and India in the East. It is therefore following a policy which seems paradoxical at two levels. At the international level, Pakistan has walked out of the military alliances sponsored by the West and has joined the Non-aligned movement. The other paradox is at the regional level. While each country has every right to protect its security from all possible threats, what Pakistan has acquired from U.S. and China, appears disproportionate to its requirements. This matter of concern to India. Perhaps a Pakistani may argue that India's military might is superior, therefore, there is no need, to feel threatened there is some substance in this argument.

In the current phase, proposals and counter proposals are being made by the two countries with a view to evolving their future relation on the basis of peace, friendship and Co-operation. On close examination, their purpose seems to be to score diplomatic points which are hardly important in the long run. The Shimla Agreement includes all these elements which are contained in the proposals of no war pact and treaty of friendship and Co-operation, i.e. non-use of force in resolving differences and conflicts, especially in Kashmir and the principle of bilateralism to keep out the foreign powers trying to fish in the troubled water of the subcontinent. These twin principles should guide the mutual relation of the two neighbors. It must not be forgotten that India and Pakistan cannot even if they want to escape the logic of geography, instead of fighting against each other, they should make a sincere and determined efforts to fight the common enemy; the extreme poverty of their people.

There is no doubt that there is tremendous scope of improvement in mutual trust and relations between the two countries. There are reasons for optimism in this regard in spite of many negative factors. What is now required is to build on the positive elements, and eliminate the negative ones. Nuclear issues, in this respect, constitute but one of many, and there is need to adopt a holistic approach. As regards bilateral issues, Pakistan cannot ignore the geopolitical environment impinging on the two countries. It needs to emphasize the primary and fundamental requirement is that of building mutual confidence, and concrete measures would naturally be easier to build on the foundation. Amongst the large number of possibilities, few specific measures need serious consideration apart from nuclear issue.

(A) The Shimla Agreement need to be built upon as the basis of bilateral relations and the ambiguities, if any, removed. The two countries should work towards adopting politico- military doctrine of non-provocative defence which is a natural corollary of the Shimla agreement.

(B) Increased transparency is needed in the defence postures of the two countries. This should commence with detailed exchange and publication of information on defence expenditures, force levels and nuclear capabilities.

(C) In order to improve trust and reduce the risk of surprise attack, peace time deployment of military forces, especially those with the offensive capabilities, should move back from the common border to increase the time

for forward deployment.

(D)Both countries should discuss and accept the legitimate security concerns of each other, both in relation to themselves as well as third countries. A joint re-examination of previous conflicts may help clear-up many misperceptions on both sides.

The coup of 1977 in Pakistan and subsequent soviet invasion in Afghanistan qualitatively changed the pattern of Indo-Pakistan relations. By 1980 as American support to the Afghan resistance and the military dictatorship became secure through a series of political and diplomatic moves General Zia sought to put a temporary halt over Indo-Pak disputes.

By 1983, the exchange of foreign ministers visit led to the establishment of a joint commission, which was to meet annually and was further 'economic, trade, industrial, education, health, cultural, consular, tourism, travel, information, scientific and technological' issues between the two countries at later dates four Sub-commissions were also set up. These Sub-Commissions were to deal with:

(1)Economic matters relating to industry, agriculture, communication, health, and scientific co-operation; (2) Trade; (3) Social Science, education, culture, sports and information; and (4) Travel and Tourism.

Second meeting was held in New Delhi in July 1985, resulting in an accord on co-operation in the agricultural field. The two sides also agreed to liberalize exchanges and facilitate trade and transit visits.

The most important of the aspects of efforts at stabilization of relations between India and Pakistan was the dialogues between the Prime Minister of India Rajeev Gandhi and General Zia- ul- Haq of Paksitan. Their first meeting was a brief ceremonial kind of November 4,1984 when General Zia came to attend the funeral of Mrs. Indira Gandhi, subsequently Zia told 'Newsweek' that he was more than satisfied with his meeting with the Indian Prime-Minister and now that there was much younger relationship this must lead to a dynamic youthful approach to Indo-Pakistan relations.

A more substantial meeting took place in New York in October 1985, where both the leaders had assembled for the 40th anniversary of United Nations. Indian Prime-Minister described his discussion with the Pakistani President as 'fruitful' and told the 'New York Times' that both had agreed upon to begin talks on security on their borders and increasing economic co-operation. The Pakistan foreign minister SahibzadaYaqub Khan described the meetings as substantial and believed that "there was a very positive movement"

But Rajeev Gandhi unequivocally rejected Zia as proposal for a nuclear free Zone in the Indian sub-continent made in speech at the U.N. Both leaders gain met at Muscat and in SAARC meetings. These meetings were also called as Confidence Building Meetings (CBM) without and concrete result.

The problems between India and Pakistan were not tractable. Pakistan's military relationship with U.S.A. and the kind of weapons it was getting and its proximity to the nuclear bomb, at the very least remained highly contentions. For Pakistan Kashmir issue of the issues which is no nearer solution to its satisfaction. It was a long road ahead and a durable structure of friendship would need patient brick- brick masonry. One must also take note of the amazing transformation of public opinion in both the Countries. Barring the nuclear issue Indian Public-opinion was no longer exercised over Pakistan and there was absolutely no desire for a conflict with Pakistan. Similarly Public opinion in Pakistan was no longer edgy and could not be easily inflamed against India. People in both countries had no stomach for war.

The new detente has helped in bringing about a total change in international system and particularly in South Asia. During the years both India and Pakistan could call upon external support, both political and military, to deal with each other, they are now on their own.

The sub-continental adversaries have no choice but to strive for negotiated solutions to their disputes, because war is no longer an option either can afford to adopt. In the changing world, possibility of war is very less. Denis Kux, a South Asian specialist stated, 'who would have thought a year ago that development towards peace between Palestinians and Israel would have taken place. No one would think that today between India and Pakistan either. Mr. SumitGanguli viewed that it is in the interest of India and Pakistan to settle their differences. Professor Thomas has compared India and Pakistan to Jews and Arabs. He maintain that Pakistan has to accept the power factor that India control Kashmir, that India is not going to let go and that the only way to live in peace to accept status-quo.

There are some reasons for Pakistan's compulsions to co-operate with India. The economy like India's is under terrible strain making it equally dependent on the continuing inflow of large scale of foreign assistance, headed by IMF. The international community anxious to restrain regional conflicts has made it quite clear to both India and Pakistan that they will forfeit, the goodwill of friends if they indulge in the madness of hostilities. The choice thus is, between fighting a war on which neither is likely to triumph and the hear certainty of an economic collapse.

Today the process of Indo-Pak normalization of relation is promising because Pakistan's top is beginning to come together for many reasons.

As U.S. military aid remains cut off since 1990, because Washington is no longer obliged by its strategic concern to turn a blind eye to Pakistan's nuclear transgressions. Indian military strength and political will to challenge Pakistani misbehaves is very much clear. Since 1990, Pakistani army has gained a more realistic view. It realized that there was no need to waste time, energy, resources and manpower on confrontation. It is generally accepted that war is not visible option. In fact majority of the people in both India and Pakistan have come to believe the task of Indo-Pak Co-operation would be like chasing a mirage.

Trade is another area which could better to keep free from political and other considerations. There are good many lacunae in India-Pakistan relation which need to fill expeditiously since the nuclear capabilities of the both countries compel them to imagine a new kind of political relationship. We cannot afford the indefinite continuance of the present mode of suspicions, conflict and confrontation which only promises a bleak future for both countries. Admittedly there are not many forces working at present for a coherent political expression of common interests and priorities between India and Pakistan, yet one the symbiosis between regional economic development and the peace process is grasped, the potential for self-transformation in South Asia will prevail over national sensitivities.

The challenge now is to establish a process by which India and Pakistan can maximize their economic strength and achieve joints gain through collaborative arrangements. Mutual losses should be eliminated or minimized by reconstructing bargaining situation. A fundamental criticism of the old approaches to Indo-Pak question is that there has always been a search quick – fix solution which have invariably failed to activate synergetic effects. It is necessary to conceptualize Co-operative conflict management first of all by establishing a process which ensures a continuous dialogue, in which political interaction are controlled and guided by wise decision. The new approach should focus an exploratory technique in problems solving and conflict management on the basis of wide consultation at both official and non-official levels.

The nuclear status of India and Pakistan compels both of them to remove the cause of belligerency. Decision making procedures are of two types, those which focus on substantive solution and those which focus on the process by which the solution can be reached. Bureaucratic routines which have deflected substantive solution can only be side stepped by dramatic political moves. Both countries must now do a good deal of thinking to create awareness of process issues. Fruitful innovations can overcome domestic constraints on regional co-operations by using each substantive problem as an occasion for improving the ongoing process.

Going back by the development of the past two decades, it is quite clear that nothing concrete could emerge between the two neighbors. It is not saying that efforts were not attempted at. Much of the last decades of the 20th century witnessed cross-border terrorism. While India was all though insisting that unless it halted no progress could be achieved. On the other hand the very nature of the forces operating with in Pakistani politics made it impossible for the rulers to take any significant step in this direction. The terror menace was at its best. Unfortunately the appeal made by India remained unheard at the international level. It was only after 9/11 that the United State could realize how dreaded this menace could be globally. But here again United States had its own compulsions to patronize Pakistan.

The hopes created by Lahore declaration died with Kargil and the outcome of the Agra summit is there for everyone judge. It is no secret that political forces with in Pakistan compel every political regime to keep the very bone of contention between India and Pakistan, namely the Kashmir issue alive. Perhaps the strong political will which alone can serve the purpose, is something which no Pakistani regime, democratic or the military, has courage to muster. Even at the SAARC summits this compulsion can be witnessed. The suggestion made at

different forums with regard to strengthening economic diplomacy, initiating confidence building measures and promoting people to people contact and cultural ties have all failed to bring the desired dividends. The only hope was on the establishment of democratic regime, establishing a liberal democracy in all its manifestation in Pakistan. Give the overall climate this too looks like a distant possibility.

The war will solve nothing. This is clear from the facts of India-Pakistan relations. A third party mediation can only help if that party has no vested interest to serve. Only a bilateral dialogue can be useful. But such dialogues too require a strong political will and true statesman like quantities to be demonstrated by both the countries. The spirit of the Shimla Agreement has to be the basis and until it is wanting, a precarious future sums the story.

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