FOREIGN POLICY OF PAKISTAN TOWARDS INDIA IN MUSHARRAF ERA

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Abstract: *Despite living together for centuries, Hindus and Muslims could not create a relation of harmony. Though certain deliberate efforts had been made to bring the two close to each other, but the alliance could not prosper. Consequentially, the sub-continent was partitioned. Soon after that certain unsettled agendas of partition nurtured the enmity further. Afterwards, woefully enough, the two could not live in harmony as sovereign states even after seven decades. The two had been involved in three major wars and several armed clashes. Objective of this paper is to explore the nature of India-Pakistan relations in Musharraf era and a major shift in Pakistan's foreign policy towards India after 9/11. Policies of Musharraf became the cornerstone in moving forward Pakistan's established position on Kashmir than any of his predecessor in the past.*

Keywords: India, Pakistan, Kashmir, General Musharraf, foreign policy.

Historical Evolution of Indo-Pak Relations

India Pakistan ties are a narrative of mutual misunderstanding, distrust, lack of confidence to take optimistic decisions, misperception, and disharmony.1 Due to a variety of historical and political events, relations between India and Pakistan had remained complex. Violent partition of Sub-continent in 1947 defined the nature of subsequent ties between India and Pakistan. However, in the wake of liberation of Pakistan, Quaid-e-Azam Muhammad Ali Jinnah

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[1] D.S. Mahmood, *International Affairs* (Lahore: A.H Publishers, 1994).

in a meeting convened in the Chamber of Commerce Bombay said, "We will live in Pakistan, you will live in India. We will be neighbors…we want to live in a friendly way, friends in trade and commerce as two brothers."[2] Similarly, Nehru in 1950 in Indian Parliament stated, "We cannot be enemies forever and good relations are better than fighting."[3] Moreover, shortly after the partition of sub-continent, India and Pakistan tried to build diplomatic ties but varied territorial claims and other clashes overshadowed their relations. The disagreements began to occur between them even after they became separate independent states owing to the fact that Hindu leadership did not accept the existence of Pakistan. India endeavored to eliminate Pakistan from the world's map and relationship of the duo had been evolved in mistrust, fear, antagonism and anxiety. Since their independence, the two had fought three major wars (1948, 1956, and 1971), a military clash in Kargil (1999), and had been involved in numerous armed skirmishes and several military standoffs. Oimstead is of the view that India and Pakistan were birthed out of bloody partition that heartened each to define herself in hostility towards the other, and they had waged four wars since partition.[4] Kashmir conflict, the unfinished agenda of partition further plagued their ties with hostility and suspicion. With the acquisition of strategic weapons and modernization in the region, a new dimension had been added in the relations between the two arch rivals. This acquisition of strategic weapons had become more and more a matter of competition between the two rival states culminating in conducting nuclear tests in 1998. A complicated nuclear race began in the region that made South Asia a dangerous and unstable place. The global community also became concerned that these nuclear weapons could be used in further aggravation of ties. The relationship between the

[2] A. Z. Hilali, "Confidence and Security Building Measures for India and Pakistan," *Alternatives: Global, Local, Political* 30, no. 2 (Sage Publications, Inc. 2005).

[3] Ibid.

[4] J. Oimstead, "India-Pakistan Relations: A Destructive Equilibrium," *The Diplomat,* November 2, 2014.

two is now measured as fusion of animosity and distrust on both the sides even after seventy years of the partition.

Foreign Policy of Pakistan towards India in Musharraf Era

Foreign policy is a set of ideologies and objectives which determines the relations of one state towards another state. Pakistan's foreign policy is based upon friendship and goodwill towards all the states in the world. Pakistan and India have problematic relationship having a history of wars and mutual clashes on water, territorial disputes of Kashmir, Siachen, and Sir Creek. Pakistan's foreign policy towards India is shaped with the same stance. These issues are required to be tackled by both the nations.[5] General Musharraf during his presidency tried to build a cordial relation with India and other nations of the world but not at the cost of sovereignty and security of the state. He in his first press conference declared his policy objectives regarding India that hostility would be met with hostility, peace with peace, and threats with threats and that he would ensure the honor and dignity of the country. Also, anyone threatening Pakistan would get a similar response.[6] Musharraf gave Kashmir a pivotal place in Pakistan's foreign policy. After 9/11, a major move in Pakistan's foreign policy came when Pakistan became aligned with the United States of America and got the status of a frontline state to fight against the "war on terror." On December 13, 2001, a terrorist attack on Parliament of India in New Delhi was carried out. Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) were accused as perpetrators which increased tensions between Pakistan and India resulting in the 2001–2 military stand-off. President Musharraf responded by banning Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM). Gradually, Pakistan resumed the peace process and the resurgence of Composite Dialogue in 2004 along with the restoration of diplomatic relations and over flights etc.

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[5] M. Bukhtiar, "Pakistan's foreign policy towards India in Musharraf Era," *Parliament Times*, January 11, 2017.

[6] F. Akhtar, "Pakistan's Foreign Policy towards India during Musharraf Era" (MPhil dissertation, University of the Punjab, Lahore, 2016).

The 2001 Agra Summit

After the Kargil outbreak in 1999, the process of rapprochement between both the neighbors again started after a long stalemate through Agra Summit. It is also generally accredited that Musharraf, against the verdict of civilian-led government in Pakistan, ordered his forces, supported by Pakistani-based Islamic militants, to penetrate into Indian occupied territory of Kargil in Kashmir. India called the issue 'cross-border terrorism' that involved attacks by Kashmiri militant factions. Later, the attack on Indian Parliament in Delhi in 2001 was supposed to be a follow on of this action. Furthermore, India reacted severely by deploying hundreds of thousands of troops on the other side of border. The leadership of India called it a "decisive battle." Prime Minister Vajpayee condemned the attack, and the most popular war cry in India was to "teach Pakistan another lesson."[7] On the other hand, Pakistan endeavored to persuade India for talks in order to restore ties with India. The ice was melted to some extent when President Musharraf phoned Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee and shared his sympathies over the catastrophic incidents of Gujarat and Kutch earthquakes. Additionally, he sent goods and medication to help the grief-stricken people. On May 25, 2001, Indian Prime Minister Vajpayee invited General Musharraf for the Summit talks. General Mushaaraf responded by accepting the invitation. He, on July 14, 2001, went to India. The leadership of both the countries met in the historical city of Agra. In order to resolve mutual issues including Jammu and Kashmir and cross border terrorism; four rounds of talks had been held. But both the states could not reach a joint statement which ultimately led to the failure of talks. However, the talks could not succeed, but it was proved to be a watershed in process of normalization of relations. And, both the countries agreed to open doors for dialogue process in the times to come. The tensed military impasse took ten months to last when both the sides after so long

[7] Z. Abbas, "When Pakistan and India went to war over Kashmir in 1999," *The Herald,* February 17, 2017.

reached a decision in October 2002 to start lowering troops placed along both sides of the borders.

Indo-Pakistan Ties: Post 9/11

On September 11, the United States of America was hit by a series of four coordinated terrorist attacks. Within hours of the attacks, al-Qaida was quickly suspected of carrying out the attacks.[8] The U.S. responded irately by launching a Global War on Terror (GWOT) and effective counterattack by invading Afghanistan in order to penalize the perpetrators.[9] (Pakistan was left with no choice but to join the GWOT as a frontline state. General Musharraf thought it wise to align with the US-led war in counteroffensive at al-Qaida bases in Afghanistan. Jones and Shaikh argue that while the events of 9/11 enforced the U.S. to court Pakistan to fight against Islamic militants, the military rule in Pakistan was aware of the fact that if there would be any decline in her liaison with the U.S., then India would be poised to emerge as the key U.S. ally in the region.

Since 9/11, terrorism became a global phenomenon that later opened a new phase of conflict between India and Pakistan. The 9/11 attacks on the Twin Towers in the United States of America afterwards changed the nature of relations between India and Pakistan. Especially, following the terror attacks on Indian Parliament on December 13, 2001, India started raising her voice over Pakistan's involvement in cross border terrorism. She alleged Pakistan based organizations Lashkar-e-Taiba (LeT) and Jaish-e-Muhammad (JeM) involved in the terrorist attack on Indian Parliament and held them responsible for creating insecurity and insurgency in Kashmir. Simultaneously, India disrupted all transit links to Pakistan along with cutting off diplomatic ties with Pakistan. She deployed her

[8] H.S.Rothstein, *Afghanistan and the Troubled Future of Unconventional Warfare* (New Delhi: Manas Publications, 2006).

[9] S. Kay and S. Khan, "NATO and Counter-insurgency: Strategic Liability or Tactical Asset?" *Rutledge Taylor and Francis Group*, April 29, 2008, http://www.tandfonline.com/doi/pdf/10.1080/13523260701240625.

forces at the common frontier with Pakistan. The attack on Indian Parliament faded all the prospects of peace and composite dialogue between India and Pakistan. Vajpayee's agreed visit to Pakistan was also called off. All trade and social exchanges between India and Pakistan were suspended. Moreover, over flight of Pakistani commercial planes was also suspended. A similar posture was taken by Pakistan. She also positioned nearly more than a million armed forces personnel on her side of border.

India put forward the following demands to Musharraf in the form of a charge sheet:

- ✓ Handover to India twenty wanted criminal and terrorist outfits suspected to be living in Pakistan;
- ✓ Pakistan may terminate her backing to all terrorist factions battling against Indian rule in Kashmir and to close down all their training sites functioning in Pakistan as well as infiltration of terrorist networks and their arms supply;
- ✓ And terrorism in all its manifestations should be banned categorically and unequivocally.[10]

The list of demands also included the handover of masterminds of Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) and Lashkar-e-Taiba(LeT) accused to have been involved in terrorist attack on Indian parliament. Pakistan categorically denied all the claims and averred to provide appropriate evidence. Pakistan also set up her forces forward in defensive position on border and Line of Control. For several times, they even reached at the verge of war. "For a year, the forces of both the countries stood eye ball to eye ball and on more than one occasion the both countries came very close to begin war."[11] With the escalation of conflict, risk of nuclear warfare between both the states

[10] M.A. Bashir and M Ahmed, "Pak-India Relations during Musharraf Era Behavioral Study of Leadership" *Berkeley Journal of Social Sciences* 3 (2013).

[11] A. Sattar, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy (1947-2005)* (Oxford University Press, 2007).

rose. The international community, apprehensive by the military belligerence and involvement of nuclear dimension, tried to pacify the situation and normalize the ties. U.S. President Bush shared his sympathies over the terrorist attack on Indian Parliament in a telephonic discussion with Indian PM Vajpayee. Also, he made a phone call to President Musharraf to carry out discreet actions to counter the cross border terrorism. Pakistan tried her best to prevent Islamic militant organizations to involve in jihad in Indian occupied Kashmir, and this was deemed to be a major move in Pakistan's policy towards India. Pakistan clearly stated that she would not allow her soil to be used in terrorist activities against any state including India. Though, Musharraf after 9/11 severely coerced by Pakistan's status as a major ally in the "war on terror" sternly rein in militant (Jihadi) factions functioning in Kashmir. Afzal Guru, who was exclaimed to have been involved in the attack, was hanged to death in India. According to Indian claims, Pakistan has yet not taken any substantial step to annihilate the infrastructure of terrorism such as launching pads, training sites, communication infrastructure, and financing system. Musharraf vehemently spurned these accusations. Since 9/11, Pakistan banned many terrorist organizations which were included and topped the U.S. government terrorist watch-lists. Pakistan under the stress of U.S. also tried hard to suspend operations in Kashmir by militant outfits.

In 2003, the tension was somewhat lessened when Indian PM Vajpayee put forwarded numerous confidence building measures (CBMs) to help normalize the tensed and aggravated atmosphere between the two states. A step by step approach was taken which includes resumption of ambassadorial ties, restoration of land links, and agreement to reopen their skies early next year to each other's aviation airlines. Fahmida Ashraf, a well-known expert of the Islamabad-based Institute of Strategic Studies says that normalizing relations between India and Pakistan is one thing and to restart the dialogue is quite another.[12] Subsequently, Vajpayee offered talks with

[12] F. Ashraf, "Jammu and Kashmir Dispute: Examining various Proposals for Its Resolution," *CSS Forum*, June 18, 2015, http://www.cssforum.com.pk/css-optional-subjects/group-i/international-relations/360-jammu-kashmir-dispute.html.

Pakistan. Pakistani Prime Minister Zafar ullah Jamali did not hesitate to take Vajpayee's "hand of friendship." The ceasefire was finally enforced on November 26, 2003.

In turn, in November 2005, the banned Kashmiri militant group Lashkar-e-Tayyaba is accursed to hold a timed bomb blasts in Delhi that impaired an accord with India to open LOC for the first time since inception and to let Kashmiri people, affected by the earthquake, to link up with their relatives.

The Revival of Composite Dialogue (2004)

As the U.S. was dependent on Pakistan in the "war on terror," seemingly, the real move in Pakistan's stance would be internally taken. Significant developments in Kashmir had been made visible since 2003, which included the opening of bus services between Lahore and Delhi and massive "people-to-people" contact. Additionally, it was planned to initiate similar service across the LOC in Kashmir along with restoration of a rail link across the Wagah border. In 2004, Pakistani President Musharraf and Indian PM Vajpayee during SAARC summit in Islamabad agreed to carry on a composite talk on Kashmir and other unsettled mutual issues. Sadly enough, the same year, Vajpayee lost power. In September 2004, at the sidelines of UN General Assembly in New York, fresh talks between Musharraf and Manmohan Singh, the new Indian Premier, started. In 2005, Musharraf and Singh in a joint declaration asserted that the mutual peace process is irrevocable. Since then, the Pak-Indo ties appeared to move along three similar roads. Although, there was a slight progress visible. Following the first composite dialogue there was withdrawal of troops from Siachen Glacier and demarcation of boundary in the Rann of Kutch. The second round of talks included a ban on nuclear tests and bilateral advance notice of missile tests. The third round of talks concerned the core agenda of Kashmir was being taken up behind the closed doors. Both the governments were in touch through backdoor channels for the implementation of Musharraf's proposals. The Indo-Pak relations went towards the right

direction in early 2006. A joint mechanism for countering terrorism was adopted by the Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh and the Pakistan's President Pervez Musharraf at Havana in September 2006.

Musharraf's Four-Point Formula on Kashmir

Since inception in 1947 of Pakistan, the state of Jammu and Kashmir has been disputed territory for both Pakistan and India. After seven decades, the two have not been able to move on to a consensus on this unfinished agenda and carried on to a zero-sum approach on the issue. Even their narratives and agendas on the issue are different from each other. Pakistan furthered the case of Kashmiris in order to internationalize the issue after the 1989–90 mutiny, and India's attempted to tackle the Kashmiris by adopting repressive measures. It was also reckoned that it was General Musharraf, who moved Kashmir conundrum further from Pakistan's established posture than any of his predecessors in the past. In order to break a stalemate, in 2001, he himself met with Indian Prime Minister Atal Behari Vajpayee that had proved to be a defining movement in the way to normalizing relations with India. Musharraf stated, "We are for the United Nations Security Council resolutions. However, now we have left that aside," adding further, "if we want to resolve this issue, both sides need to talk to each other with flexibility, coming beyond stated positions, meeting halfway somewhere. We are prepared to rise to the occasion. India has to be flexible too."13On December 5, 2006, President Musharraf proposed his four-point solution to the Kashmir issue during an interview to the Indian television network NDTV.

This formula included:

- ✓ Demilitarization or phased withdrawal of troops
- ✓ There will be no change of borders of Kashmir. However, people of Jammu & Kashmir will be allowed to move freely across the Line of Control.

[13]J. Shah, and N. Riaz, "September 11, 2001 and Change in Pakistan's Foreign Policy," *American International Journal of Contemporary Research* 31 (2013), http://www.aijcrnet.com/journals/Vol_3_No_1_January_2013/12.pdf

- ✓ Self-governance without independence.
- ✓ A joint supervision mechanism in Jammu and Kashmir involving India, Pakistan and Kashmir.[14]

Musharraf was able to persuade the Indian leaders to determine the years' old unresolved agenda of Kashmir. Pakistan always wanted the instant attention and immediate solution of the Kashmir issue. India was agreed to consider Musharraf's suggestions on Kashmir. Both the governments were in touch through backdoor channels for the execution of Musharraf's formula for Kashmir. Even though, the Indian prime minister afterwards accepted that India and Pakistan had reached to the preparation of final draft for the conclusion of the Kashmir conflict.

Samjhota Express Attack and Its After-effects on Indo-Pak Ties

On February 18, 2007, a terrorist attack on Samjhota Express was carried out in the midnight. Bombs were set off in two carriages of the train. It was a twice-weekly train service connecting Delhi (India) and Lahore (Pakistan). The attack left sixty eight people dead. Most of them were Pakistanis. The perpetrators of the attack intended to interrupt peace negotiation between India and Pakistan because the attack was conducted just a day before Pakistani Foreign Minister Khurshid Mahmud Kasuri was to arrive in New Delhi. At the outset, the Indian government pointed fingers towards Pakistan, but afterwards the attack was likely to be connected with Hindutva ideology. The government of Pakistan responded in the similar manner and proposed that Indian government should investigate the act of terrorism. Kasuri said the attack would not stop his trip to India, and that he "will be leaving tomorrow for Delhi to further the peace process." Adding father, he said that "we should hasten the peace process."[15] Pakistani President Musharraf stated that Indian

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[14] N. Ali, "General Musharraf's four-point formula can provide an effective roadmap in Kashmir," *An Interview with Prof Abdul GhaniBhat Institute of Peace and Conflict Studies* (2011), http://www.ipcs.org/pdf_file/issue/SR99BhatInterview.pdf.

[15] *The Daily Star*, February 20, 2007.

authorities must execute full investigation. Concerning the peace talks, he affirmed that "we will not allow elements which want to sabotage the ongoing peace process to succeed in their nefarious designs."[16]

In 2007, President General Musharraf started losing his political power. His various decisions including his offensive strike in Lal Masjid of Islamabad by the Pakistan's armed forces and his actions against judiciary led the nation and the political scholars against him. In addition, the leadership of India began to losing trust in Musharraf particularly following the terrorist attacks in India. Finally, in 2008 general elections Pakistan People's Party won the elections, and Asif Ali Zardari established his government. After a prolonged military rule, a democratic government was established in Pakistan. A new policy posture over the issues of terrorism, nuclear strategy, and relations with India was established.

Conclusion

Indo-Pak history is full of conflicts and appeasements. Since independence in 1947, they both have several mutual conflicts which escalated with the passage of time. Due to a number of reasons, the efforts for the development of peace and cooperation between India and Pakistan started many a times and eventually stopped. Kashmir remained a core agenda between both the states since inception. During Musharraf era, the terrorist attack on Indian parliament in 2001 led both the states at the threshold of war. Afterwards, Pakistan initiated peace procedure along with the resumption of composite dialogue in 2004, the restoration of diplomatic relations, and air flights were the top priority. Several other agendas such as Siachen, Sir Creek, Wuller Dam, nuclearization of the region, and confidence building measures were the part of peace process.

In conclusion, at any cost, the peace process must be continued. A neutral posture should be adopted by Pakistani and

[16] Y. P. Rajesh, "At least 66 killed in India-Pakistan train blast," *Reuters*, February 19, 2007, https://www.reuters.com/article/us-india-pakistan-trainidUSDEL34195220070219.

Indian representatives. Certain Confidence Building Measures should be adopted by both sides. Ties at diplomatic level and people-to-people contact should be enhanced. Flexibility should be observed on the principle standpoints in dialogue in order to resolve major outstanding bilateral issues between both the states.