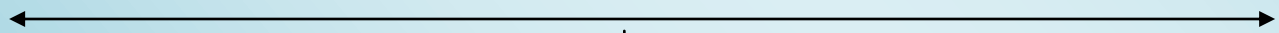


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UNITED STATE AND THE KASHMIR ISSUE

SAJAD AHMAD*

* Cont. Lect. Dept. Political Science, Govt. Degree College, Gool, Ramban J & K, India

INTRODUCTION

In the past, both India and Pakistan have been engaged in four military crisis in which the United States has played an increasingly assertive role in managing and resolving. A chief component of recent American administration's foreign policy goals in south Asia has been to avert the future war in the sub continent. However, attitude in India and Pakistan are changing and the internal situation in Kashmir issue is more fluid than it has been for years. After September 11 are both countries. However, United States strongly differed on certain issues related to India's national security.

In the mid fifties when the Govt. of Pakistan was convinced that she would not be able to grab Kashmir with the help of the United Nations, she decided to resort to other methods and formally aligned herself with the United States and her allies. The acts of Pakistan had affected the foreign policies of both the countries. The inroads made by the United States into the affairs of the India sub continent by signing military pacts with Pakistan had marred the prospects of an indo-Pakistan détente and prompted Pakistan to assume a rapidly anti India stance.

As India and Pakistan both possess nuclear weapons, the United States has a stake in resolving the Kashmir problem before 1998 nuclear tests. However, it has never been taken the risk or spent the political capital necessary to do so, and no blue prints of a solution have emerged from successive United States administration. The bush administration perused the traditional American position that India and Pakistan need to resolve the Kashmir issue through bi-lateral negotiations and that the United States would not mediate a dialogue between the two neighbors.

The Pakistan backed tribal invasion of Kashmir in 1947 gave rise to the Kashmir issue. In Oct. 1947 the maharaja Hari Singh, the last Dogra ruler of Jammu and Kashmir, decided the fate of Kashmir and agreed to accession of Kashmir to India and in turn requested the Indian military help. The United States failed to recognize

Pakistani aggression; imposed arms embargo against both India and Pakistan and supported the United Nations Security Council resolution that did not condemn aggression. India complained that the United States equated the victim with the aggressor through its policy. The United States took a similar stand during the second Pakistani attack in 1965. The United States tilt towards Pakistan in the indo-pak war of 1971 was an act of hostility towards India. But after the Indian victory in the war, the United States began to support the Shimla agreement of 1972. Which called for the resolution of the issue through bi-lateral dialogue. Nonetheless, the United States continued to view Kashmir as a disputed territory and did not accept the Indian claim that it was an internal affair of India however,

“in a brutally direct message to Pakistan, the visiting united states president, bill Clinton called upon Islamabad to create conditions for a dialogue with new Delhi, stop trying “redraw” borders with blood and said the united states will not negotiate the Kashmir dispute”.(1)

In his television address to the Pakistani people Clinton also put his full weight behind the Lahore process as the vehicle to resolve differences between India and Pakistan. He also told Pakistan to make full arrangements to curb the terror inflicting elements. He said,

“We cannot and will not mediate the dispute on Kashmir. Only you and India can do that through dialogue. I will do all, I can help both sides to restore the promise and process of Lahore” (2)

Insurgents and Pakistani solidies infiltrated into Jammu and Kashmir in the mid.1999. During the winter season, Indian forces regularly move down to lower altitudes, as severe climatic conditions make it almost impossible for them to guard the high peaks near the line of control. The insurgents took full advantage of this and occupied vacant peaks of the kargil range overlooking the high way in Indian Kashmir that connects Srinagar and leh. This resulted in a high scale conflict between Indian army and the Pakistani army. Fears of kargil war turning into a nuclear war provoked the united states to pressure Pakistan to retreat with the end of war by the united states pressure, India claimed control of the peaks, which they now look after all year long.

Human rights abuses are an ongoing issue in Kashmir. They range from disappearances, mass killing, rape torture and sexual abuse to political repression and suppression of freedom of speech. The Indian central reserve police force, boarder security personnel and various military groups have been accused and held responsible for committing severe human rights abuses against Kashmir civilians. A wiki leaks issue accused India of systematic human rights abuses. It stated that United States diplomats possessed evidence of the apparent wide spread use of

torture by Indian police and security forces. A United States government finding reports that the Indian army in Kashmir has carried out extrajudicial killings of innocent civilians and suspected insurgents. However the report has also mentioned killings and abuse being carried out by insurgents and separatists' (3)

The 2010 United States state department report blamed separatist insurgents in Kashmir and other parts of the country of committing serious abuses, including the killing of security personnel as well as civilians and of engaging a wide spread torture, rape, beheadings, kidnapping and extortion.

The Hindu kashmiri pundits, who had stably constituted about 4-5 percent of the population of the Kashmir valley during Dogra Rule, and 20% of whom have much greater numbers in the 1990s. According to a number of reports about 10,000 of the total Kashmiri pandit population of 1, 40,000 left the valley during that decade. The United States government has reported on the terrorist threat to pundits stilling in the Kashmir region. The violence in Kashmir was condemned and labeled as ethnic cleansing in a 2006 resolution passed by the United States congress. It stated that.

“The Islamic terrorists infiltrated the region in 1999 and began an ethnic clearing campaign to convert Kashmir to a Muslim state” (4) According to Bhatt a united nations Advisor.

“The hours of kashmiri pandits have been burnt, many killed, and that there has been an almost total ethnic cleansing of kashmiri pandits from Kashmir by fundamental forces of terrorism organized and support from Pakistan.” (5)

The Indian agencies are also blamed for the killing of 37 Sikhs at chattighingpora at the time of Clinton's visit to India.

We have seen United States officials challenging the legitimacy of accession of Jammu and Kashmir to India and deliberately playing down Pakistan's active assistance to the militants in Jammu and Kashmir and with the United States government decision to seek from the congress a onetime gainer from the pressure amendment for supplying F-16 fighter bombs and other sophisticated weapons to Pakistan thereby unleashing a new arms race in the sub continent. The Indian public opinion sees the United States once again as real villain of peace and prosperity in south Asia.

The United States has agreed that the Kashmir issue must be resolved by the Shimla agreement which is in the India's favour. On the other hand the Kashmir issue is alive because of its hope Pakistan pins on the United

States and its capacity to help. Pakistan had aligned itself with the United States through mutual defense treaty and by becoming member of other alliances. Initially, the united states provide a full support to Pakistan in the Kashmir issue, but with the rejection of India to involve a third party in the issue, the united states affirmed that it should not interfere in the bi-lateral relations between India and Pakistan but the united states has not given up completely the path of a mediator or participator in the issue between India and Pakistan. The United States has strongly condemned the terrorist attacks in India. She has condemned the human rights violations in Kashmir by both security forces as well as insurgents.

There seemed to be a recognition in the USA now, both in the administration and in sections within congress, that Pakistan is a problem , not just for India, but also for the region and ultimately, for the USA as well. The United States administration acquiesced in India's view that elements within the Pakistani government have supported those who engage in violence in Kashmir. The jihadi groups, for instance, propagate, and train freely in Pakistan and Afghanistan and the only explanation the Pakistani ambassador to India is able to give is that this is part of the national upsurge on behalf of the oppressed people in which his government is not directly involved and can do nothing.

India declared unconditional support to the United States war against terrorism. But when united states administration decided to make Pakistan a frontline state in his war against global terrorism, doubts were again expressed about the future cooperative ties between India and the united states. The growth of the terrorist strikes in India, especially on Kashmir legislature on Oct. 2001, and the futile attempt by Pakistan backed terrorist to storm the India parliament on 13 December 2001 created complications in the indo- United States relations. Washington considered Pakistanis support crucial in its war against terrorism and failed to restrain Pakistan from continuing its cross boarder terrorism against India. Mobilization of troops along the border by India and Pakistan in the wake of 13 December event and Washington call for indo-pak dialogue was interpreted in India as America's double standard in dealing with terrorism. However, India decided to pull its troops back and normalize the situation along the border after successfully making the international community aware of cross border terrorism in Kashmir this policy also removed an America worry over a full scale war in the sub continent, which could escalate into a nuclear war.

CONCLUSION:-

As Washington today is in the unique position of enjoying good relations with both India and Pakistan, there is an opportunity for the United States administration to go beyond crisis management and help build a positive peace process for Kashmir. There is also a rare opportunity for shaping a coordinated approach to Kashmir with its European allies. The stakes are high as the focus on the war on terrorism shifts from Afghanistan to Pakistan; it will gradually but inevitably include the Kashmir problem. At this critical juncture Washington should peruse a proactive approach with both short term and long term ends. The immediate objective of Washington's policy must be to avert a war and facilitate resumption of the bi lateral dialogue between India and Pakistan. The Indian govts decision to with draw troops from the internal border to peace time locations and Pakistan's decision to reciprocate hold promise for accomplishing the first objective. Although the Indian deployment of troops along the line of control will continue, it is a major step towards security military de-escalation on the borders. The United States administration needs to continually engage the top leadership in India and Pakistan. The key lies in strictly low-profile and quiet diplomacy. In the long run Washington could play a crucial role of a catalyst in supporting and sustaining the larger peace process, through much of the ground work and ideas must emanate from within the region. The key lies in shifting the focus from India and Pakistan to Kashmir, and from territorial dispute to addressing the political needs of the people.

There are United States interests in both India and Pakistan. These interests mostly include avoiding future wars, nuclear proliferation according economic growth, trade and investment, promoting democratic institutions, providing stability to south Asia, avoiding human rights abuses, combating terrorism, etc. but above all eyeing United States as a mediator and peace promoter from India and Pakistan, there raises the question of Kashmir. The current policy is that only solution to dispute must take into account of the view of the Kashmir people.

Therefore Kashmir is a principal cause of tension between India and Pakistan. It is also a reflection of their general state of animosity. If the Kashmir dispute were resolved tomorrow, relations between the two countries would still be somewhat sour. Still Kashmir remains a possible casusbeli. Unfortunately, there is no possible solution to the conflict in sight. The United States government doesn't have a greater deal of leverage on this issue, and the time not ripe for Washington to launch a major new initiative. United states interest in both India and Pakistan are best served by with other government on a step by step approach towards a series of practical interim rather than of final status such an international contact group ought to pressure mainly quiet multi lateral diplomacy in this area promoting modest incremental steps to ease tensions, reduce friction between

the protagonists and restore political normalcy in Kashmir, and the united states, Pakistan and India, all the three must deal seriously with the Kashmir issue.

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Address:- Dr. Ashak Hussain Malik House No-221, Gangoo Pulwama - 192301

Jammu & Kashmir, India

Cell: 09086405302, 09906662570,

Ph No: 01933212815

Email: nairjc5@gmail.com, nairjc@nairjc.com, info@nairjc.com

Website: www.nairjc.com

