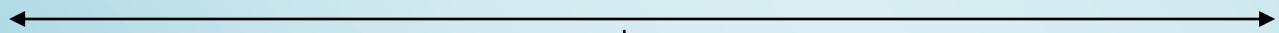


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INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT AND RELATIONS: INTERNATIONAL IMPLICATIONS

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1. INTRODUCTION:

India and Pakistan have had a history of conflict with each other ever since the independence of the Indian subcontinent, and its partition into India and Pakistan in 1947. The India-Pakistan conflict, which began as and is a bilateral conflict, got entangled with the international politics of the Cold War at the time of independence of the two countries. The Cold War, a post Second World War ideological conflict between the US and the Soviet Union, forced both the US and the Soviet Union to take opposing sides in the dispute between India and Pakistan. However, after the end of the Cold War, with the collapse of the former Soviet Union in 1991, the growth of terrorism and the proliferation of the nuclear weapons, the two key consequences of the conflict between the two countries, have given a new dimension to the bilateral conflict from an international perspective.

This paper will explore the international implications of the conflict between India and Pakistan. Section I of the paper will analyze the origin and the growth of conflict between India and Pakistan in a historical context. Section II will highlight the underlying factors that have led to the proliferation of the nuclear weapons and terrorism in the region due to the growing conflict between the two nations. The regional and global implications of nuclear proliferation and terrorism, as well as Pakistan's role in the war and the destabilization of Afghanistan will also be discussed in this section. Section III of the paper will analyze the policy alternatives for building peace between India and Pakistan, which are likely to enhance the prospects of maintaining peace and security at a broader international level. Section IV will conclude the paper, re-emphasizing the internationalization of the India-Pakistan conflict in terms of having unpleasant global consequences.

2. THE INDIA–PAKISTAN CONFLICT:

India and Pakistan have shared a feeling of “mutual distrust” (Hewitt, 1997) ever since the partition of India and the eventual creation of Pakistan as an independent state. This distrust was an outcome of the colonial legacy of “divide and rule.” The colonial policy of divide and rule pitted the Muslims against the Hindus. The policy gave rise, amongst the Muslim, to a sentiment of “Islam being in danger” (Hewitt, 1997) in the Hindu dominated Indian society. The growth of Islamic nationalism and hence the demand for a separate Muslim state was an outcome of this paranoia. On the other side, the belief within the Hindu dominated nationalist party of India was “secular Indian nationalism” (Ganguly, 1994). According to this belief, the Muslims could coexist with the Hindus under the Indian secular umbrella and, therefore, there was no necessity of a separate state.

Despite all efforts by the Indian nationalists to stall the partition at the time of independence, India was divided into two states, the Hindu-dominated India and the Muslim-dominated Pakistan. The British hurried into them partition because they did not want to get embroiled into what they thought to be the irreconcilable differences between the Hindus and the Muslims. Also, having suffered huge losses during World War II, the British lost the will to support their extended empires to resolve their internal conflicts. Thus, the Radcliffe Line (Note 1) was drawn on 17 th August, 1947, which officially demarcated the borders of the two countries.

The feeling of mutual distrust between the two countries, which got seeded during the British rule, continued even after independence. The mainstay of the distrust and, therefore, the conflict between India and Pakistan has been Jammu and Kashmir (Kashmir), a northern state in India. The “ideological orientations” of the Hindus and the Muslims, “Secular Indian Nationalism” and “Islam in Danger,” became the basis for the Kashmir conflict between the two countries because the majority of the population in Kashmir is Muslim. The issue became more complicated because the ruler of Kashmir (Maharaja) was a Hindu and the population of Kashmir was predominantly Muslim. At the time of partition, the Maharaja signed the “instrument of accession,” (Note 2) expressing his will to be a part of India. India, therefore, claims Kashmir to be a part of its territory by virtue of the signed accession. Pakistan, however, denies this claim. Pakistan’s assertion is that the will of the people was not taken into consideration before signing of the accession agreement. This resulted in the first war between India and Pakistan in 1947. The Indian government supported the Maharaja of Kashmir and sent its armies to repel the attack on the western borders of Kashmir. Pakistan’s army also got full fledgedly involved in the war. The war lasted for almost a year till the ceasefire agreement was signed, in January of 1949, as a result of the UN diplomatic effort. The ceasefire agreement, sponsored by the UN, required a withdrawal of the forces on both the sides and demarcated a new ceasefire line. The UN agreement also stipulated that a plebiscite should be held in Kashmir to take into account the will of the people. The government of India, however, failed to implement the last recommendation of the UN which became a sore point between India and Pakistan. The two countries have denied each other’s claims on Kashmir resulting in a conflict which has gone on for more than six decades with no plausible solution in sight. India and Pakistan have fought two full-fledged wars on the issue of Kashmir and they have had a number of border skirmishes during the period.

3. INTERNATIONALIZATION OF THE INDIA-PAKISTAN CONFLICT:

What was essentially a bilateral issue and a regional conflict has assumed international significance in the past couple of decades. Therefore, the conflict between India and Pakistan needs to be revisited in light of the developing international situation and its international implications. The internationalization of the conflict should be approached from two perspectives. In the past years, both India and Pakistan became involved in a race to acquire more and more nuclear weapons to strengthen their front against the other. This has aided and abetted the international nuclear arms race. In addition, acts of terrorism have been used as a potent tool to gain a winning edge in the bilateral conflict. Subsequently, international terrorism has grown manifold ever since the India-Pakistan conflict became marked by heinous acts of terror. The following sub-sections will explore the growth and internationalization of the issues of nuclear proliferation and terrorism in the context of the India-Pakistan conflict.

3.1 Nuclear Proliferation:

India's nuclear journey began as early as in the 1950s. In 1952, the then Prime Minister Nehru unveiled a four year plan to begin developing India's nuclear infrastructure. In the initial years, India's nuclear program was designed towards using nuclear energy for civilian and peaceful purposes only. The direction of the program changed after India lost its territory to China in the Indo-China war of 1962. In 1964, China tested a nuclear weapon and in the same year India commissioned a reprocessing facility in Trombay. With the growing nuclear threat from China, India refused to sign the Nuclear Non-Proliferation Treaty (1968) and continued with its nuclear ambition to strengthen its defense, especially against China. Subsequently, India conducted its first peaceful nuclear explosion in Pokharan (Gujrat) in 1974. even go hungry, but we will get one of our own" (Sublette, 2002). In addition, Pakistan had relied heavily, during the Cold War years, on the US as a security guarantee against India. But the US failed Pakistan's expectations during the 1971 Indo-Pak war. The US naval ship USS Enterprise was deployed in the Indian Ocean during the war, but it did not take any action and very soon moved away from the region. The inaction was due to the fear of a regional war escalating into a war between the Cold War rivals with the possibility of the Soviet Union getting involved from India's side. The US attitude upset Pakistan and provided Pakistan with another rationale for strengthening its defense, especially against India, through acquisition of nuclear weapons.

3.1.1 International Implications:

The nuclear arms race between India and Pakistan and the subsequent nuclear threat has not remained confined to the region. The involvement of countries like Libya, Iran and North Korea in the nuclear proliferation ring has broadened the scope of the nuclear threat beyond the precincts of India and Pakistan.

1) Involvement of the outside powers in Pakistan's nuclear program:

Pakistan is believed to have been clandestinely involved in developing nuclear relations with Iran and Libya ever since it began its nuclear endeavor in the 1970s. A. Q. Khan, the founder of Pakistan's nuclear program and also known as the father of the Pakistani bomb, has been the mastermind behind these relations. Khan's nuclear journey in Pakistan began with an effort to counter the nuclear power of Pakistan's enemy, India. After he returned to Pakistan from Switzerland in the mid 1970s, he gave to Pakistan the much sought after technology to make the nuclear bomb and thus assisted his country in neutralizing India's regional nuclear pre-eminence. However, with time, his nuclear network extended much beyond India. The underlying motivation for his call for proliferation was "pan-Islamism and hostility to western controls on nuclear technology" (Albright and Hinderstein, 2005). Thus, Khan befriended countries like Iran, Libya and North Korea through nuclear collaboration.

2) The Indo-US Nuclear partnership has spurred the nuclear race;

Another factor that has given a dangerous dimension to the nuclear race between India and Pakistan is the tacit acceptance by the United States of India's nuclear status in the past few years. The eagerness of the United States to balance Beijing's power in South Asia and also its perception of India being a "responsible nuclear power" has determined US's policy framework in the region. In addition, recognition of Pakistan's growing links with terrorism and also its clandestine nuclear program has led the US to circumvent Pakistan's nuclear

ambitions. The veritable outcome of US's new overture was the signing of the nuclear deal between US and India in 2006. Although the deal is for using nuclear technology for peaceful purposes, India has still welcomed US's support. India has an underlying desire to gain nuclear superiority to maintain its regional pre-eminence and US has vouchsafed India's desire through the nuclear deal. The deal between India and the United States was concluded despite the fact that India has decided not to open most of its nuclear facilities for international inspection. The US has happily acceded to India's position. Also, the deal went through irrespective of India's non-commitment to the Nuclear Non Proliferation Treaty and India's decision to conduct a series of non-peaceful nuclear tests in the 1990s. No such deal was offered by the US to Pakistan. The Indo-US nuclear partnership has increased Pakistan's paranoia and has pushed it into the arms of other estranged powers. In order to enhance its nuclear capability and be at par with India, Pakistan is now courting with China. Although China had provided nuclear assistance to Pakistan in the past in developing the technology to build gas centrifuges, the Indo-US nuclear partnership has given a new impetus to Pakistan-China nuclear relations. Subsequent to the signing of the nuclear deal between India and the US, the visit of the then President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, to China, was an affirmation to revive nuclear cooperation between the two countries. China also did not welcome the US-India nuclear deal with much enthusiasm because the deal undermined China's own political ambitions in the region. Thus, China eagerly agreed to pacify Pakistan's fear about the changing regional nuclear balance. China's state-run China National Nuclear Corp (CNNC) got involved in building nuclear reactors for Pakistan. In February, 2011, the CNNC signed a deal to build two nuclear reactors with a capacity 300 megawatt. The CNNC has recently proposed to build a one giga-watt nuclear plant in Pakistan which will be much more powerful than the other four.

3) A failed Pakistani state can be a dangerous omen:

After independence, Pakistan's political history has been inimical to a genuine democracy. A democratically elected government has never lasted its full term in Pakistan. The democratic political leadership changed three times in the 1990s before finally being thrown over by a military coup in 1999. Ever since, Pakistan has become

a breeding ground for the extremist groups who often seek refuge in unstable societies. These groups found greater succor in Pakistan in the 1990s and early 2000s. The stability of the current democratic government has also been put at stake by these extremist elements. There is a growing fear among the political analysts that if the current government fails, Pakistan may degenerate into being a failed state.

3.2 Terrorism:

The conflict between India and Pakistan for control over Kashmir has had a direct bearing on the issue of terrorism, both regionally and internationally. The conflict, which resulted in three full-fledged wars between the two countries in 1947, 1965 & 1971, has had a dangerous outcome in the form of growth of terrorism in the region. After being humbled in the three wars with India, Pakistan realized the weaknesses of its military defense. The 1947 and the 1965 wars were fought by the two nations to directly assert their respective control over Kashmir. The 1971 war, which was fought in the eastern sector, was about the secession of the eastern wing of Pakistan (which became the independent nation of Bangladesh in 1971) from the western mainland. The war, however, considerably undermined Pakistan's claim on Kashmir which was based on religion. East Pakistan, like

Kashmir, had a predominantly Muslim population. It became evident that Pakistan had to “find new allies to fight the asymmetric warfare against India” (Reidel, 2008). Subsequently, in the 1990s, a new trend of external insurgency began in the Kashmir, apparently with the tacit support of the Pakistani Intelligence Agency (ISI), after the end of the Cold War (Note 5). The insurgent groups like, Harakat-ul-Mujahideen (HUM), Jaish-e-Mohammed (JEM) and Lakshar-e-Taiba (LET), which were earlier members of the Afghan Mujahideen group - Muslims involved in Jihad (Holy War) - assumed distinct group identities and became active in fighting for the freedom of Kashmir. During the Cold War, the Mujahideen fought against the 1979 Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. Once the Cold War ended, the Mujahideen redirected their attention to Kashmir with their growing empathy for the Pakistani claims on the region. In the 1990s there were a series of terrorist attacks in India which began in Kashmir and then gradually spread to other regions by the year 2000 - the Delhi parliamentary attack in 2001, Bangalore bombings in 2006 and more recently the Mumbai attacks in 2008.

3.2.1 International Implications:

As in the case of the nuclear arms race, the terrorist threat has also broadened in scope beyond the territorial boundaries of India and Pakistan.

1) Pakistan has become the epicenter of the terror matrix:

The terrorist groups responsible for the terrorist attacks in India and those involved in the attacks on the western territories have worked collaboratively and Pakistan has become the headquarters of their activity. HUM, JEM and LET have been operating from Pakistan ever since their creation. After 9-11, when Al-Qaeda and Taliban (Note 8) were routed from Afghanistan by the US and NATO (Note 9) troops, they also sought refuge in the neighboring Pakistan.

2) Pakistan shifting away from the war in Afghanistan:

Another international implication of the bilateral conflict between India and Pakistan and the resulting terrorism has been the US fear of losing Pakistan as an ally in US’s war in Afghanistan. After every terrorist attack on India, Pakistan’s focus shifts to its eastern sector, with India alerting its armies on its borders with Pakistan. Therefore, the western allies, especially the US, have been insisting on the two countries to resolve their bilateral issues peacefully so that Pakistan can redirect its war efforts on the western borders. In the aftermath of the 2001 terrorist attack on the parliament of India, the then President of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, moved his troops from the western borders to the eastern borders and thereby jeopardized the US’s operations in Afghanistan. Collin Powell, President Bush’s secretary of state, was rushed to the region to diffuse tensions between the two countries. After the Mumbai attacks in November, 2008, Condoleezza Rice, the secretary of state during former President Bush’s second term, employed diplomacy to end the escalating tensions on both the sides. During her visit to the region after the attacks, Rice claimed that there was no military stand-off between the two countries and that the two governments are working in cooperation to apprehend the perpetrators of the act.

4. CONFLICT RESOLUTION:

Since the bilateral conflict between India and Pakistan has become intertwined with broader security concerns internationally, resolution of the conflict has assumed greater importance in the current times. Such a resolution is not only integral to the establishment of peace and security between India and Pakistan but it is also imperative for the maintenance of international peace and security.

4.1 The Issue of Nuclear Proliferation:

Nuclear arms race has been a major deterrent to trust building between India and Pakistan. Therefore, it is pertinent that a nuclear dialogue should be started between the two countries as an initial gesture to secure peace. For the purpose, “The two sides should set out their perceptions of each other’s nuclear efforts and make explicit their concerns.”(Subramanyam 1993) In this context, an assurance for not using the nuclear weapons first would be a good start. Unfortunately, Pakistan has not committed itself to any such initiative despite the explicit statement by the former Prime Minister of India, Atal Bihari Bajpyee, that India will not preempt the use of nuclear weapons. On the contrary, the former military ruler of Pakistan, Pervez Musharraf, blatantly declared that Pakistan will not hesitate to use nuclear weapons if the Indian army crosses the ceasefire line. Pakistan currently is under democratic governance with civilian leaders in control of its politics. Here is an opportunity for Pakistan to make that commitment and help in the process of confidence building. During his first year as the Prime Minister of Pakistan, Yusaf Raza Gilani (2008-2009), had admitted that “the country was mindful of its responsibilities as a nuclear weapon state as well as its international obligations.” But no practical measures were adopted by the former Prime Minister since then, which could be said to have been directed towards the enforcement of his candid assertion.

5. CONCLUSION:

The India-Pakistan conflict, which began in 1947 after the independence and the subsequent creation of the two states, has assumed an international character in the past couple of decades. The two veritable outcomes of the conflict, nuclear proliferation and terrorism, have not only destabilized the region but have also posed a threat to international peace and security. What was originally a bilateral conflict, now, has unpleasant international implications. The conflict has involved many other countries with the growing nuclear cooperation of India and Pakistan with their respective nuclear partners. The nuclear threat has become all the more dangerous considering the political instability in Pakistan and the subsequent fear of the extremists getting their hands on the nuclear installations in Pakistan. The conflict between the two countries has also resulted in terrorism, especially the one practiced by the Jihadists, becoming a global threat with more and more acts of terror happening world-wide. Therefore, it is pertinent to address the bilateral conflict with positive initiatives from both the sides, India and Pakistan, to ensure stability not only for the region but also for the international society at large.

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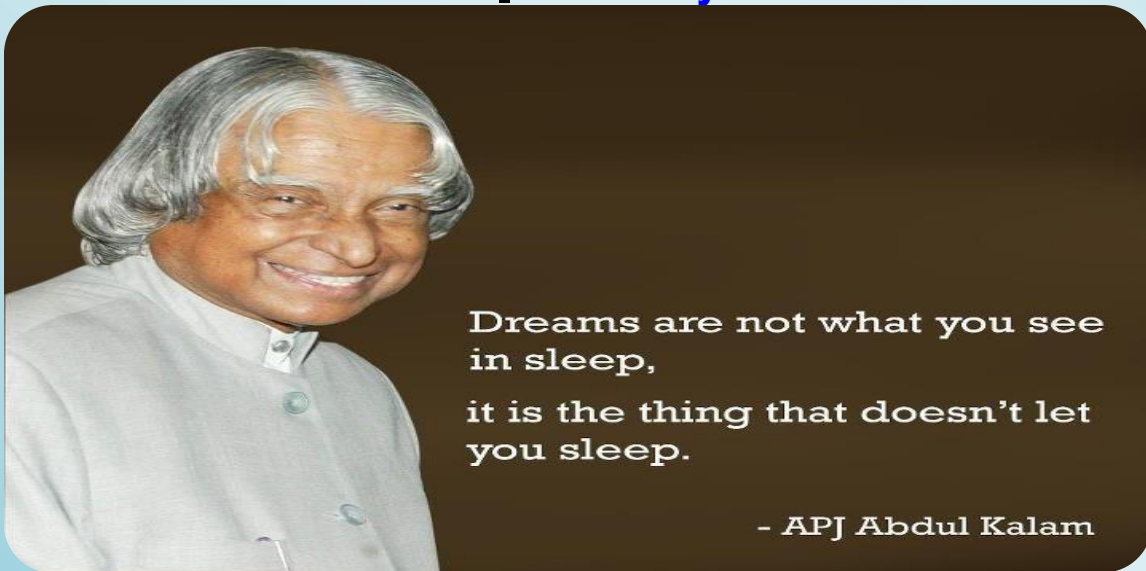
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Dreams are not what you see
in sleep,
it is the thing that doesn't let
you sleep.

- APJ Abdul Kalam