

Present and Future Conflict Environment: Challenges for Pakistan

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Abstract

US occurrence has actively contributed in aggravating the security situation in the region of South Asia. US war on terror has affected Pakistan significantly. This war has posed serious challenges for Pakistan military and political leadership. Worsening economic condition has added a frustrated dimension in this war. There has been a serious lack of comprehension between political leadership and Pakistan military on the perception of threat, nature of conflict and development of consensus on resolving these conflicts and moulding a favourable public opinion. This grim scenario on national and regional level is the consequence of global security environment. In past Pakistan's security policies was mainly India centric while US served as a prime factor in the backdrop. In present the situation is reversed. Pakistan's security policies are mainly US centric in post 9/11 era. The present study is an effort to analyse the existing realities.

Key Words: Threat perception, Strategic culture, Security policies, nuclear capability, Cold Start Strategy.

In South Asia, nuclear status was sought to cope with the security challenges, present in the strategic culture of the region. But the security scenario is blurring even today specifically for Pakistan. This grim scenario has kept the institution of Army active and effective since inception. In some periods of time military it self was the political decision maker and sometimes it provided relief to the political leadership for making viable political decisions. There has been a serious lack of comprehension between political leadership and Pakistan military on the perception of threat, nature of conflict and development of consensus on resolving these conflicts and moulding a favourable public opinion.

This grim scenario on national and regional level is consequence of global security environment. In past Pakistan's security policies was mainly India centric while US served as a prime factor in the backdrop. In present the situation is reversed. Pakistan's security policies are mainly US centric in post

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9/11 era. There are few important factors that are shaping the security settings. They are;

- Reality and Rationale of US Presence in the Region
- Internal issues and challenges
- New Regional Powers with Global Aspirations and Agendas
- Changing Realities of World Politics

Strategically Pakistan is the foremost victim of insecurity due to above mentioned global security settings. America is sitting in backyard, economy is near to shatter, there is a constant threat condition on Eastern and Western borders, moreover, there is ideological divergence between different segments of society. This scenario is not only intricate but delicate to handle. Before discussing the regional and global element of insecurity and role of Pakistan's institutions to counter them, it is important to understand the theoretical base of threat, strategic culture and conflict. In fact threat and conflict are the off springs of strategic culture and on the other hand threat and conflict contribute to the strategic culture. These elements are inter connected and inter dependent. Here they are explained one by one keeping in view the security issues of Pakistan in the global security settings.

Threat Perception

In literal meaning threat is declaration of intention to cause harm. One can understand it as a warning from a powerful opponent. On the other hand perception is a process of using the senses to acquire information about the surrounding or situation (Hornby, 2000, p.997). Threat perception is 'central to overall phenomenon' in the international crisis studies (Cohen, 1979, p.3). Threat validates the mobilization of defence resources of the state. Without the clear communication of threat even the clear evidence is not entertained on merit in some cases. Threat evokes counter measures on the other hand (Singer, J.D. 1958: 93-94).

Threat is not generally to the physical existence of the state. If a state is vulnerable to the internal rebellion then threat is not to the physical existence of the state but it is to the besieged regime. Now such a state claims that there is threat to its national security which is, in reality, to that particular regime alone. In such situations 'internal turmoil can escalate into the threat of external invasion' (Holsti, 1992:85).

Defining Threat

In term of international relations there are various definitions of threat. From external point of view 'a threat is the communication of one's intention to take an action harmful to another party, if that party first takes an action one holds in disfavour, or does not take an action one favours' (Sawyer and Guetzkow, 1965:464) in the view scholars external aspect of treat emerges out of the external entities whose logical structure can be seen objectively.

The other definition describes the internal point of view of the threat. Singer and Pruitt say 'threat perception arises from the targets assessment of threatener's intentions and capabilities' (Singer, 1958:94). This group of scholars focuses on the intangible elements. For them threat is cognitive and emotional response of the target than logical and intangible. Both internal and external theories have been criticized. There is also a view that internal theory of threat lacks 'objective criteria of evolution'. While external theory of threat avoids these elements and focuses only those elements which can be objectively observed (Sawyer and Guetzkow, 1965: 469).

The behaviourists attempt to find the variables which act between these two types. They prescribe to observe threat in the environment of norms and values. For them if external type of threat is stimulus and external type of threat is responsive then the contextual variables between the threatened and the target must be sought (Sawyer and Guetzkow, 1965: 452).

Threat Perception and Decision Making

Political decision making is always based on some solid reason. Strategic culture helps decision makers to assess the ratio of threat as threat actually manifests itself in the elements of strategic culture. It is a fact the premises of arguments are not necessarily authentic, even if premises of argument is true it is not necessary that the conclusion made under the circumstances is necessarily authentic. 'Certain statements, item of evidence and physical environment' are the only element available to a decision maker for a correct decision. Under the circumstances of threat it becomes critical to reach at the correct and viable decisions. A decision maker is required to use his faculty of evaluation to investigate facts, statements, information from various sources and clues (Stebbing, 1939: 30-31).

Threat actually makes its presence felt in the strategic culture of a state. Strategic culture, along with its components in relation with particular actor,

serves as a major determinant of foreign policy. Wherever the vulnerabilities are exploited, the threat emerges. The emerging threats generate impetus for the immediate decision making. Hence, threat serves as a prime motivating factor in the procedure of decision making. It actually determines the direction of policy making and decision making procedure.

Threat Perception in South Asia

South Asian region contains a variety of states from India with enormous size of 3million sq km, to the Maldives with only 300 sq km land area. Among all regional actors India occupies a pivotal position. India shares its borders with Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, Nepal, Bhutan and Myanmar, while it is separated from a Sri Lanka through a narrow strait (<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>).

South Asia is a distinct natural unit. In north and north-west it is bounded with Himalayan and Hindu Kush Mountain, in South by Arabian Sea. In East it is sided with ASEAN region while in West it is linked with Central Asia. Its power potential and politico-diplomatic mainly depends on two vital states, India and Pakistan. Total environment of South Asian region is over shadowed by the hostile and antagonistic relations of India and Pakistan. Peace, security and economic up lift of the region totally depends upon the nature of relation of these two paramount states. It is mainly because of disagreement between India and Pakistan that South Asian Association for Regional Peace (SAARC) has remained unsuccessful to show its potential for regional peace and economic uplift like other regional groups like ASEAN and European Union (<http://www.odci.gov/cia/publications/factbook/index.html>). Atomic explosion from both India and Pakistan has further covert this region into a nuclear flash point. Level of threat and insecurity has become dangerously high in the region. There are many factors responsible for this scenario. Both of the paramount states India and Pakistan have their own perception of threat and insecurity. Their threat perception can vividly be judged by studying their strategic cultures. Both states have been keeping each other as an indispensable element of their strategic culture since inception.

Security has been discussed in detail in the theory of international relations. There is a classificatory scheme which has discussed the weaker and the strong nations in detail. If a state has more capabilities to control the environment than its incapacities then that nation is a strong nation like USA, Germany, Britain and France. If a state's capability to control the environment, sustain pressures and to safeguard national interests is equal to their incapacities then such states can have a moderate level of insecurity like Brazil, Yugoslavia, China and Israel. The states whose incapacities are more than their capabilities are real insecure states. They have more concerns

regarding their capabilities. All post-colonial states come under this category (Buzan, 1983: 4).

As part of third category, both India and Pakistan have their own perception of threat and insecurity. In the mid of 20th century most of South Asian nations got independence from the British rule. This enormous change in the political position of these nations brought forward new geographic and strategic realities which have chalked out present political and strategic scenario in the region. India is an enormous chunk of South Asia geographically. This enormous size, cultural diversity and multiple resources have given this country a natural supremacy over other regional actors (Matinuddin, 1993:25).

There is a deep sense of domination in India due to these factors. India wants to be a pro-eminent nation not only in the region but also in the world. Right from the inception India has planned its security program on the principle of dominance. It has constantly kept on enlarging its defensive parameters on different pleas and demands (Matinuddin, 1993:27). The emerging power of India had enhanced the volume of threat in the South Asian strategic culture. Other South Asian states actually have taken care of these Indian trends while making policies regarding their defence and security. That is why India has always criticized the regional actors who try to seek foreign help ignoring Indian assistance and involvement.

As far as nuclearization of the region is concerned, India has remained busy since its inception for the achievement of this capability. Sino- Indian conflict in 1962 served as a significant factor in this regard. In 1974 India had established its nuclear status with a successful atomic explosion. This explosion has begun the nuclear era in the South Asian region. Nuclear dimension has revitalized the threat perception in the region. Dealing with Pakistan has always been a tough challenge for India. Both of the countries continue to have antagonistic relations. As both of them perceived each other as a serious threat, the entire region has suffered the after effects of this antagonism and mistrust (Mattoo, 1999:11-23).

Before describing the security issue between two countries it is important to understand the strategic culture. From inception till 9/11 India has served as the prime factor in the Pakistani decision making and security plans. Pakistan kept its defence apparatus busy till the acquisition of nuclear capability as Indian threat was brooding and ever enhancing. It actually occupied this entire era while America served as the secondary factor. But the global security setting after 9/11 reverses the entire situation. To understand this scenario, it is first important to understand the strategic culture approach.

Defining Strategic Cultural

There is consensus of scholars that understand strategic culture is the tool to comprehend and predict state's behaviour and policies. This concept has yet not considered as a separate field of study. Various scholars have their own views and concept on this topic (Katzanstien, 1996: 50). Since 1970s strategic culture has been a topic of study. These studies were done mostly from a sociological, anthropological and psychological perspective. The studies of scholars has defined culture as "a historically transmitted pattern of meanings embodied in symbols, a system of inherited conceptions expressed in symbolic form by means of which men communicate, perpetuate, and develop their knowledge about the attitudes towards life" (Geertz, 1973: 20).

When culture is applied in security studies, it is defined as "modes of thought and action with respect to (force) derived from perception of national historical experience, aspiration of self- characterization and from state- distinctive experiences" (Gray, 1981: 53-75).

In the mid 1990s the concept to strategic culture became more focused on security issues. It was defined as "different predominant strategic preferences rooted in early formative experiences of the state, influenced to some degree by philosophical, political, cultural and cognitive characteristics of a state and its elites" (Johnston, 1995:74-90).

There is a vast disagreement on one definition of the concept but most of the definitions include the general terms of the concept which were referred by Jack Snyder. He has defined culture as 'the sum total of the ideals, conditional emotional responses, and pattern of behaviour that member of the national strategic community have acquired through instructions or imitation and share with each others' (Snyder, 1977:8). The most recent definition is offered by the Ian Johnston, he expressed strategic culture as 'an ideational milieu which limits behaviour choices'. This particular milieu is shaped by 'shared assumptions and decision rules that impose a degree of order on individual and group conceptions of their relationship to their social, organizational or political environment' (Johnston, 1995:76).

Due to vast disagreement among the scholars on this concept, a researcher is required to immerse deeply in the nation's history, attitudes and conduct. Being concise, a good area study is required for this task. The method to be applied for such studies would be derived of cultural anthropology or political sociology.

Major Components of Pakistan's Strategic Culture

Before discussing Pakistan's security issues, it would be appropriate to understand the major components of Pakistani strategic culture. This can assist in understanding the security policy and crucial decisions that were made from time to time. There are several factors in the strategic culture of Pakistan that created primacy for Indian threat till the end of century and there are the factors that have got currency in the beginning of 21st century from global perspective. End of previous century and beginning of current century has seen the shift of security pendulum from India to USA. The elements of defining strategic culture are discussed below.

Defiance to Indian Hegemony

Both military and political elite are agreed on the point to defy all Indian efforts of establishing its hegemony over Pakistan. This hegemony is considered opposite to the ideology of Pakistan which was based on the idea of freedom of religion, expression and action for the majority of South Asian Muslims in a separate homeland. After the attainment of independence, Pakistani elites have strived to save the sovereignty of state. They have made all efforts to resist Indian attempts to curtail the freedom of action of the state. This trend is visible in all regional and international policies, military planning and all efforts of arms acquisition (Lavoy, 2005:125-132). This significant element of strategic culture has kept Pakistan's security plans mostly India centric.

Priority of Defence Needs

Defence expenditure is the second striking component of Pakistan's strategic culture. This excessive expenditure on defence and security needs is done at the cost of basic infrastructure, education, social services and economic uplift. Despite intense poverty condition there has been a considerable allocation of defence expenditure in the annual budget (Rizvi, 2002:305-328).

1. Arms Assistance from the West

Indian superiority in wealth, manpower and military advancement has always made Pakistan to seek weapons and training from the West. U.S has provided this arms assistance in 1950s, 1960s and in 1970s. In 1980s Pakistan turned to China for its security needs. With US tilt towards Pakistan for its strategic interests in the region and Pakistan again capitalized on this opportunity. In 1990s US imposed conditions on arms transfer to prohibit Pakistan from pursuing nuclear weapons. Pakistan has sought foreign assistance in the field

of defence but in no part of history it has totally relied on it. Pakistan has gradually pursued its own conventional and nuclear defence program (Rizvi, 2002: 305-328).

2. Western Borders Concerns

Afghanistan has been source of constant threat and tension since inception. Afghan factor has further affected the security policies and decision of the country, especially after 9/11. Afghanistan has serious concerns over the legitimacy of the Durand Line which demarcated the Pak-Afghanistan border. Pushtun being the divided community between Pakistan and Afghanistan remained a source of tension. Pakistan has tried to remain friendly to the Afghan ruling regime either warlords or Taliban (Khan, 2003:45-55). Since 9/11 these relations have taken quite intricate turn. American presence in the region has made the security scenario more grim and complicated.

3. Identification with Islam

Pakistan's policies have been identified with Islam. This was the concept that has provided the basis of the ideology of Pakistan. Many a times Pakistan tried to be the leader of Islamic world but these efforts were not appreciated by many states who think themselves better for this position. As far as defence policies are concerned they mostly remained free of this influence.

4. Nuclear Capability and Deterrence

This element is the by product of the rest of the element of Pakistan's strategic culture. Many a factors have contributed in this element. India factor is much predominant in this regard. East Pakistan debacle has served as a major reason behind Pakistan's nuclear weapon program. It was created out of sheer security needs. Pakistan has currently sufficient conventional and nuclear deterrence posture.

The strategic culture of Pakistan is the outcome of many inherent and ongoing issues and political realities discussed earlier. Strategic culture determines "pervasive and long-lasting strategic preferences by formulating concepts of the role and efficacy of military force in interstate political affairs, and by clothing these conceptions with such an aura of actuality that the strategic preferences seem uniquely realistic and efficacious." This is the basic factor that helps to assume the nature of adversary, the actions and threat it poses (Rizvi, 2002: 305-328). these factors have mainly composed the strategic culture of Pakistan. Among these factors Indian dimension is most prominent. Hence, most of security and defence policies of Pakistan remained India centric till the end of 20th century. With the beginning of 21st century US has replaced India. The components of strategic culture are the same but the

vulnerabilities have become more America centric than India centric. Just as Indian threat has convert most of the geographical vulnerabilities into an active threat, the same is happening in case of USA. Vulnerability on the Western borders has turn into a potent and standing threat for the region in general and Pakistan in particular. Now the conflicts emerged within the region shall be discussed in two major phases i.e. pre 9/11 and post 9/11.

Conflict within the Region

Pre 9/11 (India Centric Phase)

Pre 9/11 era was mainly India centric, while US played as a factor behind the conflicts took place between India and Pakistan. Pakistan's foreign policy remained vocal mainly regarding Indian concern while US was sought for military, economic and strategic assistance. Pakistan joined capitalist bloc and joined defence pacts with US. In this capacity Pakistan served as an ally of US against communism. Pakistan was forced by its defence needs and security situation as India was showing antagonistic designs since inception. Major issues faced by Pakistan in pre 9/11 era are mostly the product of Indian threats and antagonistic policies. There is no doubt in explaining that Pakistan's threat perception is the product of prevailing and inherent strategic culture. Right from the inception Pakistan had to face serious threats generated by the boundary commission and nefarious designs of India. Some of the basic issues shall be discussed here that have created Pakistan's strategic culture and make the presence of threat certain in the regional scenario. Indo- Pak conflicts are further divided into two eras; pre nuclear power phase and post nuclear power phase.

Pre Nuclear Power Phase

1. War of Succession And Inverse Ideological Basis

Since centuries both nations are the inhabitant of South Asia. It was under the British rule in sub continent that cultural religious and ideological differences take shape of divergent and hostile political posture (Khan, 1951:8). Both communities remained hostile to each other the entire phase of independence movement. In the time of Lord Ripon in 1883, Sir Syed Ahmad Khan was very much vocal about the rights of Muslims on the establishment of local boards and their reservations under the Hindu dominating representative body. He was of the view that India was a multi-cultural and multi-religious continent, here 'in one and the same district the population may consist of various creeds and various nationalities' (Coupland, 1943: 155-56). The same concern had made Muslims to convince British Government to grant them right of separate electorate in the Indian Council Act of 1909. The principle of communal representation became inevitable part of subsequent British

constitutions in subcontinent. By the end of Second World War both communities were not ready to offer viable political adjustment to each other. This attitude made the procedure of succession terrible. The procedure of succession is hence, the base of many issues between India and Pakistan.

2. Conflict on Military Share

Military supplies of Pakistan were restricted by India on the eve of independence. This factor has laid the basis of defence equipment deficiency for Pakistan. Commander-in-Chief of British India Sir Claude Auchinleck resigned from the post of Supreme Commander on the same issue. Pakistan, with all its vulnerabilities was arms less in front of Indian aggression. The prediction of Sir Claude Auchinleck that 'if we are removed, there is no hope at all of any just division of assets' was finally proved correct and India did not deliver arms to Pakistan which were due to it. This unreasonable attitude exhibits the Indian nature and posed an open threat to Pakistan (Burk & Ziring, 1990: 10; Khan, 1963: 40; Salamat, 1992: 174; Hassan, 1966: 428-30).

3. Conflict on Evacuee Property

Both sides had to face tough situation on this issue. Millions of people evacuated their houses and leave their properties for sake of a safe homeland as the result of large number of massacres on communal and religious basis. Many solutions were presented on the issue of evacuee property but with the settlement of refugees on both sides, this issue died down. A number of conferences were held by both sides to resolve problem such as evaluation of property, record setting the areas to evacuation legislation was to apply. Finally an intra-dominion agreement was made in January, 1949, regarding agricultural property, urban movable and immovable property. It was limited only to agreed areas (Salamat, 1992: 172; Khan, 1963: 40). As a consequence it had left a deep psychological scare on the mind of people and made the traces of hostility permanent for future.

4. The Indus Water Conflict

Injustice of the division commission settled under the presentation of Sir Radcliff was mainly responsible for the emergence of this conflict between India and Pakistan. It was such an issue which has brought the entire nation to its toes. The country faced a sheer threat when India on 1st April 1948 had cut off the supply of water from the two head works under its control. Under such a dire situation Pakistan has no choice but to sign a treaty on Indian biddings (Baxter, 1987: 39-45).

Pakistan remained under constant threat till 1960s. Before that with help of good offices of International Bank of Reconstruction and Development

solution of the problem was devised in 1952 but finally the Indus Water Treaty and the Indus Basin Development Fund Agreement was signed by President Ayub Khan and Prime Minister Nehru in 1960 in Karachi (Uzair, 2007: 175-197; Ali, 1967: 308-322).

5. Cash Balances Conflict

It is a recorded fact that united India under British rule had reserves of about 4,000 million rupees at the time of independence. The case of cash balances was in the Arbitral Tribunal, by the end of 1947 India and Pakistan had mutually decided that the later would get 750 crore rupees and the case was removed from the tribunal. India, as always, tried the nerves of newly born state by delivering only 200 crore rupees and the rest of the amount was conditioned with the settlement of Kashmir issue (Gupta, 1960: 46). This statement was given by Sardar Patel after the concluding the treaty. Finance Minister of Pakistan had mentioned that 'at no stage of discussions, which led to the signing of the agreement, was the question of Kashmir ever mentioned.' The issue of cash balance was vulnerability on the part of Pakistan which was well explored and turned into a serious conflict at that time.

Issue of cash balance had taken a dramatic turn when Gandhi had threatened to start an indefinite fast till the time the cash balance is issued to Pakistan. Sardar Patel was convinced for the time being but later on Mr. Gandhi had to pay by his blood when on the same issue he shot dead by a member of RSSS (Rashtriya Swayam Sewak Sangh). After this entire episode Pakistan remained unable to take its entire share in cash balances from India (Salamat, 1992: 173; Tendulkar, 1963: 246-47).

6. Kashmir Conflict

Kashmir is the longest standing issue between India and Pakistan. 'This factor has been central to the growth and sustenance of antagonism.' This issue has its basis in the division plan of subcontinent. Kashmir was among 600 Princely states who were given right to decide with consultation of their people, with what side to be affiliated. Kashmir was sharing frontiers with both India and Pakistan. This fact had given Dogra Ruler a good reason to annex the state with India. Moreover the boundary commission under the supervision of Sir Radcliff had also provided India with the facility to enter its forces in the valley by giving its important district of Gurdaspur.

It is because of Kashmir issue that both sides had begun their relation with the outbreak of a war in 1948. Since inception this issue has been a major bone of contention between India and Pakistan. This issue had taken many turns but

each turn has added in the threat perception of Pakistan. India has always exploited Pakistan over this issue. In reply Pakistan had tried to gather all types of support from round the world, from moral to military support. Wars between two countries had even not been avoided. Still it is a standing issue between two states and one of the major sources of insecurity in the region and one of the principle element of threat perception of Pakistan. Throughout the decades of independence the 'degree and form' of crisis may have changed but the issue has remained the same (Jalazai, 2001: 103; Salamat, 1992: 185; Menon, 1961: 125; Kazimi, 1997:.306-314).

All above mentioned issues served as major motivational factors in covering up vulnerabilities and looking up the tools and assistance in order to meet with the conflict posed by India time to time. These conflicts kept on taking serious position. Both sides fought two wars; one in 1965 and the other in 1971. In the later war Pakistan lost its Eastern wing. It was a big blow to the sovereignty and strategic position of Pakistan on global level. In this grim scenario Indian nuclear explosion in 1974 added a serious dimension in the strategic culture of Pakistan. Pakistan was well aware of the vulnerabilities on both Eastern and Western borders. The situation was calling for a strong, viable and permanent defence arrangement that could contain India effectively. Such containment could be obtained only though nuclear weapon program. Pakistan had a grim experience of defence pacts and it was aware of the vested interest of the West. Pakistan build nuclear weapons, even then the issues and conflict did not cease to emerge.

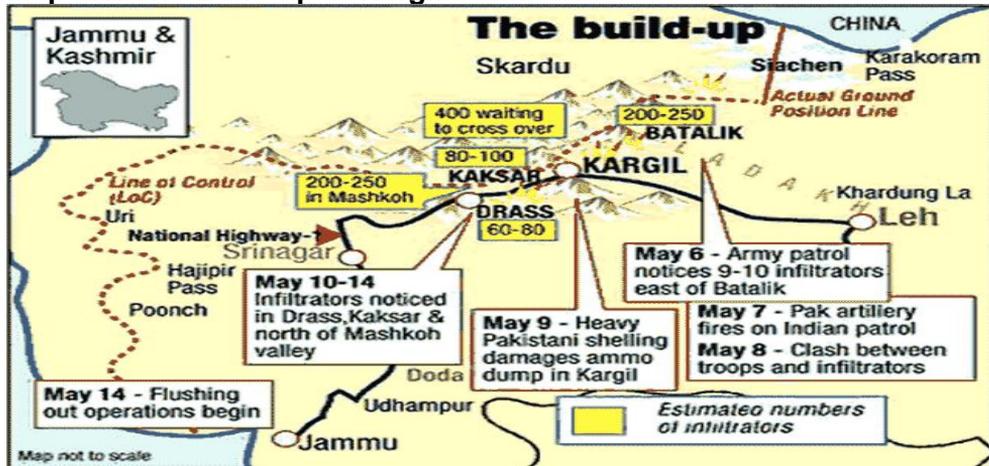
At the same place it is a fact that nuclear capability has contained Indian hegemonic designs in an effective way.

Post Nuclear Power Phase

1. The Kargil Crisis of 1999

This crisis was the first major military conflict between India and Pakistan after overt nuclearization. Kargil heights are the point of separation between Indian held Kashmir and Pakistani administered Kashmir. India had encroached over these heights since Simla agreement. Indian forces used to vacate these heights during deep winter months and come back in the summer. In the summer of 1999, when Indian forces came back they were totally surprised to find out that the heights were taken over by the Pakistani forces (Cheema, 2008: 57-62).

Map 4.1: The Build-up of Kargil Conflict 1999



Source: Retrieved on 27 July 2010 from <http://en.wikipedia.org>

Although both sides used the conventional means but Indian superiority was obvious in this regard. At a certain point India had given serious thought to the use of nuclear weapons. India even carried out the mobility of her nuclear warheads in order to create a credible threat over Pakistan (Levy & Das, 1999). Pakistan had also corresponded with the same will. This is worth noticing that both sides refrained to announce officially the deployment of their nuclear weapons. It was mainly signalling of nuclear deterrence that had halted this crisis from converting into a full fledged war between India and Pakistan. Nuclear deterrence had played a vital role in de-escalation and management of Kargil crisis (Lancaster, 1999).

Kargil conflict was managed during the Nawaz- Clinton summit in Washington on 4th July 1999. US had persuaded Pakistan on unilateral withdrawal of her forces from across LoC around Kargil. Pakistan had agreed to it. The US role between India and Pakistan became active after nuclearization and Kargil episode was the example of this fact (Hoyt's, 2008:34-45).

2. The 2002 Military Conflict

Military confrontation in 2002 was the second significant conflict between India and Pakistan in post nuclear power era. It was a clear manifestation of signalling of nuclear deterrence. Global politics had taken a significant turn after September 2001 terrorist attacks on USA. War on terrorism had taken initiatives. This military confrontation came forward on a significant point of time. Unlike Kargil crisis in this conflict both sides had begun to operationalize their nuclear weapons in a limited way. Threat perception and conflict situation

in the region had been heightening even more (Chari, Cheema & Cohen, 2007:149).

3. Kashmir Issue

Kashmir has been a major source of contention between India and Pakistan since independence. This issue had remained in limelight during Kargil crisis of 1999. This conflicting situation had made the global authorities realized that there can be a strong chance of nuclear exchange in the presence of an unresolved territorial dispute (The Dawn, 22 February 1999). Both sides were stressed to join meaningful dialogue for the resolution of the decades old conflict. As both sides remained stuck to their fundamental principles regarding the issue, this issue remained unresolved. Again US role in the region and between India and Pakistan came forth significantly.

4. Cold Start Strategy

After over nuclearization the nature and mode of conflict changed significantly between India and Pakistan. US involvement became more active, effective and direct. Beside its own global hegemonic agenda, US started to contain nuclear flash between India and Pakistan. India, on the other hand, adopted cold start strategy after 2002 military confrontation. The objective of this military strategy was to obtain objectives which are otherwise hard to achieve in the presence of nuclear posture and intervention by the super powers. This strategy was not officially announced. It was an attempt to threaten Pakistan by causing limited but deep military losses (Salik, 2004:15).

Indian side a few very important facts regarding such a strategy. One may choose war on its own but it is impossible to terminate it without agreement of the adversary. Secondly India had wrongly assumed that Pakistan will silently observe Indian short tripped military adventures by IBGs. Pakistan's conventional strategy is based on the doctrine of 'offensive defence.' Pakistan has short strategic depth, which is why Pakistan defence strategy had aimed to fight subsequent battle on the enemy ground (Ladwig, 2008: 158-60).

As strategic culture kept on developing, the security situation took more intricate shape. Indian designs have not changed but its mode of action has significantly changed. With active US role in the region and its vested interests India has gradually taken the place behind the scene. Security situation and defence policies have gradually shifted from Indian centric to US centric agendas. Hence, it important to understand the changing nature of conflict in the strategic culture of the region and current security settings on the globe.

Changing nature of conflict

Post 9/11 Era

U.S is present in the region since last one decade as a glaring reality. US presence has actively contributed in worsening the security situation in the region. US war on terror has affected Pakistan significantly. This war has posed serious challenges for Pakistan military and political leadership. US global hegemonic agenda is no secret any more. Worsening economic conditions have added a frustrated dimension in this war. The war mania and economic deterioration has posed a serious threat to capitalism itself. Emerging regional powers are a point of concern for US policy makers. Among these grim factors Pakistan is bound to contribute due to its strategic setting.

Post 9/11 Era (US Centric Phase)

Present Security and Conflict Scenario

1. Reality and Rationale of US Presence in the Region

US emerged as a super power by the end of WW-II. By the end of cold war it has taken shape of 'Hyper Power'. America filled the power vacuum with the disintegration of USSR. It was significant, at the same place, that in what way America will manifest its position; as a benign super power, as global hegemonic power or as leader of global community. America, unfortunately choose to adopt the role of a global hegemonic power. Without going into the history of post 9/11 US entry into Middle East and West Asia it is significant to understand its aims and objectives in this venture. It is US policy to first devise the rationale and then enter in the game with its own global agendas. US had landed up in our immediate neighbourhood, Afghanistan with a rationale and an obvious agenda. The War on Terror is the rationale in the backdrop of 9/11 and the agenda is the following;

US Agenda and Rationale

The incident of 9/11 is the term that explains itself. Infect the contours of the New World Order heavily relied on creation of that formidable foe, the Political Islam. The West led by America is seeking an economic lebensraum (energy security by physically controlling the hydrocarbon hub). Central Asia and Middle East are the significant power hubs.

The other side of this war is the containment of China. By controlling the power hubs of this region, America can further squeeze the China's ever spreading impact on the regional and global economy.

US Global Hegemonic Designs and Pakistan's Security in the Region

U.S is following this agenda step by step since the end of cold war. The role of NATO is extended to a non North Atlantic Zone. With the initiation of war in Afghanistan, on one hand US coerced Pakistan into becoming a frontline in this war and on the other allowed Indian, Afghan and Israeli intelligence apparatus to play a dangerous and anti Pakistan game in our very backyard along the Durand Line. This has generated a confused and vicious circle of different players trying to undermine one another and led to an environment of mistrust and fear. The amount of resources (military and financial) being made available to the so called Pakistani Taliban (TTP) to unleash urban terror of gigantic proportion is a very clear indicator that enemies of Pakistan have joined hands to exploit its soft belly west of River Indus, including Balochistan.

Cracks in the Capitalism and World Economy

Capitalism is facing serious a failure and the evidence is the recent crash of stock markets and fall of bans in the leading capitalist states. This situation has caused a situation of recession worldwide. These dilapidated economic conditions have brought down the public morale on the whole. No doubt expenditure on the GWOT is the major factor in this overall economic downfall throughout the world. This poor economic condition offends the American plan of war on terror.

2. New Regional Powers with Global Aspirations and Agendas

■ Rise of China

China has emerged as a capable economic power that has capacity to emerge as a benign super power with the especial considerations for the developing world. The good will and benign policy of China is well understood throughout the globe. American involvement in the Middle East and South Asia has given serious considerations to the Chinese policy makers. Pakistan and Iran are the natural partners of China. Especially Pak-China axis can alter the security equation in the region and it can prove positive for the internal security environment in Pakistan.

■ Iranian Question

Iranian resilience has posed a challenge for US. Iran is not ready to compromise on its nuclear program. Iran's nuclear program is not suitable for US interests in the region. Iran is not only pursuing nuclear weapon program but also it is cherishing good relations in the region with other regional actors. Iran has maintained reasonably good relations with the Arab World, has

worked for politico-economic cooperation with Pakistan and India and developed strategic relationship with China and Russia.

■ **Position of India in regional and global scenario**

India has always posed as regional power with global aspiration but in the recent scenario it has emerged as a favourite of West. India is considered as an opportunity in the sight of West. As far as Pakistan is concerned, India is has always been a threat for its security. It is recently come to light that there is collaboration between RAW and MOSSAD in Afghanistan with a view to seriously destabilize Pakistan. India has full backing of West for its favourite anti-Pakistan agenda. India is using different tools of coercion, for example diplomatic and economic coercion, media blitz and support of terrorism in Pakistan. India has violated the Indus water treaty and it has blatantly used Baglihar dam. It is also penetrating in the media to spread Indian culture in the country, while its intelligence and terrorist agencies are contributing in the terrorism in Pakistan.

■ **Rebound of Russian Federation; A New Challenge for US**

Russia has come back in the power game within the first decade of disintegration of USSR. First it has taken control over the economic downfall and then is posed a new military front against NATO. US is not successful in developing an effective response against it. On the other hand it is developing good relationship with Iran and China which is up-setting factor for US. Pakistan may get some positive responses out of this scenario indirectly.

3. Mass Media and Efforts to Undermine a Nuclear Pakistan

Indian impact has established its roots gradually in the Pakistani print and electronic media. India has no doubt dominance over Pakistan of information. Pakistan has remained unsuccessful to penetrate the global media market due to lack of an effort to build print and electronic media on international standard. Pakistani media has not groomed its media experts who could become Pakistani mouthpieces in the inter-national media. India has always portrayed an exaggerated picture of its society while Pakistan has focused on the opposite direction. Unfortunately proliferation of news and entertainment channels and print media within Pakistan has done the opposite when it comes to positive projection of Pakistan.

Future of Afghanistan and Challenges for Pakistan

After the withdrawal of US from Afghanistan, the disturbed and instable state will pose further challenge to Pakistan. The conflicting relationship, the

unsettled issues between the two countries will raise serious questions. Against this backdrop of Afghanistan's impending economic collapse, post-Isaf, and the unique set of challenges such a collapse will raise, Pakistani policymakers need to "re-imagine" the extant Pak-Afghan relations in a new light.

For this reason, the "New Silk Road Initiative (NSRI)" proposed by Sham L Bathija, Senior Economic Advisor to President Hamid Karzai, shows tremendous promise in assisting policymakers with re-imagining Pak-Afghan relations as a "win-win" situation. The NSRI seeks to increase cooperation between Central Asian nations, Afghanistan, Pakistan and India through enhancing regional connectivity and economic prosperity..The basis for the NSRI is rooted in the belief that sustainable security in Afghanistan, especially post-Isaf, is firmly embedded in the economic gains for the Afghan people. Without jobs or the opportunity to choose productive pursuits, the Afghan people will be left at the mercy of extremist elements. Protracted ethnic and religious violence, ballooning crime rates and full-scale social unrest would continue to be the reality in Afghanistan .So Pakistan has to decide its future preferences while keeping in mind the these all options..<http://www.thenews.com.pk> The New Great Game: impending economic collapse in Afghanistan and Pakistan's choices

Building a Comprehensive Response to the Threats and Conflicting Issues

After analyzing the threat, understanding strategic culture and discussing phases of insecurity in pre and post 9/11 era it is important to discuss the nature and directions of responses towards this grim scenario. In order to obtain a policy direction with a general consensus, it is important to generate debate on national issues among intellectuals, scholars and members of military establishment. This effort can help military and civil leadership in devising viable policy direction and political strategy. For compensation and economic up lift of the tribal population, economic programs must be initiated on macro level.. The is a need of realization on the part of media that the spread of negativism is bringing not the public morale down but also it is creating hurdles for the country's leadership. Pakistani media must keep in view that in order to become the fifth pillar of state; it should not become simmering dynamite under other four pillars. Media should generate the unity among people and it must support the policies for the stability of the state. There is dire need to manage traditional and non traditional threats to the security of Pakistan. In present international political scenario, skilful diplomacy is required to develop strong strategic and economic linkages with regional and international states

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