

Kashmir Dispute: Trends in Indo-Pak Relations and Response of International Community

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ABSTRACT

It is an undisputed reality that Kashmir dispute has remained an important political issue between India and Pakistan, rather we can say that it is a bone of contention between both the nuclear powers of South Asia (India and Pakistan), and is often dubbed as the nuclear flashpoint. It is to be believed that this dispute can bring both nuclear powers on the brink of hot war. The very first war fought over Kashmir problem in 1948, set a trend for future wars, mistrust and hostilities. From thereafter, both the states enter into skirmish in 1965 and 1971. International community expressed their reservations over Kargil episode of 1999, where two states deployed their forces at border areas and positioned their naval forces against each other. Nevertheless, after Kargil episode the fears of Kashmir issue leading to nuclear conflagration has become more loud and audible. It is also unfortunate that none of the forum has been able to bring India on negotiation table. Apart from the fact, that the presence of nuclear weapons provides befitting deterrence and ensuring strategic stability, the possibility of faceoff between India and Pakistan are more stern and horrifying. This paper argues that different resolutions passed by international community justify the centrality of Kashmir issue for the normalization of Indo-Pak relations.

Keywords: Kashmir, Deterrence, War.

Introduction

It is commonly accepted that a major cause of conflict between India and Pakistan is the Kashmir dispute ‘the unfinished agenda of partition’ (Kazmi 2016). Border skirmishes are usual between the two traditional foes. Movement of freedom fighters on Line of Control has not been stopped. Kargil episode of 1999 and small contest between armed forces of both the states exhibit that Kashmir occupies a significant standing as far as regional and international peace and security is concerned.

Presently, north Korea catches the attention of the global community over uranium enrichment along with its strained relations with South Korea while the region overlooked in the present circumstances is Asia having three nuclear

powers i.e. China, India and Pakistan with the strong tendency to become a nuclear flashpoint.

In Asian peninsula India is engaged in faceoff with China on one side of its border while on the other border, is engaged with Pakistan. Among number of regional issues Kashmir issue needs special attention as the issue may lead to nuclear contest between India and Pakistan, since Indian conventional capabilities are higher-up to Pakistan. Consequently, Pakistan has opted for using tactical nukes to deter Indian conventional capabilities. The same strategy was adopted by US led NATO forces vis-à-vis Soviet forces during Cold War (Keck 2017).

Keeping in view the bitter past, it is commonly believed that the sole reason having the capacity to bring India and Pakistan on the brink of war is Kashmir problem. The first faceoff of 1948 between India and Pakistan was also over Kashmir. Barkha Dutt in her book 'This Unquiet Land: Stories from India's Fault Line' announced that during Kargil episode, India did not preclude the option of using nuclear weapons against Pakistan (Dutt 2015a). Brajesh Misra, the ex-Indian National Security Advisor, in an interview to the NDTV, divulged that PM Vajpayee in a letter to President Clinton, clued that India is deliberating of surgical strike and use of nuclear weapon forcing Pakistan to retreat from Kargil (Dutt 2015b).

Though these revealed facts are traumatizing but nailing down some of the bitter realities are; international community only intervened when it came to know Indian despicable motives of using nuclear weapons; deduced from the revelation of the book, it was the probable use of nukes that forced the international community to mediate and neutralize the crisis; India will not hesitate to use the nuke irrespective of ingeminating to 'not first use' policy; to resolve the 'unfinished agenda of partition' there is need of the third party as both Pakistan and India since their inception are not ready to agree on terms and conditions of each other; since the Kashmir dispute is not resolved, it may trigger faceoff between India and Pakistan that can lead India to contemplate on the use of nuclear weapons anytime (Kazmi 2016).

Conceptual Framework

The contemporary popular discourses on nuclear deterrence in international relations deemed this phenomenon as contest between two rivals in which one tries to intimidate and leaving other sedentary. The idea of deterrence rests on the principle of mind games rather the use of actual physical force precluding peculiar course of action. Phil Williams spotlights; deterrence is an attempt by a state to preclude a rival from resorting to a course (normally an attack) that a state consider detrimental, by intimidating to obtrude insufferable price if a particular action is taken (William 1987). While strategizing deterrence the state tries to transform the approach of the rival state or projects itself in a way so the rival may assume that abstaining from attack will best serve their interest. Henry Kissinger holds that nuclear weapons have changed the dimension of policy making by

*Kashmir Dispute: Trends in Indo-Pak Relations and Response of International
Community*

transforming it into deterrence, and deterrence into orphic cerebral activities (Kissinger 1994). Nuclear deterrence is an act of intimidating the adversary of the use of nuclear weapons as retribution to preclude the adversary from harming the interest of the deterring state.

With the introduction of nuclear weapons, strategy has become a tool to contain the adversary; the only intent of nuclear weapon is deterrence; which is to prevent conventional wars. According to Dr. Riffat Hussain: nuclear weapons orchestrate relationship among states on three different fronts; firstly, nuclear weapons provide an edge to the possessor, of its territorial integrity and independence. Secondly, nuclear weapons provide deterrence among the states of nuclear club that ultimately marginalize the chances of eruption of war. Lastly, nuclear weapons after providing deterrence enable the weak state to defend itself against the mighty state (Hussain 2007). In sum we can say that nuclear weapons not only give confidence to the owner state while designing its defense policy, but also demands to act on rational principles.

Deterrence theory cannot be placed in the category of strategy nor a conflict resolution mechanism. Rather it is the threat of the use of nuclear weapons to keep the regional and global order unchanged and preclude any chance of war between adversaries. Deterrence highly depends upon the translucent procedure of war preparations or armed control pacts among the adversaries. All these arrangements make it easy to predict rival behaviors while marginalizing the chances of misjudgment and muddles. To Scott D. Sagan stable nuclear deterrence can be achieved through three components i.e. precluding war when one state has temporary edge over the other competitors, developing the endurable second strike and sidestep inadvertent nuclear war (D. Sagan, 2001).

The nuclear deterrence theory justifies the developments in bilateral relations of India and Pakistan after their entry into nuclear club. Both the states agreed on the point that nuclear weapons provide minimum possible deterrence for securing their territorial integrity and independence. Many scholars and defense analysts while taking into account the deterrence theory assumes that nuclear proliferation in South Asia has circumscribed the policy options that could allow India and Pakistan to capitalize the momentary military edge without risking self-destruction. Think tanks in Pakistan and India are of the view that the use of nuclear weapons would be detrimental and hence would be deterred from engaging into military conflict having any chance of the use of nuclear weapons. While nuclear pessimist scholars are of the view that nuclearization of South Asia has augmented the possibility of conflicts and nuclear war.

Therefore, it can be rightly said that Kashmir is keeping both the nuclear powers of South Asia engaged, and has often been articulated as 'nuclear flashpoint.' Before going into the debate focusing Kashmir as a 'nuclear flashpoint' it is necessary to understand the term flashpoint.

Explaining Flashpoint

The belief that certain periphery is momentous to comprehend international conflict can be traced back to past several centuries. For example, Palestine is situated at the junction of Egypt and Mesopotamia. Control of Khyber Pass ensured the protection of Indian-Subcontinent. Britain felt threatened from the Low Countries and later assurance of Belgian detachment proved to be a significant factor for Britain to interpose against Germany in late 1914.

A concise study of the number of flashpoints of the twentieth century develops better understanding of the concept. The focal point of the flashpoint is that it denotes recurrence or consistent centering of the conflict. Region that has been remained a center of conflict on a single occasion with a solution acceptable to all the stake holders cannot be categorized as a flashpoint. A flashpoint is a region having unsettled conflict and presence of an ungratified state. Flashpoint can be a disputed territory or can come into being as a result of partition or can be instituted on the basis of ideological differences. As far as nuclear flashpoint is concerned, it is a region where one or more states possess nuclear weapons. In sum, flashpoint must be a deep-rooted political contest; gravitate to more complex situation if have contiguity between the two foes; lead to grave condition when intimidated to involve mighty states, thus increasing the possibility of extensive war (Hoyt 2003).

Kashmir a ‘Nuclear Flashpoint’

Geopolitically Kashmir lies at the junction of three nuclear powers of South Asia i.e. Pakistan, India and People’s Republic of China. Among this trio India is a trouble maker having illegal occupation of state of Jammu and Kashmir and endlessly causing trouble to its two neighbors. Josef Korbel in his book ‘Danger in Kashmir’ has given a comprehensive account of complex and troubled nature of Kashmir issue. The book was published in 1954 and by the time India tactfully rebuffed UN sponsored plebiscite after manipulating the elections of legislative chamber of Indian held Kashmir. After that India started articulating Indian held Kashmir as its integral part. Josef Korbel in his book further writes that the two great nations of subcontinent i.e. India and Pakistan are wasting their time, money and energies and has transformed the state of Jammu and Kashmir into a battleground. In the recent past, this issue has taken new dimension after the abrogation of Article 370 by India. Over the past seven decades, Kashmiris have survived under Indian subjugation and brutal policies, still the young blood of Kashmir is optimistically hoping to get freedom from India (Webmaster 2016).

Consistent existence of trust deficit between India and Pakistan is a unique component of their troubled relations since their inception. The component of trust deficit got momentum with the Indian implicit explosion of nuclear weapon, smiling Buddha in 1974, forcing Pakistan to follow the same pursuit. On May 11 and 13 1998, India explicitly detonated its nuclear Tests-Operation Shakti (I-V).

*Kashmir Dispute: Trends in Indo-Pak Relations and Response of International
Community*

This was a clear message for Pakistan that India has proven potential of nuclear weapons.

Think tanks in both India and Pakistan are driven by realist school of thought, in shaping regional policy. India and Pakistan following the same pursuit and ignoring the relations between economic growth and mutual collaboration in regional settings, have failed to come up with reliable solutions of some of the core issues between them. It means both the states place their military resources parallel to their security. Military security is based on two levels of inter-state relations physical and psychological. Physical level accounts for the offensive-defensive capabilities of states and psychological accounts for states perceptions about each other's capabilities. It is because of these factors that the ex-foreign minister of India George Fernandes intimidated Pakistan to negotiate on AJK and GB as they claim these territories to be part of India. The nature of their relationship got more complex after both the states entered into a nuclear club (Webmaster 2016).

The immediate and foremost impact of nuclearization of South Asia in 1998 was the internationalization of Kashmir as a nuclear flashpoint (Gilani 2014) and consequent pressure on India to enter into a dialogue with Pakistan on the issue, if for nothing else, just to bring down the temperature and soften confrontational postures of the two nations.

Nuclear deterrence theory is engaged for inaction to maintain status quo. In Indian Pakistan context nuclear weapons are meant not only for deterrence but have been used to build security-insecurity paradox, as an instrumental component of South Asian strategic environment. Additionally, there is need to understand that deterrence cannot be an alternate of the traditional war.

There are number of troubled areas in the world, proving to be dangerous for the masses living there. These hotspots include Palestine, Chechnya, Middle East, Balkans and African continent, providing the most upsetting evidences of brutality of humankind in 21st century. Still these conflicts are limited owing to regional importance, and not having nuclear dimension in these conflicts (Webmaster 2016).

The issue of Kashmir has been internationalized owing to the presence of nuclear weapons as conflict between the two adversaries have drastic and calamitous consequences for regional stability. Deterrence in the form of nuclear weapons does not knock out the chance of armed conflict between India and Pakistan since the bone of contention i.e. Kashmir dispute has not been resolved according to the wishes and desires of people of Kashmir. Mc George and Kenneth Waltz are of the view that nuclear weapons provide deterrence in conflict-ridden areas (Waltz 1981). In June 2004, foreign secretaries of both India and Pakistan made the same statement that nuclear weapons of their countries are serving as a deterrence ultimately guaranteeing regional peace and stability. The deterrence theory developed during Cold War is quite different in nature from the deterrence between India and Pakistan. Unlike the Cold War foes, India and Pakistan shared

troubled border leading to infinite border skirmishes and four wars; have short range missile system giving no time for reaction; the unresolved Kashmir issue; and power imbalance between the two regional nuclear powers. Consequently, deterrence theory is not actively and effectively engaged as far as strategic setting of India and Pakistan is concerned. This is the reason why conflict between the two foes accelerates as a result of nuclearization of the subcontinent. Kargil conflict of 1999, massive deployment of massive force on borders in 2001-2002, developments in Post Mumbai attacks, innumerable violations of Line of Control and the most recent claim of surgical strikes by the Indian government, have nuclear dimension (Webmaster 2016).

Keeping in mind the evolving conditions both India and Pakistan may not enter into nuclear war as it is not feasible for both sides. Shivshankar former Indian National Security Advisor in his memoirs wrote that India will not provide Pakistan an opportunity to take colossal nuclear strike after Indian use of tactical nuclear weapons against Pakistan, thus use of short range nuclear weapons by the later will provide India enough space to launch massive strike against Pakistan (Keck 2017).

Change in Indian stance of 'not to attack first' specially after its Cold Start doctrine, give it fair enough room to strike back and take over small piece of territory as a reaction to any incident taking place in India and blaming Pakistan for it. Therefore, having nuclear weapons provide deterrent force to Pakistan. Besides the role of international community is of prime significance not only to keep a watch on the stake holders but also manage and resolve the conflict. The need of the time is to put an end to the heinousness Indian brutalities along with the accountability of the culprit. Kashmir dispute should not be dealt only as a political crisis or its potential of becoming nuclear flash point but should be considered on humanitarian grounds (Kazmi 2016).

Beside nuclear dimension India is bringing demographic transformations in Kashmir through different tactics like; Ponun Kashmir, Bantustans, reclamation of non-Kashmir Hindus and Sanik colony and also taking away the identity of Kashmiris. There is a need on the part of international community to get feasible solution for Indian held Kashmir to end humanitarian crisis and human rights violations. Pakistan and people of AJK have played their part in highlighting the human brutalities in Indian held Kashmir and to put a halt on the demographic transformations there. No doubt, there is need to do more to this end. India is tactfully distracting the world's attention from these human rights abuses by projecting cross border terrorist activities like Mumbai attacks, Uri and Pathankot incidents while Indian media has taken the lead to malign Pakistan (Webmaster 2016).

Due to a history of past conflicts, political uncertainty and simmering tensions over Kashmir, the risks of using nuclear weapons in South Asia are perceived to be quite real by the international community. As a result of nuclear tests, UNSC Resolution 1172, the P-5 Communiqué of 4 June 1998, G-8 Foreign Ministers Communiqué, Sino-American joint communiqué of 27 June 1998 and President

*Kashmir Dispute: Trends in Indo-Pak Relations and Response of International
Community*

Mandela's inaugural address at NAM summit underlined the centrality of Kashmir as a nuclear flashpoint in the region and urged the two states to resume bilateral dialogue to settle their contentious issues including Kashmir.

All these statements were close to Pakistan's position as they talked of the centrality of the Kashmir issue to the normalization for Indo-Pakistan relations. However, none of the forum has been able to convince India to sit on negotiating table. It could be attributed to weak diplomatic maneuvering by Pakistan or the vice versa by India. The recent developments in the Middle East also reaffirm the selective approach of the US and UN. If the two belligerents in Middle East could be persuaded for a negotiated settlement, what really hampers the same for a solution in the sub-continent?

Kashmir Issue & Response of International Community

USA. President Clinton while addressing the 53rd session of the "UN General Assembly" (UNGA) held on 21 September 1998 asked for "resolution of ancient animosities in Kashmir "that is killing innocent people. ("Opening Session of The United Nations General Assembly" n.d.) The United States tried to stop Pakistan from the nuclear tests and high official visited Pakistan in an emergency visit. US Secretary of State Madeleine Albright referring to Indian nuclear tests said: "We believe that--- the Kashmir problem played a role in Indian decision to detonate --- Kashmir is the basic problem that causes tensions in South Asia"(Mahmud 2005). The Deputy Secretary of State Strobe Talbot said, "Greatness lies --- to work --- in the interest of international community (Matinuddin 2002).

It is a considered view that all these voices raised failed to persuade India to act wisely and respect the freedom struggle as she knows the west has economic interests in India and they will never abandon or isolate India economically or diplomatically.

UN Concerns

The nuclear tests revived the Kashmir issue at the UN Security Council. The UN Security Council resolution 1172 dated 6th June 1998 (Matinuddin 2002) pertaining to nuclear testing by India and Pakistan called on both states to "resume dialogue ---on all matters pertaining to peace and security, --- to remove the tensions between them", and --- "find mutually acceptable solutions --- of those tensions including Kashmir". The resolution further called on India and Pakistan "to exercise maximum restraint and avoid --- other provocations --- to prevent an aggravation of the situation".

The resolution practically revived the international status of the Kashmir dispute, recognizing it as one of the root causes of tension, which is a very welcome development for Pakistan.

Nuclear Genie

Acquisition of nuclear weapons by India and Pakistan have further destabilized South Asian region. Is nuclear war considered achievable and survivable? David Downing in his book has said that eminent scholars are of the view that it is unlikely as both India and Pakistan know that the other would retaliate. Few others disagree and opine that both sides could use nuclear weapons. They may go to war over Kashmir at some point in time with an inclination of both sides to strike first to avoid any surprise (Downing 2003). South Asian security will be tenuous in the coming decades.

European Union (EU)

Since EU has high economic stakes in India, it did not impose any sanctions on India. It however, termed the tests as a threat to global peace and underscored the need for Pakistan's security concerns (Matinuddin 2002).

G-8.

The G-8, another powerful world body, in its communiqué issued on 12th June 1998 termed Kashmir a root cause of tension and underscored "to take positive actions directed towards defusing tension in the region", --- and "halt arms race in the subcontinent". It emphasized action aimed at "reducing tension--- and encouraging peaceful resolution --- through dialogue". In this context the communiqué urged the two parties "to avoid --- cross-border violations ---; implement fully the confidence and security-building measures--- and resume --- direct dialogue that addresses the root causes of the tension, including Kashmir" ("UofT G8 Information Centre: G8 Foreign Ministers' Meetings." 1998).

NAM

The Kashmir issue was also raised for the first time by a NAM chairman in his inaugural address. President Nelson Mandela addressing the 12th NAM Summit at Durban held in South Africa from 2-3 September 1998, made reference to Kashmir and offered to mediate between the two countries on the issue of Kashmir. He said: "All of us remain concerned that the issue of Kashmir should be solved through peaceful negotiations and NAM should be willing to lend all the strength (that it has) to the resolution of this matter." This came as a big jolt to India.

China

China denounced India's nuclear tests and also linked peace in South Asia with the settlement of Kashmir dispute. It proposed a five-nation conference on Kashmir involving US, Russia, China, India and Pakistan. India rejected the offer terming it an attempt at third-party mediation.

Japan

The Japanese reaction to the Indian nuclear explosion was very harsh owing to its economic influence worldwide. As a matter of fact, it took a leading role in drafting the UN resolution to admonish India. It also froze loan for the new projects in both the countries in accordance with its "Official Development Assistance" charter (Jain 2008).

UK

UK's reaction was primarily based on the historical association with the South Asian region. It urged on the resolution of the Kashmir tangle. In fact, the Labor Party during a resolution in 1995 had warned that "Kashmir was a flashpoint for a conflict between the two countries". British Foreign Security Robin Cook asserted that the tests have proved that "there could be no peace in South Asia unless the two countries --- resolved --- Kashmir". He underscored that "Kashmir was on top of the government agenda and can only be resolved --- in accordance with the wishes of the Kashmiri people" (Malik n.d.).

Russia

Russian response to Indian nuclear tests flowed from its ties with India which are deep rooted in history. Her stakes in India are not only significant from commercial point of view but also from strategic point of view. It also played a leading role in softening the language of the UN Security Council above mentioned resolution from "condemnation to deplorable" (Matinuddin 2002).

International Mediatory Efforts

Over a period of time, global players have been striving to find a solution to this long outstanding issue between the two belligerents of South Asia and arrive at an amicable resolution acceptable to both the nations. Convinced of the inherent danger in keeping alive the core problem between the two countries, US President Bill Clinton, the UN Secretary General, the P-5, the G-8, Japan and the UK among others all offered their good offices to help resolve this problem. India has however, always been emphasizing on bilateralism and localizing the dispute in its favor. Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) during its 13th Summit held at Istanbul from 14 to 15 April 2016 has again called upon India to implement all the UN resolutions on Kashmir. It also showed its concerns over the gross human rights violations in Indian Occupied Kashmir.

West Asia

Iran

Iran was the first country to express its concerns on the Indian nuclear explosions. In fact, it was of the view that Pakistan must respond in the same coin (Matinuddin 2002).

Saudi Arabia

Saudi Arabia also raised eyebrows on the Indian nuclear tests and called it a security threat on the global level. In fact, it urged Pakistan to respond in a tit for tat fashion so as to thwart Indian and Israeli threat to the Muslim world.

Regional Response

South Asia

When India went for nuclear explosions in 1998, it did provoke Pakistan for a quid pro quo. Other than Pakistan, response at the regional level was restricted to “deep concerns” only. Smaller states felt utterly helpless and were not in a position to avoid nuclear race in the region due to the domination of India in the region. Their own future was rather more important to them. With the nuclear race now imminent, its effects on Kashmir cause were any body’s guess. In nutshell, the smaller states in the region felt succumbed to the Indian domination in the region as she insisted on *bilateralism*.

SAARC

The same year in July, SAARC summit was held in Sri Lanka. Since bilateral issues are outside the purview of this particular forum, nuclear proliferation was not put up on the agenda. However, in her address then Sri Lankan President, Mrs. Kumaratunga did make a mention of the nuclear explosions by both the countries. The final declaration skirted the issue of Kashmir and confined it to the socio-economic development in South Asia. Indian Prime Minister Mr. Atal Bihari Vajpayee raised “eyebrows” and expressed apprehensions to remain confined to the SAARC charter and interpreted it in a manner that kept contentious issues as bilateral concerns. Again in January 2002 SAARC Summit was held at Katmandu where the famous handshake of President Musharraf with Indian PM Mr. Vajpayee was seen as a sign of good will from Pakistan among the rising escalation between the two countries and was aimed to reduce the bitterness among the two countries.

Kashmir versus East Timor-An Analogy

- a. 20th Century saw an uproar against colonialism and specially during the late 40s and early 50s, decolonization movement gained momentum which paved the way for the adoption of the United Nations Resolution 1514 (XV) in 1960 entitled “Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples.” (“The United Nations and Decolonization” n.d.)
- b. East Timorese exercised its right of self-determination, as enshrined in this 1960 decolonization resolution; it was welcomed by the international community. Interestingly, Kashmir was never a colony in the conventional sense hence the right of self-determination need not be applied.
- c. The right of self- determination needs to be universally applied as the above mentioned documents are applicable to the states which were signatories to these.
- d. On the occasion of its Silver Jubilee in 1970, the United Nations adopted Resolution 2625 entitled “Declaration on Friendly Relations”. This is considered as “the most authoritative” statement on the principles of the right of self-determination. The opponents of Kashmir equalizing it with East Timor have the decolonization past context of East Timor which does not hold valid in case of Kashmir. It may however, be kept in view that ever since the 1970 Declaration has been adopted, the right of self-determination is applicable to all the people who are struggling for their independence.
- e. Resultantly, the right of self-determination is very much applicable to the cause of Kashmir as well like East Timor. In view of all the UN resolutions, it is rather more applicable in this case. The UN resolutions of August 13, 1948, and January 5, 1949 in particularly are noteworthy which grant the right to Kashmiris. This also has the approval of the India as an “international agreement”. Few independent observers are of the view that the reason of lukewarm response to the analogy is based on religion whereby East Timor is a Christian majority area as compared to Kashmir where majority is Muslim.
- f. While addressing the UN Millennium Summit on 6th September 2000, then Chief Executive of Pakistan, General Pervez Musharraf compared the case of East Timorese with Kashmiris. He said, “If the people of East Timor could be given their freedom, why not the people of Kashmir?” (“General Pervez Musharraf’s Address at The UN’s Millennium Summit” n.d.)?

- g. Then Indian Foreign Minister, Mr. Jaswant Singh was sharp to react and refuted this analogy on the grounds that East Timor had been a colony, where as “Kashmir is an integral part of India.”(R Someshwar n.d.)

Pakistan’s View

Dr. Tahir Amin has dilated upon Pakistan’s view point in a much greater detail starting from local to international level.(Amin 1995) At the official level, Pakistan supports the “just struggle of Kashmiri people to seek their right of self-determination” and favors early implementation of the relevant UN resolutions. She is committed to “extend moral, political and diplomatic support” to the cause. However, at the local level, “Pakistan has not been able to adequately handle the Kashmir situation”. It has failed to provide any meaningful assistance neither has it been able to resolve differences within the Kashmiri resistance groups. It is also perceived that she has not been able to develop a consensus at the national level owing to adhocism and short term policies. When it comes to dealing with India, there is a sharp contrast of methodology between the two states. India professes on a systematic formula to discuss all other issues first and Kashmir later. While Pakistan views Kashmir as the fundamental issue it should, therefore, be resolved first. As a matter of fact, for Pakistan, the systematic approach proposed by India is a trick to put on back burner the basic issue of Kashmir. President General Pervez Musharraf is on record on more than one occasion to have invited India for a dialogue on the issue. In one of his statements the President said, --- “the Kashmir dispute --- be resolved peacefully (in accordance with the) aspirations of Kashmiri people (as it is our) joint responsibility” (Bose 2003). He has however, categorically ruled out conversion of the Line of Control into a permanent international border (Musharraf 2007). Internationally, Pakistan has been able to attain a moderate achievement in generating world response on the dispute and has sought positive concerns in its favor from such international establishments like the OIC, NAM and European Community etc. Engagement / involvement of international organizations like Asia Watch and the Physicians for Human Rights etc. in “condemning the state sponsored atrocities in Kashmir” (Amin 1995). further strengthen the diplomatic stance of Pakistan.

Conclusion

Nuclear deterrence seems to be ineffective in terms of Indo-Pak nuclearization that can be justified by substantiating Kargil episode of 1999, military deployment by both the states on border areas in 2001-2002, and Indian claims of surgical strikes in Pakistan in post Mumbai attacks. The rounds of composite dialogues fail to develop trust between the two traditional foes. All these events reveal that the outstretched tension between India and Pakistan bear increased chances of border skirmishes. Even if, the conflicts are confined to conventional war, Indian conventional superiority gives her edge in these conflicts.

***Kashmir Dispute: Trends in Indo-Pak Relations and Response of International
Community***

The fallout of this asymmetry is that balance of terror alone is not ensuring the engagement of deterrence theory therefore; there is need for the benignant foreign involvement to ensure the active engagement of deterrence theory between the two nuclear powers of South Asia.

Kashmir issue 'the unresolved agenda' has acquired the prime significance after the nuclearization of South Asia. The severity of this issue can be measured by the fact that both sides have fought four wars because of Kashmir issue. Presence of nuclear weapons has added to deterrence between the two traditional foe. Dr. Rasul Bakhsh Rais holds that no state all of sudden shifts from conventional war to nuclear collide, especially when they are cognizant that the rival too owns nuclear arsenals.(Bakhsh Rais, 2007) Nuclear deterrence is expected to preclude total war which can transform into nuclear skirmish that could be detrimental in India Pakistan context. Reliance on the external power not only provides initiative to the third party but confines the options of the deterring state.

Keeping in mind all the possibilities, it is a very critical time not only for the armed freedom struggle but also for the Kashmir cause. It is essential for Pakistan to provide all types of moral, political, psychological and diplomatic help to the freedom fighters to sustain the struggle at the desired level and concurrently project human rights violations at the international platform to put pressure on Indians to stop the brutalities and resolve the issue through negotiations with Pakistan and Kashmiris.

Since the uprisings in 1989, the freedom struggle in Kashmir has taken a very heavy toll of lives and property in IJK which continues till to date. Thousands have lost their lives and many have been disabled for life time. It is a considered opinion that the Indian army's morale is in their boots as they have still not been able to suppress the "Jihad" despite the heavy losses they have suffered in men and material.

The Kashmiris are also suffering considerably due to the brutalities of the Indian security forces. It is time to sit down and talk. The world community, in particular the United States should continue to persuade India to agree to talk to Pakistan on all issues, including Kashmir as to ensure lasting peace and prosperity in this region.

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