

The Pakistan-India Security Dilemma - Contemporary Challenges

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ABSTRACT

The relations between India and Pakistan have been strained by various historical and geopolitical events, since the 1947 partition. Both countries have fought four major wars, including the Kargil war in 1999. Lately, various emerging issues have contributed to increase security related tensions between India and Pakistan. This article examines three of the prime issues that have resulted in security concerns including Kashmir dispute, water dispute and cross border terrorism. Peaceful relations between India and Pakistan are central for peace in South Asian region. The international stakeholder have therefore been emphasizing on the need to build trustworthy ties between both the countries.

Key Words: India-Pakistan Relations, Kashmir, Water Dispute, Cross Border Terrorism

Introduction

Relations between India and Pakistan have been complicated due to a number of historical and geopolitical events that led to four [wars](#) between the two nations. Consequently, despite of sharing similar cultural, lingual, geographic and economic ties, the relationships between these two South Asian countries have been strained by suspicion and hostility. Keeping in view the fact that peaceful India-Pakistan relations is a guarantee to the peace in South Asia (Ahmad, 2010; Mitra, 2009; Naseer & Amin, 2011), the international stakeholders are stressing on the need to build trustworthy and friendly ties between both the states (Held & McGrew, 2007; Paris, 2001).

A throwback to the history reveals that since partition, India and Pakistan have been struggling to deal with several disputes including Kashmir, water sharing and military conflicts (Bose, 2009). Lately, the global issue of terrorism

has contributed to increase tension between two countries (Kaldor, 2013). The details of these India-Pakistan conflicts are given in the succeeding paragraphs of this article.

Kashmir Dispute

Kashmir has been a major bone of contention between Pakistan and India that not only inflicted the three wars between the two countries but the dispute is believed to spoil the bilateral relationships in future (Reveron & Murer, 2013). The regional and global stakeholders recognize the geographical importance of Kashmir from strategic point of view (Fayaz, 2016). India and Pakistan being the nuclear powers spend massive share of their annual budgets in nuclear arm race to ensure their nuclear supremacy on each other. Thus, the Kashmir dispute not only dents the mutual ties between two states but serves as a constant threat to the security of the entire South Asian region (Fayaz, 2016; Ganguly & Kapur, 2010).

A threat to security

Pakistan and India are cognizant of the geographical location of Kashmir for the security of both the countries (Korbel, 2015). Nehru admitting the importance of Kashmir for India once stated that common boundary between India and Kashmir ensures the security of India as it helps to protect India from security threats by Afghanistan, USSR and China (Fayaz, 2016). Similarly, Liaqat Ali Khan also considered the importance of geographical location of Kashmir for the security of Pakistan. He said that Indian control over the territory of Kashmir is a serious threat to Pakistan's security because without Kashmir, Pakistan cannot defend itself from the potential unscrupulous governance in India (Ganguly, 2013). Geographical position of Kashmir is not only a security dilemma for Pakistan and India but it is also important for China and Central Asian states. Occupation of entire Kashmir by India would disengage Pakistan from China while its entire occupation by Pakistan would disconnect India from Central Asian countries (Fayaz, 2016). Respective

Security dilemma in Kashmir dispute

Kashmir dispute is continuously a security dilemma for both India and Pakistan due to its strategic importance (Fayaz, 2016; Korbel, 2015). In addition, three stakeholders including India, Pakistan and Kashmir are involved in the dispute with their respective stances over the issue of Kashmir (Fayaz, 2016). India is not agreed to give the right of self-determination to the Kashmiris considering that the majority of Kashmiri people are Muslim and they would support Pakistan (Hussain, 2015). On the other hand, Pakistan supports their right of self-determination while completely rejecting the Indian slogan that Kashmir is integral part of India (Fayaz, 2016).

The Pakistan-India Security Dilemma - Contemporary Challenges

In this war of interests, India has resisted the peaceful freedom movement by Kashmiris and has used force and diplomacy to assert control over them. Deployment of Indian armed forces in Kashmir and allegations on Pakistan to support the Kashmiri freedom fighters keep fueling the conflict between two states (Fayaz, 2016; Hakeem, 2014). Indian tactics such as increasing deployment of armed forces across disputed line of control, changing the natural flow of river water in Jammu valley, supporting terrorist activities in Pakistan and killing of peaceful freedom fighters and civilians in Kashmir are the major causes of security dilemma between India and Pakistan.

Water Dispute

Water dispute is another bone of contention between India and Pakistan and serves as a hurdle in peaceful civil-military relations (Malik, 2010). According to the economic development experts, it is very important for Pakistan to settle water dispute with India, which is a continuous threat for major water bodies of Pakistan (Asif, 2013). On the other hand, natural bodies of water are also very important for running hydro-power plants in both India and Pakistan (Cosgrove & Rijsberman, 2014). It is also a well-known fact that hydro-power is one of the cheapest forms of power which is being used by many national and international countries, so both the countries desired to have lion's share of water (Sameh & Kamel, 2017).

Water dispute started from the very initial time of partition that came to an end in 1960 in the name of Indus Water Treaty between both the countries (Akhter, 2015). This peaceful resolution with the help of the World Bank and Russia was aimed to minimize the potential armed conflict between both the countries (Ali et al., 2015). But in contemporary era of 21st century, it is observed that the stakeholders of Indus Water Treaty are breaching this agreement considering it just a piece of paper and dragging the water dispute into the domain of security dilemma (Smith et al., 2014).

Water dispute: a security dilemma

There is significant academic evidence suggesting that international water conflicts are more violent than domestic water conflicts (Chellaney, 2013; Mustafa et al., 2013). In addition, it is found that water conflicts in Pakistan are closely linked with Indian upstream position, consequently, this association is going to disrupt water relations between Pakistan and India (Mustafa et al., 2013). Furthermore, water is becoming scarce day by day in South Asia which enhances the importance of Indus Water Treaty and thus making it more significant to resolve water dispute between India and Pakistan on urgent basis (Price et al., 2014).

As mentioned previously, the geographical location of India is upstream as compared to Pakistan. It is easy for India to control the river water, which is a major concern for Pakistan (Mustafa et al., 2013). The perceived water related threat by Pakistan became a reality in recent few years (Dahal & Pandey, 2014).

India had started constructing dams such as Baglihar and Kishanganga on the rivers allocated to Pakistan under Indus Water Treaty (Khan, 2013). According to Indus Water Treaty, India was not permitted to store water in dams for either purpose. However, India is not only constructed dams but also storing water which is a clear violation of treaty by India (Sidhu, 2013). It is a serious threat to the economy and survival of Pakistan that is creating tension in India-Pakistan relations and is an emerging security dilemma in contemporary era.

Cross Border Terrorism

Cross border terrorism is not a contemporary challenge; it had its roots right from the time of partition (Muzafar, 2015). According to Pakistani narrative, India is continuously working to destabilize Pakistan from the time of partition and trying her best to isolate Pakistan internationally using different tactics i.e. interference in internal affairs, falsely accusing and supporting terrorist activities in Pakistan (Hajari, 2015; Rajan, 2015). Indian intelligence agents are working in different areas of Pakistan such as Baluchistan and Federally Administrative Tribal Area and Northern Waziristan etc. to deteriorate peace in Pakistan (Khan, 2016; Sial, 2014).

On the other hand, Indian narrative regarding cross border terrorism is totally different. They are of the view that Pakistan is interfering in Indian internal affairs such as in Kashmir. In addition, they accuse Pakistan for terrorist activities in India (Virk, 2013; Yadav, 2014). They believe that freedom movement in Kashmir is being backed by Pakistan. A popular notion in India is that Pakistan is training militant groups to fight against Indian army to create restlessness and anarchy in India (Korbel, 2015; Singh, 2013).

Cross border terrorism: a security dilemma

India has the notorious history of being associated with the events that prove Indian interference in the internal affairs of Pakistan to deteriorate its security situation (Muzafar, 2015). On the other hand, brutality of Indian armed forces in occupied Kashmir is fueling the fire; ideologically, historically and humanitarially, Pakistanis consider Kashmir as part of Pakistan (Fayaz, 2016; Korbel, 2015).

Recent Indian interference in internal affairs in Baluchistan gave birth to a contemporary security dilemma between both the countries. An Indian military agent Kalboshan Yadv is arrested from Baluchistan, Pakistan (Tariq, 2016), who not only confessed that he is currently working as Indian military captain but he also admitted that he had been working in Baluchistan since several years to destabilize peace and prosperity in Pakistan (Fayaz, 2016). Furthermore, it is also found that his major focus to create security issues was the Gawadar and China-Pak Economic Corridor (Muzafar, 2015). It has become a major security dilemma for Pakistan to make necessary arrangements to stop Indian interference in

The Pakistan-India Security Dilemma - Contemporary Challenges

Pakistan. Currently, Kalboshan Yadv is sentenced to death because of his admitted involvement and support to terrorist activities in Pakistan. This attempt to destabilize Pakistan is a serious threat to bilateral relations between India and Pakistan and a source of defamation of its prime intelligence agency RAW.

Conclusion

Relations between India and Pakistan have been complicated due to a number of historical and geopolitical events. Currently, India and Pakistan are facing serious security challenges including Kashmir dispute, water conflicts and cross border terrorism. Kashmir dispute is the major bone of contention as it is fueling other disputes like water and cross border terrorism. Indian government's denial to the right of self-determination to Kashmiris is the major hurdle in solving Kashmir dispute while Indian violation of Indus Water Treaty is also a contemporary challenge to the bilateral relations between the two countries. This study recommends successful negotiations for the peaceful settlement of the disputes between the two countries because the war between the two nuclear powers is going to affect not only the two states but the entire South Asia.

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