

India-Pakistan Enduring Grievances: Unwavering ...

INDIA-PAKISTAN ENDURING GRIEVANCES: UNWAVERING ROLE OF DOMESTIC POLITICIZED FACTORS

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Abstract:

India-Pakistan rivalry has always been the most perturbed issue on geopolitical canvas. This impasse has locked distinguished resolutions for mitigating their asymmetrical enduring conflict. Pakistan and India's unusual position alienated leadership and distant behavior of citizens have made their connections more strained. There is an unsettling condition of tranquility, but neither country is compelled to act. Animosity can only be alleviated through friendship. Friendship requires mutual consent, something both India and Pakistan have continuously lacked over the previous few decades. Nevertheless, India-Pakistan got brutal setback and has been significantly deteriorating after Prime Minister Modi's election in 2014. India's policy for Pakistan under Modi has seen certain dramatic shifts. The policy has been undergone unscheduled visit to surgical strikes on militant camps in Pakistan. With highly volatile border in Jammu and Kashmir, an upsurge in terror attacks on India, and critical elections on the horizon, Indo-Pakistani relations look to have reached probable flash point. Escalation of war is a clear and ongoing threat. Both countries have different sort of domestic politics discourse which further ignites their enmity. These domestic perspectives tend to galvanize the great polarization in their country. This research paper will shed light on those domestic political narratives which plays pivotal role in setting contemporary scenarios for India-Pakistan relations. This research paper will analyze the different intricacies and obstacles related to domestic's factors in India-Pakistan furious relations. This research paper will further elucidate different psychological perspectives, fallacies, and rhetoric in shaping political discourse and mindsets.

Keywords: India-Pakistan, Domestic politics, Kashmir, Domestic Diversionary Tactics, Partition.

Introduction

Since the inception of India and Pakistan, both nations have faced restricted relations along with



memorable four wars. Several disputes over Kashmir, Sir Creek, water disputes and their conflictual borders have been the prevalent reason for those declared wars and one declared war. In fact, war of 1971 resulted in the creation of Bangladesh. Over the course of history, certain geopolitical alignments, shifts in conventional & nuclear doctrine, expedite arm race, suspicious attitudes have stymied the normalization of their ties. (India and Pakistan at 75: Prospects for the Future, n.d.)

Right after the traumatic partition, Pakistan's policies have been repeatedly changed. Pakistan made a perplexed religious based identity for loudly projecting Pakistan as an Islamic state. Deep mistrust with India along with aggravating concerns drove Pakistan's leaders, politicians, and strategists to claim that India can never recognized Pakistan and probably aspires to overturn the partition. Pakistan tends to set its policy goals to prevent India's geopolitical clout and its excessive hegemony in South Asia. That fear of India has been sabotaging policy structure of Pakistan significantly. That decision making dilemma have haunted Pakistan for at least seven decades. (Pande, 2021)

In the contrary, India has also been in its insecure position for so long. Indian perspective is way too hostile for Pakistan. As per their narratives, Pakistan arose from an inventive effort which gone through the nationalism process after World War 1's illustration and causation of nationalism. That was an illustrious method of gaining a nation with deep rooted ethnic belongings. According to their rigid and somehow misunderstood perspectives, partition was enormously traumatized and outrageous for people of subcontinent. Which drastically altered their lives and has displaced many communities where they had been living for more than a decade. Languages, properties, legacy, heritage, and patrimony all were gone ineptly. That chronic loss has shaped the attitude of the people of both sides i.e., their beliefs and views on governments, minorities, and notions of homeplaces. Some scholars have considered the India-Pakistan partition as generational trauma for centuries. (Shashkevich, 2019)

Those generational traumas were further exaggerated by the political pressure groups. Pressure groups were also prevalent before the partition of Pakistan. After World War 2, nationalistic sentiments were on peak among people of subcontinent especially those who were participants in that war. They were carrying imprints of separable fascism which led to the establishment violent pressure groups i.e., Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and Muslim League National Guard. Coping greatly with British imperialism and then gained independence with fiercely ethnic and nationalistic grievances. Religious justification was an absolute escaping point for legalizing those grievances. By playing religious card with political ingredients, these groups have thwarted the relations between both nations and further restrained the peace process. Some those elements still causing precarious relations with the land of pure (Pakistan). (Dixit, 1995)

In contemporary epoch, the fate of India-Pakistan relations depends on the regime status of both countries. The severity and party politics decides the future of India-Pakistan bilateral relations.



As it is evident in Modi's epoch. The previous tenure of Narender Modi had an optimistic beginning. Modi had attempted to mend relations with Pakistan by inviting the then Prime Minister of Pakistan, Nawaz Sharif to his oath taking ceremony and then paid sudden or unscheduled visit to Pakistan. However, after Pathankot incident in 2016, all efforts got regressive mode. Government of India cancelled the scheduled discussion with Pakistan by tying conversations and demanded actions from Islamabad against the militant organization responsible for that assault. India then launched surgical strikes in Pakistani-administered Kashmir in response to attack on its military installation in Uri. India Air Force pilot was then arrested by Pakistan and later got released as a goodwill gesture. That incident considered to be the significant incentive for Modi's election campaign. Election campaign in that year was flooded with anti-Pakistan rhetoric which made Modi won the later elections. All speeches were flooded with the fear and unnecessary warnings of nuclear flashpoints. This rhetoric shaped the mindset of millions of citizens and further ignited the generational trauma. All these domestic obstacles are based on securitization perspective. Pakistan's right-wing parties used that tactics as well to fill their vote banks. Citizens are literally so naïve that they got hypnotized by cunning political fallacies which is the main restrictions in peace building measures between Pakistan and India. Both nations are unable to restrict these domestic political factors as they are deeply rooted in their societies. (Nabeel, 2019)

Literature Review

Securitization theory would be the most phenomenal concept to demonstrate domestic politics dilemma for mending India-Pakistan bilateral relationship. According to securitization theory, national policies meticulously crafted by politicians and decision makers. Any political and geopolitical concerns could be shaped as extreme security issues as alarming, menacing, and threatening. Those mindful reshaping then convinces the state institutions and higher hierarchy to go beyond for that matter of concern. Security issues are basically driven for personal, institutional, and political interest. Securitization theory contradicts the standard approaches related to security in International Relations by claiming that situations can never be so severe and dangerous, but they become controversial by being referred repeatedly as vulnerable security issue. (Eroukhmanoff, 2018)

Securitization illustrates the severity of speech rhetoric in sabotaging the rationality of local citizens. Securitization exposed all those extraordinary measures against the so-called security by crushing the rationality of local people and raising the level of urgency and threat. Population of India and Pakistan have badly gone through their cunning fallacies and were primary victims of securitization policies. The securitization tactics were evident very often in the political history of both countries. Especially for right wing parties, the securitization related to the India-Pakistan is the main ingredient in their elections campaigning. For instance, after Pathankot incident in 2016, Modi won the later elections. Because his party's election campaign was then immediately driven by that incident. India's Lok Sabha was then echoed by that incident and centrality of audience on that matter was much prevalent. (McGlinchey, 2019)



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There is an overarching question in South Asia's geopolitical scenario that why every coming election in India is preceded by terror and India-Pakistan controversies. Maneuvering national security matters and sensitive political matters for driving political agendas is all for their electoral appetite. Hyper nationalism has always been the triggering point for playing nasty polity tactics. Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) has long been using hyper nationalism as staple product of their party politics. This concept got more blatant in 2014 after Modi's arrival in political corridor of India. This phenomenon was enacted more successfully in the election of 2019 after Pulwama incident. Shortly after that incident, Modi along with his cabinet members were seen extensively with the coffins of martyrs. Thereafter, Modi's political clan worked tirelessly to shape an effective electoral campaign based on unnecessary jingoistic and assertive policies against Pakistan. Nationalistic pronouncement and noisy promises were made during the political rallies. Media houses then broadcasted those rallies which ultimately shaped the narratives of people. All those uproars muffled all unaddressed and unsolvable issues in Modi's previous regime such as inflation, unemployment, agricultural crisis, political chaos and Hindu-Muslim controversaries etc. (Bakhto, 2021)

Apart from domestic politics, role of media is also evident in shaping perceptions of population regarding India-Pakistan bilateral relationship. Media has always been the most central pillar in mending and wrecking relationships between two adverse nations. According to some rational approach, television is more influential than newspaper in shaping public attitudes and perceptions regarding other especially hostile nations. There is an interesting gap between media agenda and public opinion which then slightly get filled by domestic political propaganda. This act causes an acute disruption in peace building efforts. Many of the inclusive political debates on media talk shows have further aggravated the hostility among both nations. Distinguished and most notable news anchors are primary suspect for ingraining severe hostility between both traumatic nations i.e., Arnab Goswami (Indian talk show host) and another Anti-Indian anchors in Pakistan. However, some media platforms are also projecting confidence and peace building effort for both nations and adopting multi-dimensional approach for educating populations about crisis and its resolution process i.e., Aman ki Asha and Cricket Diplomacy etc. (Karim & Hussain, 2020)

Additionally, distinguished extremist groups like RSS and Shiv Sena are big hurdles in making up of India-Pakistan bilateral relationship with greater proximity. They are kind of evil forces which does not want better ties between both nations. These groups have been influencing the Indian government significantly. These groups have been playing as an acute mitigator of peace and warmth between two neighbors. The narrative and motive of these pressure groups has been used by different regimes for political point scoring. They preach and practice these narratives for their political comfort. (Hindustan Times, 2016)

The tussle has also been seen among the proponents of Hindutva legacy. The tussle between Shive Sena and BJP. These tussles have been fluctuating over the period. However, both are severely



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against the proximity of both neighbors. Both Parties are intensified supporters of Hindutva. RSS is the nerve center of Hindutva and BJP is the political arm of this extremist group. The Shiv Sena, a comparative latecomer, advocates the Hindutva legacy with more steadfastness and as prominent as RSS. Nevertheless, both are excessively infamous for employing violence to advance their Hindutva cause i.e., Babri Masjid riots, Gujrat massacre or hatred and violence directed against Pakistan. Their projection is kind of foreign demon. Pakistani government has limited the movement of their citizens and has been using diplomatic offensive attitude for some years due to state oppressions against Muslim living in India. Pakistan has always emphasized the threat of Hindutva extremism in the Indo-Pak subcontinent. (Falak, 2015)

While considering Pakistan's dilemma, militancy and Kashmir factor are among major domestic obstacles in mending India-Pakistan's normalized relations. Pakistan is a religiously and politically diverse state, founded in 1947. It consisted of lacking uniting factor and was immediately plunged into political upheavals. Successive administrations collapsed as corruption and infighting undermined the national government, leaving regional leaders in control and power was shifted in the hands of military. Still Pakistan is considered as the garrison state. For the sake of security, the insecure military has established Pakistan more of a hostile nation for immediate and traumatized neighbor (India). When the power was oscillating between civilian and dictatorship in Pakistan, their relationship was fluctuating very badly. While securing the insecurity of garrison state, Pakistan has gained nasty repercussion in the form of militancy. Playing the game of clientelism and geopolitical bodyguard for Uncle Sam (United States of America), the ingrained militancy has deliberately sabotaged the peace process between Pakistan and India. (Council of Foreign Relations, 2023)

After war on terror, militancy in Pakistan has become one of the most integral issues in geopolitical landscape. Since 2001, the west has concentrated their and client state's attention to the terrorism. Afghan Jihad is the fundamental cause of rising militancy and insurgency in Pakistan. Pakistan has failed to achieve desired counterinsurgency goals made by United States of America. Pakistan is being accused of not taking serious actions against Islamic militants. Pakistan's position in that matter is quite perplexed i.e., it has supported, resisted, and ignored the militancy as well. Pakistan's capacity to make decisions is hampered by both domestic and global challenges. Pakistan's super institutions has been instrumentalizing Islamist militancy for political and strategic gain. This planned instrumentalization has thwarted the peace process between India and Pakistan. The militancy, the military's dominance in Pakistani culture, and the rise of Hindutva in India have made the conflict increasingly unmanageable. This uneasy nexus reverberates the existential threat for proximity between India and Pakistan's bilateral relationship. (Lowe et al., 2012)

Another major obstacle from Pakistan's side is Kashmir factor in their domestic politics. Pakistani politicians frequently refer Kahmir issue as the core issue in their manifesto. In that way they drive



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centrality and attention of audience through deeper fear of India related to national recognition. Pakistan's attempt for resolving Kashmir question is quite blurry. Which contains succession of some tactical moves that lack a unified strategy or a predetermined outcome. Pakistan's identity predicated on balancing the perceived Indian dominance in South Asia and Kashmir issue has become is not just the root cause, in fact the symptom of India-Pakistan dilemma. Kashmir has been the most provocative agent for filling the vote banks of certain malicious and right-wing political parties. The rhetoric and fallacies in rallies speeches have mould this predicament into more diversified and more problematic matter. Pakistan lacks an immaculately defined goal in a contested Kashmir. Their addressing concerns or the most dignified/documented approach is to ensure the creation of a viable conclusion that does not involve bloodshed. (Haqqani, 2003)

According to some research, Pakistan have become more critical regarding their conventional rivalry with India. The attitude of local citizens has quite changed after certain uneasy standoffs between both neighbors. Military tension for nearly seven decades, continues to heighten security tension in South Asian region. In the Pew research survey of 2001, over three quarters (74%) of Pakistani sees India as an existential threat for their nationhood and 54% believing it as a severe threat for their national sovereignty. Approximately half believe the Taliban (54%) and al Qaeda (49%) pose substantial risks. All those surveys perfectly expose the ingrained hostility by domestic factors. (Pew Research Centers, 2011)

Objectives

The foremost intent of this research paper is to investigate the cunning domestic factors responsible for aggravating the enduring grievances between India-Pakistan.

- This research paper tends to offer a thorough and analytical look at India-Pakistan enduring grievances due to certain major and exasperating domestic politics and attitude of local population.
- This research paper will conduct the comprehensive overview of triggering and provocative agents involving in the political battle for enhancing outrageous conduct from both sides.
- This research paper will inspect the intricate policies made by leaders from both sides just to gain political point scoring and not putting peace making efforts.
- Another intent of this research paper is to find out the domestic contrasting tactics. Which helped the regimes of both nations to divert people's attention from severe domestic matters to centuries old India-Pakistan hostility.
- Furthermore, this research paper tends to propose rational and pragmatic recommendations for mitigating the enduring grievance between both hostile nations and uplifting proximity between their bilateral relations.



Research Methodology

This research paper's inquiry relies on secondary sources and publicly available electronic data. Research paper is precisely made up of quality data through distinguished research papers, blogs, books analysis and surveys. Securitization theory has been used as theoretical approach in this research paper which has examined the intricacies and hurdles to peace process more accurately. In attaining comprehensive inquiry, this research paper includes literature review which analyzed the whole predicament through closed lens. Along with the examination of significant findings and discussions, this research paper has evaluated certain domestic factors responsible for that predicament. This research paper has also suggested some recommendation for expediting the peace process between India and Pakistan and proposing the pragmatic suggestion for protecting the process from provocative and triggering agents.

Finding And Discussions

After the above discussions, well rounded research has found some distinguished reasons behind this concurrent dilemma.

1. Domestic Diversionary Tactics:

Domestic diversionary tactics can be defined as those tactics which are used for diverting attention of population from any persistent domestic issue to centuries old cliché matter. For instance, in the case of India and Pakistan, whenever there is any severe or catastrophic dilemma in Indian domestic situation, unexpectedly and suddenly violation occurs at LOC or any other militant assault from Pakistani side which led to tumultuous situation and successfully able to divert the attention of local population from that persistent domestic matter. The most famous example would be of farmer protest in India from August 09, 2020, to December 11, 2021. During that time, several LOC violations were broadcasted by the manipulated Indian media. India's religio-political dynamics and Khalistan angle was then overshadowed by again the cliché old LOC violation saga. (Arora, 2020)

2. Elections Saga:

Most prominently in Indian politics, elections somehow get fully accelerated by playing Pakistan card. As in 2019 election of India, the BJP were so eager to quell anti-incumbency feelings. For that purpose, they played Pakistan card so efficiently that were able to continue their regime gain. Pakistan has always been mentioned in the electoral manifesto of political parties in India. In 2014, one liberal party, the Indian National Congress emphasized the party's unwavering commitment to improve relations with longstanding rival Pakistan. However, continuously making an allegation on Pakistan for 26/11 Mumbai attack. Their manifesto was also flooded with anti-Pakistan cards. As they demanded and promised to hold Pakistan responsible and accountable for that assault in



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Mumbai. On the contrary, Bhartiya Janta Party (BJP) emphasized in its 2014 elections manifesto with a robust commitment to meet the needs of refugees in Pakistan's Kashmir. Pakistan is undeniably the central notion in Indian electoral process. Anti-Pakistan emotions have risen in India on several times during the last five years, causing several BJP members to openly promote such views. The Cabinet ministers of BJP has always stated that that they cannot hold terror talks with Pakistan. Just look at that statement, it carries so much hatred and rhetoric. Which can easily shape the narrative of naïve citizens looking into the dilemmatic matter with keen interest. The rational and pragmatic politicians who were against Modi's government hostile behavior against Pakistan were brutally backlashed by them. The Pakistani factor gets more obvious while evaluating the political climate in Kashmir. Whenever an Indian soldier killed in cross border tensions, the local politicians in India immediately weaponized the indignation to blatantly criticized the incumbent government. Notwithstanding, the opposition parties in India always advocates for setting hardliner policy for Pakistan. Which resonates with the typical Indian voter, who has long harbored profound suspicions of Pakistan. Consequently, the ruling party in India is usually afraid of seeming too compromised when it comes to Pakistan, for fear of inciting the fury of both the opposition and voters. (Moonakal & Sharma, 2019)

3. Populist Leaders and Political Masculinity:

Populism and political masculinity is well evident in both nation's political discourse. Populism is an inclusive identification of piety politics in both countries. It solidifies the devotional and hypnotizing politics which is an absolute menace for Hindu majority India and Muslim majority in Pakistan. The manly state has the most diversified form of political masculinity which drives the motives of right-wing populist. (Zia, 2022)

The populist version has tangled the flexibility in conducting bilateral dialogues between both nations. Engaging in bilateral dialogues is critical to keeping the region secure from any catastrophic escalation between nuclear armed states. Populism hinders the logical and rational thinking capacity of people through rhetoric and fallacies. In case of India and Pakistan, populism ha s worse the bilateral engagement between both immediate neighbors. Unfortunately, India-Pakistan's animosity has crippled the South Asia's regional connectivity and rendered the SAARC's functionality most probably after 2016. (Jaspal, 2023)

4. Militancy and Kashmir Factor in Pakistan domestic Political Discourse:

Kashmir has always been the most sympathetic concern for Pakistan. If Anti-Pakistan narrative is beneficial for India for driving their electoral interest. So, for Pakistan, playing Kashmir card is essential for filling their vote banks by their sentimental voters. The rallies of those politicians always echoed with the slogans of Kashmir's freedom. For instance, "Kashmir Banay Ga Pakistan" or "Kashmir hoga Azad". Another threat to their bilateral relations is the enduring militancy and insurgency in Pakistan. The militant organization in Pakistan have taken the responsibility of



several attacks in India. Pakistan has been labeled as the safe haven for terrorist. That militancy is an absolute obstacle while mending India-Pakistan bilateral relationship.

Conclusion

To conclude, the cliche animosity between India and Pakistan has been the most overarching issue on wider geopolitical canvas. Since the inception of both countries, the unwavering generational partition trauma has aggravated the dilemmatic concerns for every ordinary citizen residing in both these nations. Certain major domestic politicized factor has been playing the role of provocative and triggering agents for enduring grievances between India and Pakistan. Domestic diversionary tactics usually plays the most crucial role in India-Pakistan relations. Distracting the attention of domestic citizen from sensitive domestic matters to the old India-Pakistan grievances is the most cunning form of tactic and giant obstacle in mending India-Pakistan uneasy relations. Elections saga and the never-ending hatred rhetoric of populist leaders has always been on point. Militancy and Kashmir factors are another exasperate reasons for mitigating proximity between India-Pakistan. Pragmatic and rational policies can mitigate the grievances and can limit the role of those unwavering domestic politicized factors.

Recommendations

Following are some self-evaluated and comprehensive recommendations for mitigating the thwarted dilemma between India and Pakistan due to unwavering domestic politicized factors.

- The first step to sustainable confidence building measures would be to analyze and diagnose all the major and minor conflicts with fully focused attitudes and with neutrality.
- Identifying the alternative and mutual solutions would be the next step. The alternatives solutions must be acceptable to both conflicting parties. Encourage parties to brainstorm ideas and achieve desired outcomes through the process. Building trust among conflict participants is crucial for developing and agreeing on alternative solutions, posing a high degree of risk.
- The super institution from both sides needs to understand and diagnosis the domestic divergent tactic played by any regime for distracting the centrality of audience. Elimination of these tactics is prerequisite and must be denouncing it as the worst political card played for dirty politics. The mitigations of those tactics can bring both nations closer for rational bilateral dialogues without any hardliner policy.
- Elections from both sides should be from Anti-Indian and Anti-Pakistan narratives. Populist and political masculinity must be censored if they are going to advocate their manifesto with prominent hatred against each nation. Censoring those populist leaders can



somehow make the audience realize that how their rhetoric for their political point scoring have sabotaged the proximity between India and Pakistan.

• Pakistan needs to take consolidated actions against militancy and to halt the assault by these organizations on Indian soil. Militancy and insurgence free Pakistan will be more acceptable for peace dialogue with India.



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