

PSIR Crash Course

INDIA PAKISTAN RELATIONS

INTRODUCTION

- Pakistan is a nation with **hybrid political system** — **Pakistan's dyarchy in which the military calls all the shots albeit through a 'selected' civilian front-man** who is also **known as 'Prime Minister'**.
- IMRAN Khan is **widely viewed as a puppet of the military** establishment who was **'selected' to toe the military's line**

PEOPLE TO PEOPLE RELATIONS

- A **millennium of co-existence, fractured by disruptions of sacred geographies**, has failed to resolve the subcontinent's dilemmas.
- Indians and Pakistanis **meet as rivals, live as strangers, and even behave, paradoxically, as long-lost brothers**.

India-Pakistan relationship is held hostage by many structural impediments

ISSUES

- **Issues of identity and a shared sense of historical animosity** have hardcoded themselves into both countries' politics. **And in today's polarised media environment, opinions on these issues are sharper and more amplified than ever before.** These factors make any true reconciliation very difficult.
- The **Pakistani Army remains a key interlocutor in Pakistan-India relations**. Their overwhelming control built on a **hardline Islamic identity and hostility towards India**.
- With **Pakistan now being bankrolled by the Chinese and India preparing to take on a global leadership role**, both countries are likely more confident in their strategic capability to gain the upper hand against the other.

IRRITANTS IN RELATIONSHIP

Thousand cuts

- **General Zia's 'thousand cuts, zero-option war' against India, in the form of cross-border terrorism.**
- **First in Punjab, then in Jammu and Kashmir**, not only has **Pakistan's Deep State, with the ISI as the front, fine-tuned anti-India terrorism**, but has also made a fine art of it –

RECENT EVENTS

- **2019-the Pulwama suicide bombing carried out by a Pakistani terrorist group Jaish-e-Mohammad (JeM) killing over 40 CRPF personnel** was the starting point of the steep slide in relations.
- **fighter jets targeted a JeM terrorist camp, not in Pakistan-occupied Kashmir but in Balakot** in the Pakistani province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa

- The **amendment and hollowing out of Article 370, scrapping of Article 35A**, the **bifurcation of the erstwhile state of Jammu and Kashmir into two Union Territories** stunned Pakistan.
- While the sheer audacity of the move was breathtaking, **it effectively killed whatever remained of the bilateral relationship after Balakot.**
- * In a **typical knee-jerk reaction, Prime Minister Imran Khan downgraded diplomatic relations by expelling the Indian High Commissioner and suspending all trade** between the two countries.
- **Pakistan went ahead with the Kartarpur corridor.**
- While the **eternal optimists have seen this Pakistani 'initiative' with rose-tinted glasses**, the **realists believe that Pakistani intentions are not noble** and **they are trying to use Kartarpur to re-ignite the Khalistani movement.**
- Therefore, the one thing which could be called positive also has no traction because of the **deep suspicions and mistrust that underscore the bilateral relationship**

SCHOLARS AND ANALYSIS (IMPORTANT)

Ashley Tellis - we still lack "the requisite power to shape their strategic choices." Neither our economic nor our military power by itself can influence our neighbours' foreign policy choices.

This has been **exacerbated by the rise of China which has emerged as both an economic and military player in South Asia.**

- The **failure with Pakistan is manifest. After a brief flirtation with the carrot, India doubled down on the stick.** This has yielded considerable electoral dividends, but whether or not it has helped modify or change Islamabad's behaviour remains open to question.
- **PAKISTAN maintains an effective blockade between us and central and west Asia. (CONTROLLING LAND BASED TRADE ROUTES)**

Because of this, **we are unable to establish any worthwhile rail, road or pipelines to trade with the region.** India has sought to remedy the situation through the **Chabahar project** and the **International North South Transportation Corridor (INSTC).**

- **FAILURE OF OLD INITIATIVES-** The 'Taskent Accord' (1965) and the 'Shimla Accord' (1972), both of which followed India-Pakistan wars, did hold for a time.
- In a way, the 'Shimla Accord' followed the 'Bangladesh War', which technically had begun as Pakistan's war with itself.

HARSH V PANT- India's cup of patience with Pakistani sponsored terrorism was now filled to the brim.

- It also delivered a message that **Pakistan no longer enjoys the impunity it thought it did and that India would now hit back without caring too much about the nuclear umbrella under which Pakistan merrily sent terrorists into India. EX- AFTER BALAKOT STRIKE**
- The **broad arguments for the war-psyche in India just now are based on the incontrovertible belief that Pakistan, whether Deep State or not, is incorrigible.**

ECONOMIC RELATIONS

- The **official trade** between the two countries is **small at \$2.4 billion.**
- Smuggling amounting to another \$5 billion takes place along the border. A substantial amount of trade also takes

place through third countries like the United Arab Emirates (UAE) and Singapore, amounting to around \$5 to \$10

billion.

- **Trade in any case had fallen steeply after India withdrew the MFN status and imposed 200% import duty on Pakistani goods.** Even so, after the Kashmir move, **virtually zero diplomatic communications or contact on the face of it.**
- India has granted Pakistan equal tariff treatment for more than two decades.
- In the past, **the trade between Pakistan and India never really took off even though from our side we tried our best and reduced the negative list of banned imports under the SAFTA** (South Asian Free Trade Agreement) initiated under the SAARC. **Pakistan continued to have a long negative list of 1209 items which acted as an effective non-tariff trade barrier.**

FUTURE GEOPOLITICAL SCENARIO AND INCREASING REGIONAL COMPLEXITIES

- The **bilateral relationship which has become very bitter and prone to brinkmanship** (which could lead to miscalculation and/or accidents) is only one part of the problem. The **rising complexity in the regional dynamics will also complicate the India-Pakistan equation.**
- The **excuse for this will of course be Kashmir, where a spike in terrorism is on the cards.** It is almost a given that **Pakistan will not just make every effort to re-ignite separatism in Punjab – Referendum 2020 for instance** – but also do everything possible **to incite and instigate Indian Muslims** – another Indian Mujahideen type of terror outfit could be raised to give things an indigenous flavour and retain plausible deniability.
- The **entire CAA-NRC-NPR issue will be milked by Pakistan not just to create trouble in India but also forward its poisonous propaganda campaign against India in international fora**
- . Rest assured that **Pakistan would use every available forum – from animal husbandry to climate change– to 'raise' the Kashmir issue.(SATTIRE)**
- * **Pakistan reaction with predictable hysterics, screaming and shouting about how India was preparing for a bloodbath in Kashmir,** how millions of people will be streaming into Pakistan, **how demographic invasion and genocide would be unleashed.**

INDIAN APPROACH

- **INDIA'S CHALLENGE-** of **managing the negative externalities from Pakistan's domestic dysfunctionalities.** The **Pakistani military might now try to focus on India so as to resurrect its diminishing credentials,** especially as Bajwa will be under pressure. **He will have to prove his worth by making sure the regional security environment deteriorates**
- **Stuck between a rock and a hard place with Pakistan, India's neighbourhood policy has been modified to look eastward.** Leaders of the **BIMSTEC grouping** — Bangladesh, Myanmar, Sri Lanka, Thailand, Nepal and Bhutan — were the invitees to the PM's swearing in ceremony last month.

IMPACT ON SOUTH ASIA

- The **endgame in Afghanistan will probably see greater contestation** between the two countries, in addition to new alignments.
- The **China factor will continue to loom over South Asia, not just in the context of CPEC but also the Indo-Pacific strategy.**
- The **more India hedges China by engaging in the Indo-Pacific with the US and its allies, the more Beijing will rely on Pakistan to keep India unsettled**
- The **US too will use Pakistan to focus India's attention on itself and its Indo-Pacific strategy.**
- The **Russians are already opening up to Pakistan**, and will further determine the depth and heft in this budding relationship,
- As for **SAARC, it will most likely remain confined to the cold storage**, unless of course the next summit is shifted out of Pakistan.

SUMMARY AND CONCLUSION

- **the best that can happen** on the **India-Pakistan front is that diplomatic relations are restored fully, trade opens up, there is some easing up on travel.**
- Beyond that, the **sniping and insidious policies will continue, the LoC in Kashmir will remain hot, Pakistani export of terrorism will remain a problem but will probably remain below the threshold of tolerance.** In other words, yesterday once more.
- India has a Pakistan problem is undeniable. But for **India to look at its relationships with other countries, especially friendly Great Powers, from the prism of Pakistan is disastrous diplomacy.**
- The right choice for India is to seize this moment and **offer an honourable peace.**
- This sort of thinking betrays a mindset that suffers from a combination of the **Prithviraj Chauhan syndrome (treat the enemy honourably so that she can come back and beat the hell out of you in the future) and the Treaty of Versailles syndrome (don't impose terms on an enemy that will force her to rise and take revenge in the future).**
- **Wars are easy to enter, difficult to exit — as is evident from successive US efforts to extricate their troops from Afghanistan.**
- The **West's fight against Al Qaeda and later ISIS has told us that air strikes and conventional armies have not been any match for terror groups that exist because of a combination of ideological motivation and state patronage.** A very real terror threat needs more than just muscle flexing that could backfire — it needs intelligent strategies.
- **While nation states fight conventional wars with conventional armies, the enemy is not conventional, and fights asymmetrically.**

Role of cricket (JUST TO MAKE VALUE ADDITION)

- * **P.R. Sreejesh** said, **"I get into revenge mode during a Pakistan game and my blood also boils."**
 - **Pakistanis link sport to the nation's religion-based identity, while Indians seek revenge against history.**
 - * **Pakistanis glory** in being **"separate and superior [to Indians],"** writes **Stephen Cohen** in his book
 - * **"Sports diplomacy"** is a loose term, but a starting point to understanding the good part. **Sport is politics' messenger.**
 - * Pakistan's sub-conventional war against India came after years of gaming. This war entered sport.
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PAKISTAN NUCLEAR POSITITIONING

INTRODUCTION

- **For nearly thirty years now, Pakistan has been playing the madman with nukes.** The strategic deterrence posture of Pakistan has been based on **first-use of nuclear weapons against any conventional attack on Pakistan, especially from India.**

NUKES FOR CONVENTIONAL SECURITY RATHER AS A TOOL FOR DETERRENCE

- **PAKISTAN- they consider nuclear weapons as weapons of war not weapons of deterrence,** Pakistan had **successfully deterred India from using its conventional superiority to punish Pakistan for its relentless and remorseless export of terrorism.**

SUSHANT SHAREEN

- **Rationality is, however, a subjective thing, and irrationality is a game two can play. While it was perfectly rational for Pakistanis to play irrational, it was quite irrational for India to play rationally in the face of Pakistan's act of irrationality.**
- Many analysts and strategists had been advocating the **need to call Pakistan's bluff, but until the airstrikes on the Jaish-e-Mohammed terrorist camp in Balakot,**
- **Pakistan had managed to deter India by brandishing the nuclear threat and giving the impression that its nuclear threshold was inversely proportional to India's conventional superiority.**
- In other words, as the **conventional gap between India and Pakistan increased, Pakistan's nuclear threshold decreased.**

India-Pakistan tension: Is there a role for SAARC?

INTRODUCTION

- **Largely viewed as a 'failure' in promoting regional cooperation, the inability to make progress is, in turn, attributed to the unending hostility between India and Pakistan.**

ISSUES

- **India-Pakistan conflict has long defined the boundary of South Asia's security dynamics. Far from playing a role in interstate conflict, the regional organisation has stayed away from crisis** in fellow member states. Moreover, the **SAARC Charter bars discussion on contentious bilateral issues.**
- **The SAARC nations were among the first to condemn the Pulwama terror attack.**
- The **SAARC statement** further **urged both sides to "seek solution through dialogue and peaceful means in order to ease tension and normalize the situation"** and stressed **"the importance of peace and stability in South Asia."**

- SAARC'S principled stance on terrorism as highlighted in the 18th SAARC Summit held in November 2014 when the SAARC leaders "unequivocally condemned terrorism and violent extremism in all its forms and manifestations" and "underlined the need for effective cooperation among the Member States to combat them."
- Furthermore, **in 2016, four members of the grouping boycotted the SAARC Summit after the Uri terror attack.**
- **On the wider regional role on interstate conflicts that threatens regional peace and security, the inability of SAARC to play any role beyond issuing a cautionary statement tells a lot about the low level of SAARC as an actor in promoting peace and preventing conflict.**

WAY AHEAD

- **If SAARC were to reinvent itself as a relevant actor in regional security, issues such as counter-terrorism need to form the base of regional security cooperation.**

ROLE OF USA IN INDIA PAKISTAN DYNAMICS

INTRODUCTION

- The simple fact of the matter is that the **US has interests attached to both countries and wasn't going to jeopardise one for the other.**

USA APPROACH

- **USA- to dehyphenate India and Pakistan so that he could deal with them separately and get what he wanted from each country.**
- Admittedly, the **scale and scope of US relations with India and Pakistan differ vastly. With India, the US is building a relationship which is strategic but also has an important transactional** ; with Pakistan, the US relationship is almost entirely transactional even in the strategic sense – Afghanistan, terrorism, nuclear safety.
- **With India the positive elements in the relationship outweigh and outscore the negatives,** while in Pakistan's case, the relationship is based on mostly negatives rather than anything positive. EX- HOWDI MODI EVENT, NAMASTE TRUMP EVENT
- **maturing of US-India friendship, partnership and strategic relationship, summed up in the tag line "Shared Dreams, Bright Futures".** Trump's presence completely transformed 'Howdy Modi' from being about Modi and his fan following among the Indian Americans, to becoming an **extra-ordinary demonstration of US-India bonhomie.**

TRUMP sought to continue his predecessor's policy of a compartmentalised US approach with the dehyphenation of India and Pakistan. Thus, as author George Packer recently summarised, the Holbrooke-Obama relationship "began with differences in temperament, widened with generation, and ended in outlook."

TRUMP'S MEDIATION OFFER ON KASHMIR ISSUE

- Moreover, Trump said that Modi even asked him if he'd like to be a "mediator or arbitrator" on the matter.
- This news raised a storm as it stood in contradiction to India's longstanding position that "all outstanding issues with Pakistan are discussed only bilaterally."
- Yet, all Imran could extract from Trump was a mediation offer, albeit with a veto given to India.

- Holbrooke viewed Pakistan as the "center stage," whilst Afghanistan was a "sideshow." Reportedly, Holbrooke believed that Afghan stability was linked to stability in Pakistan. And that's where "he believed that a crucial step to reducing radicalism in Pakistan was to ease the Kashmir dispute with India, and he favored more pressure on India to achieve that."

Imran Khan's Afghanistan 'Trump' card

- Pakistan has faced the ire of Trump's transactional worldview. Trump has claimed Pakistan to have been "housing the very terrorists that we are fighting," and concurrently enforced economic costs by suspending aid. Moreover, the US under Trump even supported Pakistan's demotion to the greylist of the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) for "outstanding counterterrorism deficiencies."
- Imran Khan has sought to rake up Afghanistan — which many believe to be Pakistan's "only real trump card." Moreover, as US talks with the Taliban approach a critical juncture and Trump becomes increasingly weary of the continued US presence in Afghanistan against his campaign promises, Trump has expressed faith in Pakistan to "help us out to extricate ourselves."
- Pakistan is approaching the sweet spot in Afghanistan where Taliban is set to join the mainstream. After being seen as the villain of the piece, Islamabad is being cast as a guarantor who will ensure that the country will no longer operate as a centre of global jihad
- Thus, the US is now approaching talks with Pakistan for securing Pakistani support towards "restraining Taliban attacks on US forces." Whereas, Pakistan — and its security apparatus specifically, has long construed "greater influence in Afghanistan, earned by decades of support for armed militants, as a way to gain strategic depth in their rivalry with the much larger India."
- Therefore, at this juncture, Imran Khan seems to have seen the alignment between Pakistan's interest of dampening the American policy of dehyphenating Pakistan and India,

ROLE OF CHINA IN INDIA PAK RELATIONS

- Indeed, if there is a silver lining in the international reaction to the Kashmir issue, it is the position of China.
- CHINA had voiced "serious concern" about the move by the Indian Parliament to split the state
- Even so, both US and China's responses make it clear that no matter what steps India has taken, in the eyes of China, US, and indeed other powers, J&K remains an international dispute that needs to be resolved through dialogue between India and Pakistan.
- India has criticised China for its development projects in Gilgit Baltistan on this score.

- **Beijing claims and occupies Aksai Chin in the new UT of Ladakh, as well another area in PoK, the Shaksgam Valley, which was handed over by Pakistan to China as part of a border settlement.**
- China is only expanding its hold over those parts (and also the rest of Pakistan) through CPEC, as a part of the larger global/regional BRI. India talking to China over the said territory is out of the question. The chances of Islamabad talking to New Delhi on the 'China-occupied' Indian territory without Beijing's blessings, if not presence are worse.