

INDO-PAK RELATIONS UNDER NARENDRA MODI'S LEADERSHIP: PROBLEMS AND PROSPECTS OF DIALOGUE MECHANISM AND CBMS

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Abstract

India has a more difficult and convoluted problem while attempting to negotiate with Pakistan. India and Pakistan have conflicted with one another ever since they became independent in 1947. As a result, they are psychologically incapable of establishing peaceful cooperation due to their innate animosity. There is a wide gulf between Pakistan's civilian, military, and religious authorities, contributing to the country's instability and security problems. The current peace process in India is quite unstable. But they have moved quickly to take several steps, both bilaterally and internationally, to address the issue. To my regret, none of these are long-term solutions. The temporary relief of a truce is quickly diminished. India's foreign policy has recently required greater realism and consistency to keep a dialogue with Pakistan. There was much anticipation for Modi's formal installation as India's prime minister in May 2014. Inviting all SAARC heads of state to his inauguration provided them the confidence to usher in a new age of peace and cooperation in the region and was a smart move. India, however, found that this strategy and the associated program fell short of its expectations. This study will thus examine the challenges of Modi's foreign policy toward Pakistan. The Modi government's policy toward India's neighbor is at stake here. This has been made possible by several recent innovations. The variables that have hampered Indian foreign policy with Pakistan under the Modi administration will be reflected upon and analyzed in this study. Even if terrorism has played a role in the deterioration of relations between the two nations, it is not the only cause of the impasse. This study is divided into three sections to address Modi's foreign policy against Pakistan. First, we will look at how scholars are now discussing India's foreign policy toward Pakistan. Our focus here is on Modi's strategy against Pakistan. The second section will discuss the current situation and India's reaction to Pakistan. In the last section, we shall assess the current conversation, the CBMs process, and the future challenge.

Keywords: *CBMS, Coexistence, Diplomacy, Terrorism, Proactive Policy.*

Introduction

Negotiating with Pakistan is a more challenging and complicated issue for India. Since India and Pakistan gained their independence in 1947, they have been at odds with one another. This hostility is thus intrinsic to their psyches and prevents them from fostering coexistence. Pakistan is notorious for its instability and security issues, as well as its role as an incubator for terrorist groups and the chasm between the country's civilian, military, and religious authorities. India's approach to peace at this time is precarious. However, they have swiftly taken various actions to remedy the situation using bilateral and international approaches. Unfortunately, not one of them is permanent. The joy of a ceasefire doesn't last long at all. India's foreign policy has recently needed more realistic and consistent to maintain interaction with Pakistan. There has been widespread excitement in the run-up to Modi's May 2014 swearing-in as Prime Minister of India. It was wise to include all SAARC leaders in his inauguration ceremony, as it gave them the assurance they needed to begin a new era of goodwill in the region. India's hopes, however, were belied^[1]

Therefore, this paper investigates the difficulties faced by Modi's foreign policy against Pakistan. The issue at hand is the approach taken towards the neighbor by the administration of Narendra Modi. Many recent advances have helped bring this about. This study will reflect on and examine the conditions that have complicated Indian foreign policy with Pakistan during the Modi administration. Terrorism contributes to the breakdown of communication between the two countries, but it is by no means the only reason for this stalemate. This paper is divided into three parts. In the first part, we shall examine the current academic discourse on India's foreign policy concerning Pakistan. In this part, we'll look at Modi's approach to Pakistan. The second part will discuss the latest events and how India has responded to Pakistan. The third segment critically evaluates the ongoing discourse and CBMs process and the forthcoming challenge. So, we can draw this conclusion.

India's approach to the foreign policy against Pakistan: Modi's rule

According to scholars like Kanti Bajpai, India's foreign policy towards Pakistan has dramatically altered the trajectory of Indian diplomacy. Assertive bilateral diplomacy and diplomatic activity within coalitions are part of its strategy. Modi has gone back and forth between bilateral communication and isolation.^[2] At the same time, he worked to form a coalition among several countries to increase pressure on Pakistan to crack down on terrorism. C. Raja Mohan and others have suggested that

Modi's approach to diplomacy is novel compared to that of his predecessor. He said he would not tolerate any combination of words and violence. Pakistan must take action to reduce terrorism before dialogue can restart.^[3]

In light of Recent Events, India Responds

The momentum gained from Modi's swearing-in ceremony in May 2014 and his surprise visit to Nawaz Sharif's Lahore home (on the occasion of his birthday) on December 25, 2015, on his way back from Kabul, has fueled the ongoing dialogue and CBMs process, which will hopefully yield peace in the subcontinent.^[4] The Prime Minister's official account tweeted the unexpected news that Modi would visit Lahore just a few hours beforehand. No one in Prime Minister Modi's inner circle knew about this, not even his Home or Foreign Minister.

Call for a cessation of hostilities along the LOC

The dream of continued peace dialogue with our adversarial neighbor was dashed not long after the event when Modi was sworn in as prime minister. This was because Pakistan's Army Chief General Raheel Sharif referred to Kashmir as Pakistan's "jugular Vein" during the same month.^[9] He said that this disagreement is capable of being settled in line with the decision of the United Nations Security Council. After the strikes on Pathankot air base in January 2016, which resulted in the deaths of seven security personnel, ties between India and Pakistan entered a period of heightened hostility. This terrorist outfit, Je M, was responsible for both the assaults and is the handmaiden of Pakistan's Inter-service Intelligence (ISI). The time of the meeting coincided with a discussion in the United Nations General Assembly, which was attended by both the Prime Minister of Pakistan and the Minister of External Affairs of India.

After the death of militant Burhan Wani in July 2016, there was a rise in violence and an outburst of protest in the Jammu and Kashmir valley. The issue that had been going on in the valley continued to be a threat to the country's internal security. In response to such circumstances, Kramer stated, "Politics can, and must provide Kashmir and India a new imagination – a new way of perceiving their connection to themselves and each other."^[6]

The next terrorist incident occurred in September 2016, when an army installation was assaulted in Uri. After six separate terrorist strikes on an army base in the Uri sector of Jammu and Kashmir on September 18, 2016, resulting in the deaths of 18 jawans and the infliction of terrible injuries on many more, emotions have reached a boiling point.^[7] This incident was planned and carried out by Jaish-e-Mohammad. The breaking of the ceasefire became a daily occurrence. The growing number of LOC clashes further hampers the negotiating process between India and Pakistan. In 2016, the total number of violations for the whole year was 228, but as of August 1 of this year, there have already been 285 violations. On the diplomatic front, the United States and Saudi Arabia have condemned this assault on Uri. As a collective punishment for what happened in Uri, SAARC nations have decided to boycott the next SAARC conference.^[8]

The tragedies of Uri and Their Consequences

Following the incident in Uri, India decided to go with the following option.^[9]

1. Place Pakistan in a position of international isolation.

Send envoys to important nations to encourage them to band together against terrorism supported by Pakistan. The government of India condemned terrorist activity that occurs across international borders in the United Nations General Assembly (UNGA). The aggressive coalition diplomacy discovered at an international forum where Modi chased other countries to condemn the terror assault that Pakistan planned on Indian Territory was found.

2. The government of India responded to Pakistan's hostile behavior by increasing its diplomatic efforts, expanding its use of tactical alternatives, and disengaging from the conflict.

3. The choice of the military

India performed a "Surgical Strike" by infiltrating Pakistani Territory over the Line of Control (LOC) and bombing a terrorist camp. This was a clever decision from a strategic standpoint. Still, it was meant to send a message to Pakistan that India is no longer a spectator nation regarding the recurring acts of cross-border terrorism that Pakistan is increasing. However, according to the yearly survey published by the Pew Research Center, fifty percent of Indians are against Prime Minister Modi's plan to employ military force against Pakistan to combat the threat of terrorism.

4. The economical alternative

Cut off ties with Pakistan, particularly business conducted over the border. Traveling across international boundaries and doing business across international borders, both of which became conceivable in 2008, have been placed on hold for an indefinite time at this point. India prohibited the import of any goods from Pakistan. Appeal to the governments of other nations to cut their economic links with Pakistan. Cross-LoC Trading–Cross-LoC trade was banned on July 11, 2017, which resulted in a loss of Rs 80 Cores, according to Mohammad Tanveer, the custodian of LOC trade for Poonch.

Despite all of these steps, the violence level has not decreased. In the Poonch area of Jammu and Kashmir, two Indian soldiers, a Naib Subedar of the Indian Army named Paramgeet Singh and a BSF Jawan named Prem Sagar, were murdered, and their bodies were disfigured.^[10] The most recent remark by Modi states that the Army wants to assist anybody who wants to stone it. A Jihad organization with roots in Pakistan is fueling the latest conflict in the Kashmir valley. These Jihadist groups have received backing from radicalized local youth, contributing to their success in their operations. Regarding Pakistan, Modi's primary aim in terms of India's foreign policy is to bolster India's national security and transform the country into a big economic powerhouse.

Pakistani domestic developments

By holding elections in the Gilgit Baltistan area, Pakistan hoped to provide credibility to its claim to the Territory, despite India being very critical of the move. The second is an economic corridor between China and Pakistan. The official institution of the government of India has given a stern response to China's ambitious 45 billion deal project that travels across Pakistan-occupied Kashmir. The project is located in the same region. A variety of dot lines may represent the political evolution that has taken place in Pakistan in recent times. Nawaz Sharif has been removed from his position as Prime Minister of Pakistan due to these events. The second issue is the outbreak of violence inside Pakistan caused by terrorists. Pakistan's state-supported terrorism has significantly challenged regional efforts to maintain peace and stability. On August 21, 2017, when delivering a speech to the nation from Fort Myer in Virginia, United States President Donald J. Trump revealed the tactics he would use in the country's ongoing conflict in Afghanistan. He announced that the new foundation of his plan would consist of three new pillars.^[12]

These include:

- The conclusion of a commitment to Afghanistan that was limited in terms of time and the transition to an assessment that is condition-based;
- The convergence of political, economic, and military approaches; 3) a shift in attitude to Pakistan, particularly concerning the ongoing issue of safe haven for terrorists.

This indicates that terrorism is not only preventing Pakistan from establishing internal political stability and peace inside its borders but also poses a danger to Pakistan's surrounding countries, such as Afghanistan and India. They also present a risk to the stability of the world's peace.

Initiatives based on CBMs and conversation

The conclusion of dialogue is not as important as the act of having it. For India to continue the dialogue process with Pakistan, India must comprehend the structural component that regulates the Pakistani state. The following explains these factors: First, what part does the Pakistan Army play, and how much effect does it have on the dialogue process? Even though a civilian administration governs Pakistan, the armed forces continue to wield significant influence and authority in matters of national security and foreign policy. The reality is that Pakistan's military would suffer significant setbacks in terms of its position, influence, and overall significance if peace were to be achieved with India. The second is the politics inside Pakistan: The conservative attitude of the political establishment, especially among the elites in Pakistani society, has never been interested in keeping peaceful ties with the neighboring country. This is a dynamic in Pakistan's domestic politics. Because they sought to create a false sense of nationalism inside the home realm and distract people from the internal unrest they were experiencing, they played the India card.^[12] Therefore, this way of thinking has to be revised.

When Narendra Modi first took office as Prime Minister of India, there was hope for progress in bilateral discussions. Modi's visit to Lahore to celebrate Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif's birthday on December 25, 2015, was only a gesture, but it did not assist him much in improving ties with Pakistan. During this time, no discernible improvement was identified in India-Pakistan CBMs. A meeting between the prime ministers of India and Pakistan, Narendra Modi of India and Nawaz Sharif of Pakistan, was scheduled to take place on the sidelines of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO) Summit in Ufa, Russia, in July 2015; however, diplomatic ties remain dislodged until that meeting takes place.

The Ufa Accord

Recent events in Ufa have seen the launch of several constructive efforts on both the Indian and Pakistani sides (Russia). The general public referred to this as the Ufa Agreement.

The following are the key issues that were discussed and agreed upon at Ufa:

- A meeting between the National Security Advisors of both countries will take place in New Delhi to examine all problems related to terrorism at the Ufa conference in Russia.
- A meeting of the DG BSF and DG Pakistan Rangers in the morning, followed by a meeting of the DGMOs.
- A decision to speed up the process of releasing fishermen and their boats from the opposite party's custody within 15 days.

- A system for making religious tourism easier to organize
- Discuss strategies and means to speed up the investigation into the Mumbai case, including any information required to support the investigation.

At this point, the two sides prohibit conversation at the NSA level on topics relating to terrorism, which was scheduled to commence the next month. However, they were called off at the last minute because India objected to the idea that Pakistan's National Security Advisor, Sartaj Aziz, would meet with representatives of the Hurriyat before meeting with his Indian counterpart. Because of the assault on the Pathankot air base, the comprehensive bilateral conversation on the agenda of the foreign secretary-level meeting that was supposed to take place in January 2016 has also been postponed for an indeterminate length of time. The process of reconciling with Pakistan continues to be difficult. The continuance of CBMs by India has not been synonymous with a "tit for tat" attitude towards Pakistan, nor has it been successful in drawing the proposal of third parties. This policy provided India with diplomatic influence and the political space necessary to address the components of the Kashmir problem that are internal to India. The conversation is essential to achieving change in the relationship between India and Pakistan. The Indian elite knows that surrendering important security concerns and putting the country's interests at risk is not ideal for formulating an India-Pakistan foreign policy. India has shown interest in beginning dialogue with Pakistan about the army problem, but before dialogue could begin, India has asked Pakistan to fulfill some prerequisite conditions. It would be extremely difficult to continue CBMs and the dialogue process if Pakistan maintains this inimical atmosphere.

India launched its five-point agenda in August 2016 to maintain its talks with Pakistan. The following describes each of these:

- Demand that Pakistan cease all acts of encouragement to violence and terrorism in Jammu and Kashmir
- Put an end to the terrorism that occurs across borders
- Place terrorists like Masood Azar and Hafiz Saeed in detention and bring them to justice.
- Refuse to provide a safe haven for wanted criminals such as Dawood Ibrahim.
- Shut down the terrorist training center where people like Bahadur Ali received their education.

India has also sought a debate on Pakistan's unlawful annexation of Jammu and Kashmir. All of these concerns are connected to acts of terrorism. At that time, the Indian foreign secretary, S. Jaishankar, sent a letter to his counterpart in Pakistan, Aziyaz Ahmed Chaudhury. After this, India's stance started to harden in July when Pakistan attempted to get diplomatic and political mileage out of public unrest in Indian-administered Kashmir. This was in response to India's becoming more hostile towards Pakistan. In response, Modi chose not to denounce a terrorist assault in Quetta in Pakistan in August 2016.^[13]

Meanwhile, there are indications coming from the Secretary General of the United Nations, Antonio Guterres, that he is working to facilitate a conversation between India and Pakistan to find a solution to the Kashmir problem. However, he has not indicated participating in the mediation process.

During October, November, and December of 2016, a significant effort was made to participate in peace talks with Pakistan. Nawaz Sharif and Narendra Modi met on the sidelines of the United Nations Climate Summit in Paris on November 30. Insofar as the relationship between India and Pakistan is concerned, there was a widespread belief that a significant amount of diplomatic ice would be broken. After that, there was suddenly, within seven days, NSA level conversation where Indian National Security Adviser Ajit Doval and his counterpart from Pakistan, Nasir Janjua, met in Bangkok. The meeting took place between the two countries.^[14]

The two-day meeting between India and Pakistan on the level of secretaries, which was held under the auspices of the World Bank, came to a close in September 2017 in Washington, DC. The disagreement between India and Nepal over developing two hydroelectric power plants, Kishenganga and Raite, was the impetus for starting the dialogue in the first place. In response to this Indian Initiative, Pakistan voiced its opposition. Despite their disagreements, however, they continue to talk to one another while being mediated by a third person. Even though they could not do much, they created some impetus for the discussion. Recently, both parties have been adhering to a previous CBMs agreement regarding releasing fishermen lodged in the other party's prison. At least 546 fishermen from India are now being detained in Pakistan. This list was sent to the Indian ambassador in Pakistan, Gautam Bambawale, under the consular Access May 21 Agreement 2008. According to the terms of the agreement above, both nations were bound to swap any prisoners held by the other on January 1 and July 1. On January 6 of this year, 219 Indian fishermen were given their freedom.^[15]

A Critical Analysis

Three considerations have influenced the approach that Modi has taken toward Pakistan. **The first** is associated with his comprehension and conceptualization of what should be India's foreign policy concerning Pakistan. His efforts to engage with Pakistan are rooted in two of the cornerstones of his decision-making regarding foreign policy:

- Neighborhood first policy — Modi's neighborhood policy began with inviting all SAARC leaders to his swearing-in ceremony in May 2014. This was the beginning of Modi's neighborhood policy. Both India's and Pakistan's prime ministers have given the impression that foreign secretary-level talks would continue. But in August of 2014, they could not go further since Pakistan decided to move forward with the Hurriyat leader before beginning the India-Pakistan talks.
- Increased regional collaboration with the goal of promoting economic growth. It has been observed that Modi's primary concern was with geo-economics issues rather than geopolitical ones. As a result, he focused most of his remarks at the SAARC summit on ways to improve regional economic cooperation. However, his effort at the SAARC summit in Kathmandu, Nepal, was unsuccessful due to Pakistan's opposition to Modi's agenda in this area.

Second, many security analysts believed the Ufa accord would provide fresh insight into the CBMs process between India and Pakistan. Several terrorist attacks took place in Jammu and Kashmir area and along the Line of Control before the implementation of this agreement in its operational form. As a direct consequence, the CBMs and conversation process were unexpectedly postponed. In this regard, the administration of Modi took extreme action. It was decided to use surgical strikes and a limited military option to demoralize terrorists and get them to stop their terrorist operations within Kashmir. Lt. Gen. Vincent Stewart, the Director of the Defense Intelligence Agency in the United States, said that India has attempted and continues to seek to isolate Pakistan diplomatically and is examining punitive alternatives to raise the cost to Islamabad for its claimed assistance to cross-border terrorism. At the same time, India decided to use the diplomatic option to cut Pakistan off from the rest of the world. **Third**, discussions or relations between India and Pakistan have now broken down due to the unrest in Kashmir and the terrorism that comes from Pakistan over the border. In light of a back channel meeting organized by an Indian entrepreneur named Sajjan Jindal, the beheading of a Indian soldier suggests that the Pakistani Army is not interested in moving the CBMs process further.^[16] Therefore, India's current approach to Pakistan policy is doing business as usual. There is no outside-the-box method that can bring significant accomplishment. As a result, the Modi administration's approach to Pakistan policy at this point is one of waiting and seeing what happens.

Under these circumstances, security experts are skeptical about Modi's attitude toward Pakistan. They said that neither an institutional reaction nor an endeavor is being taken to create a real advantage. They further said that the much-publicized drill known as a "surgical strike" had no results and Pakistan is continuing to ratchet up the attacks in Jammu and Kashmir. After the surgical strike, there has been a discernible rise in the number of rocket and mortar attacks launched over the Line of Control (LoC). The available information shows that there were 226 in 2014, 279 in 2015, and 227 in 2016. They said that this "surgical attack" is a strategic measure that satisfies the short-term goal to deal with Pakistan, but that it would not be helpful in the long run.

As a result, there is a need for an integrated approach on the part of India foreign policy towards Pakistan. However, it is important to bear in mind that a real normalization will not be possible as long as the fundamental positions of the two nations remain the same. This fact should be kept in mind at all times. The peace process between India and Pakistan was derailed by a series of events, which may be seen documented throughout history. Beginning a discourse is challenging, but maintaining one is far tougher. This is the case with both India and Pakistan. The problem is that Pakistan's military and intelligence services are complicit in supporting terrorist activities in the nation. In this kind of scenario, India must first maintain the lines of interaction open on the political front for as long as the fight against terrorism is at the top of the agenda and conversation is restricted to being bilateral on any subject. Instead of putting off talks for an extended time, this will enable both nations to get their communication channels up and running. As the old saying goes, having something is better than having nothing.

Second, the traditionalists who are a part of the establishment on both sides shouldn't drag their baggage from the past into the present and make things more difficult for everyone. It is necessary to cultivate some original thought to add something fresh to the India-Pakistan discussion process. This will assist them in escaping the limited zone from a legal or historical point of view and moving toward a point of reconciliation characterized by sharing and caring for one another. However, the development of empathy is required while having such a conversation. Instead, the government of India has implemented stringent preconditions for continued bilateral engagement and has also taken stringent countermeasures and attempts to delegitimize official support for terrorism. This is the case at the current time. India's critical reaction to the United States plans to provide Pakistan with F-16s and the Indian Prime Minister's tour to South Arabia, the United Arab Emirates, and

Afghanistan is the proper strategy to maintain the National Interest safe. At the same time, options should be kept open for making the matter more urgent. Pakistan will lose ground to further criticize India by arguing that India is not prepared to commence a conversation with Pakistan. There is a possible connection between this and the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Both states will benefit from the open communication line, which will make it easier to clear up any uncertainties and move toward developing meaningful bilateral relations. However, there will be more potential for misunderstandings to arise, which will lead to an increase in the level of tension that exists between the two nations. In a report titled “the Belt and Road Initiative and the Role of ESCAPE,” which was published by the United Nations Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific (ESCAP), it was stated that CPEC had the potential to create “geopolitical tension with India and ignite further political instability.” This turned out to be accurate when it was revealed that the report. Another problem is communication, which should assist both states in eliminating smaller problems. However, when there is a communication breakdown, vengeance becomes an option. This is what transpired in the case of Jadhav. According to Indian High Commissioner to Pakistan Gautama Bambawale, whose tenure in Pakistan will end in November 2017, “the arrest of Indian spy Kulbhushan Jadhav from Baluchistan in 2016” was the most notable lowest point witnessed in India-Pakistan relations during his tenure in Pakistan. However, India can relax after receiving judgment from the international court. As a result of Bambawale’s decision to step down from his position, Ajay Bisaria is now in control. If India can maintain the CBMs process, it will have an advantage in the bigger competition. The following are some benefits Pakistan would get if CBM channels were opened.

- A relationship with Pakistan that is devoid of tension would be beneficial to our national spirit.
- The problem of terrorism may be overcome by working together to handle it.
- If India can solve the situation with Pakistan, it will be able to play a far larger role in international events on the world stage.
- The procedure of CBMs has the additional benefit of demonstrating openness regarding one’s activity. As a direct consequence, trust will triumph, and the existing trust gap will be bridged.

Conclusion

In every sense, Prime Minister Modi’s approach to Pakistan is based on a conversation in 1923 between US Undersecretary of State Charles Evens and US President Woodrow Wilson. According to Charles , “Foreign policy is not formed upon abstractions.” They are the product of pragmatic understandings of the national interest that arose in response to some pressing need or stood out strongly when seen from a historical perspective.

At the same time, the most controversial topic, which is Kashmir, forms the most crucial and difficult problem in India’s ties with Pakistan. Summit Ganguly’s argument that Pakistan is a selfish state is correct. Pakistan’s irredentist claim has been a consistent part of its foreign policy and security strategy. Because of this, there has been no progress made on the problems of terrorism and Kashmir, nor has any increase in the level of trade and commerce between the two nations. In his talk with the media, Modi said that two things must be kept in mind while dealing with Pakistan. The first is that we have always desired to maintain cordial relations with our neighbors. We want a life that is free from conflict and strife. The conduct of Pakistan, on the other hand, has not altered because there are several factors responsible for this. Second, in each of our nations, does each person who holds a stake do the duties assigned to them? However, the issue that faces the Indian government is not limited to simply formulating policies while taking into account the realities of international relations. Pragmatism is what is needed to mould it. A vision to maintain CBM requires the development of a long-term plan that is cohesive, and it also requires respect for the various stakeholders’ points of view. The agenda for confidence-building measures, also known as CBMs, has recently expanded as new issues like water, CPEC, and the Afghanistan problem have been found to have increased importance. Therefore, there is no reason why these issues shouldn’t be discussed at various levels to provide the best results for making CBMs viable and lively to harvest peace in this region.

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