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A Journal of International Affairs

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عَلَّمَ الْإِنْسَانَ مَا لَمْ يَعْلَمْ

TAUGHT MAN THAT WHICH HE KNEW NOT

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TRAJECTORIES OF RSS IDEOLOGICAL DOMINATION IN THE INDIAN POLICY MAKING: IMPLICATIONS FOR SOUTH ASIA

Muhammad Javed Islam and Zulfqar Khan[*]

Abstract

It is argued by policymakers and practitioners that instability in South Asia has exacerbated since Bharatiya Janata Party's (BJP) coming into power in India. Its policymaking is impacted by the influence of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). BJP is known as the political brand-name of RSS. There is a perceptible increase in RSS expansion and dominance of Hindutva ideology in domestic, foreign, and security policies of India. RSS is following the grand policy of greater India with the establishment of Hindu hegemony in India and Hindustan's (India's) hegemony in South Asia. Empirical evidence suggests that a well-choreographed use of communal violence and Pakistan-bashing have been employed by BJP for the attainment of its objectives. BJP's revoking of Articles 370 and 35-A to forcibly absorb Indian Occupied Kashmir and enactment of Citizen Amendment Act are the most recent manifestation of RSS long-term design. Following the mixed research method, this paper will be developed around the central argument that the rise of RSS influence on Indian policymaking has impacted its domestic and external policies which bear implications for South Asia.

Keywords: Communal Violence, Hindutva, Hindu Nationalism, RSS, Security and Stability.

Introduction

Volatility, distrust, and uncertainty best define the strategic environment of South Asia. In contemporary Indian politics, there exists an underlying relationship between the mainstream political parties and nationalistic-ideological mentoring organizations.[1] The Bharatiya Janata Party (BJP) acts as the political wing of radical Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) – the Saffron Bridge – which is providing an over-arching ideological and structural base.[2] Ramakrishnan observed that the "religious extremists (RSS and its ideological partners) are yoked to political objectives via religious ideology which becomes political ideology ... religion then becomes legitimization of violence."[3] RSS-BJP duo rejects the concept of composite Indian culture ostensibly that Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru and others had espoused.[4] BJP-RSS partnership has been flourishing with the use of ideology-driven violence as a weapon for achieving political objectives.

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Empirical evidence suggests the complicity of state institutions and BJP leadership, steered by ideological mooring of RSS. Modern Indian politics is driven by Hindutva,[5] an ideological front-line that champions Hindu nationalism for decades, even before the partition in 1947. After stripping Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK) of special status and protection of its rights through Articles 370 and 35-A and growing humanitarian crises in IOK and other parts of India, the strategic environment of South Asia has never been as bitter and explosive as in contemporary times. Widening conventional capabilities gap and insane voices of 'nuclear war' from Indian policymakers have further deteriorated the regional strategic environment.

The region is witnessing the cross-cutting impact of US-China power competition implicating India and Pakistan as strategic partners. In the renewed global setting, India's liberty of action has increased significantly. Development of the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) has emerged as a new strategic factor in South Asia. Its success will benefit Pakistan but failure will have trans-regional implications. India has opted not to integrate into CPEC and oppose the project outrightly. With the central argument that the rise of RSS influence in Indian policymaking is impacting the regional stability, this paper assists leadership in South Asia to better understand the grave strategic implications of RSS-rise to the policy tiers and triggers a constructive debate. This paper also explains the Hindutva ideology and its (RSS) organizational structures, BJP-RSS nexus, and the influence of RSS on domestic and external policies.

Religion, Nationalism and RSS

There are two dynamics of RSS influence on Indian policy; internal and external. BJP's rise and domestic competition with its peers are not founded purely on political grounds. It rather wields profound ideological influence over 80 percent Hindu population of India[6] through RSS to the extent of using violence, which is explained by the theory of religious nationalism. William Barker explains that "even if the threat is not truly religious in nature, religion will still play a key role in nationalism because religion provides the easiest, most identifiable, and most useful tool of rallying opposition to the threat."[7] In this context, Mark Juergensmeyer observes that violence "has always been endemic to religion."[8] Another scholar, David Rapoport writes that "all major religions have enormous potentialities for creating and directing violence."[9] It may, therefore, be concluded that in reaction to the religious slogan of building a predominantly Hindu state by RSS, other forms of nationalisms, such as religious, ethnic, linguistic, etc., thrive as a by-product.

The competition of action and reaction forces may permit religion to be employed as an instrument to justify xenophobic tendencies. Such tendencies influence the political system and policymakers promoting aggression instead of peace and accommodation. RSS espouses to preserve and expand the Hindutva ideology while relating historical sufferings and subjugation of Hindus by invaders. RSS downplays division of India on religious identity grounds, therefore, stress regaining the control over the entire Indian Subcontinent as the pre-ordained seat of Hindu rule after British Raj – an expansionist notion in the modern concept of nation-state. RSS external

relations thinking under various BJP regimes can be explained by the Mearsheimer's theory of offensive realism, which buttresses survival through hegemony, advocating hard power aggrandizement to dominate Subcontinent and beyond in the anarchic international system.[10] RSS-BJP duo follows the Chanakya's philosophy of statecraft, however, lacks his shrewdness and skill as evident from its overt aggression. Since BJP's coming into power, Indian regional policies of Indian exclusiveness validate RSS-BJP's hegemonic thinking.

Hindutva Ideology and Its Organizational Structures

Headquartered at Nagpur, RSS was established in 1925 in southern India by Keshav Baliram Hedgewar (1889–1940) to foster unity amongst the Hindu nation in reaction to pan-Islamic Khilafat Movement in Subcontinent in the 1920s.[11] RSS initially presented itself as a cultural and apolitical organization. In 1923, V. D. Savarkar coined the term 'Hindutva' in an essay titled "Hindutva: Who is a Hindu."[12] He asserted that Hindutva is not identical with what is vaguely indicated by the term Hinduism; in fact, it primarily concerns politics that is the political mobilization of Hindus into one nation. He advocated the omni dominance of Hindutva – religion, culture, and language over the geographical expanse of the Indian Subcontinent. He crafted the motto, *Hindu-Hindi-Hindustan* – which refers to religion, language, and country while restricting and prohibiting minorities.[13] In this context, M. S. Golwalkar writes that it is a cultural nationalism that, in fact, is a nation as defined through a common culture (religion).[14] It proclaimed forced allegiance of minorities to Hindu society and should practice their faiths in private places.[15] He further vowed that Jews and Parsi landed on the soil as guests and Muslims and Christians as invaders, who cannot claim to be the children of the soil because the heterogeneity of the Indian state happened due to common threats in the form of territorial nationalism. This had deprived Hindus of the positive inspiration of Hindu nationhood.[16] It is important to mention that RSS claims to be a unified party with members from all Hindu castes but it is dominated by upper-caste *Brahmins*.[17]

Ram Puniyani elaborates that the Hindutva movement seeks to build a strong nation on the tenets of *Hindu Dharma* (Hindu faith) for Hindus only.[18] Objectives of RSS discerned from the empirical evidence and literature are: a) to penetrate the society at grass-root level to accentuate Hindu nationalism and impose its pre-modern social hierarchies; b) to offset the impact of communism and Christianity; c) progressively weaken and subjugate of Muslim population with apparent aim to compel them either reconvert to Hindu religion or marginalize them as non-entity or to leave India; d) assert and establish influence over the entire subcontinent as historical right; e) get rid of foreign dependence and assert Indian role at the regional and global levels; and f) introduce legislative changes to abrogate Article 370 of the Indian Constitution (that grants special status to IOK) introducing a Uniform Civil Code to terminate the special rights of vulnerable minorities provided by the existing Indian constitution along with repeal of Sixth Schedule of the Constitution that grants special privileges and greater autonomy to the tribal areas of northeast.[19]

RSS ideology generally refers to the consolidation of economic, political, and military power and compels states to endless wars with enemies – identical to Hitler and Mussolini's concept of Nazism and Fascism respectively – which sought to consolidate their ultra-nationalist ideologies, John Passmore posits.[20] However, it appears to be much closer to Hitler's Nazi ideology which emphasized nation-building as compared to Mussolini's Fascism that focused on the state-building.[21]

Since its creation, the organizational networking of RSS and its outreach continued to expand especially in the northern and central parts of India. *Shakha* (branch) is the basic unit of RSS organization which enrolls volunteers with a balanced mix of age groups. The *Shakhas* are responsible for recruiting, training, and propagating of Hindutva philosophy that nurtured them into role identities ... in relation to others as stated by Alexander Wendt.[22] The RSS philosophy emphasizes the physical, mental, and motivational aspects of training youth. These *Shakhas* have recorded exceptional growth in recent times; increasing its membership from meager 500 in 1939 to 10,000 in 1971, 42,000 in the year 2014,[23] and 58,967 shakhas in 2018.[24]

In the year 2000, RSS Secretary General Mohan Rao Bhagwat said: "Our endeavor is to reach out to each and every person in the society, widen our approach and raise the level of consciousness of the common man. And for this man-making nation-building mission." He believed that individuals are the "best instrument to effect change in society and *Shakha* is the best medium to create individuals."[25] RSS has created a wide spectrum of affiliated organizations forging unity amongst Hindus.[26] These organizations are critical for to permeation of its ideology and maintaining influence on the society. RSS propagates its ideology through dozens of media channels and daily and weekly newspapers in English, Hindi, Marathi, Bengali, Kannada, Tamil, Telugu, Assamese, and Malayalam.[27]

RSS has also created its networks outside India to promote unity amongst the Hindu community globally. First, overseas *Shakhas* of RSS was established in Kenya in 1947. Now, RSS has a presence in 92 countries with *Shakhas* network in 25 countries.[28] The largest network comprised of over 40 chapters and 150 *Shakhas* in the US alone, which is playing a pivotal role in generating funds, influencing the Hindu Diaspora besides promoting Indian/RSS interests abroad. Donations worth five million US dollars were collected by its global offices in 1987.[29] Such foreign donations enable RSS to finance its operational activities including communal violence against minorities, such as demolition of *Babri Masjid* and lynching passengers of *Samjhauta* Express by RSS involving an army officer, Colonel Purohit.[30]

The RSS-BJP Nexus

RSS was apolitical at the time of its creation but soon learned that it was vital to take political pathways for the attainment of its social and religious objectives. As the first step, BJS was set up in 1951 in collaboration with the *Hindu Mahasabha* leader Shyam Prasad Mookerjee to channelize RSS's societal influence into a mainstream political force. After his death, RSS's strong man, Upadhaya, took over the power

structure of BJS.[31] The party continued its struggle through the 1970s due to a stronghold of J. Nehru's political charisma and Indira Gandhi's political sway over the Indian politics right till the mid-1970s.[32] 'RSS is no longer a social organization. It has become more of a political force and less of social over the past three decades or so argues Pathak.[33]

Sensing the weaknesses in Congress Party, Jana Sangh joined hands with the Janata Party in the 1970s to make its way to the power corridors of India. Atal Bihari Vajpayee and L. K. Advani became ministers in the Janata Party's government in 1977. In the changing political situation, Vajpayee quickly sensed a change in Indian political power structure, and BJP was created (1980). BJP tried to fill the space created after the exit of Congress and kept BJP away from RSS which benefited BJP but initiated differences with RSS, temporarily.[34]

To Ellen Barrymay, RSS remained a vital force in mobilizing support for BJP during the last two elections.[35] To understand that, a snapshot of RSS's unprecedented support to BJP during the conduct of Indian elections of 2014 and the developments afterward, are imperative to understand the dynamics of their (RSS-BJP) philosophy. This election offers a profound insight into BJP-RSS formal unification. The New York Times correspondent, who covered 2014-elections, reported an extensive RSS mobilization campaign using its organizational presence in each village and urban locality to garner support for BJP.[36] RSS volunteers urged people to ensure 100 percent Hindu voters turnout. In Varanasi alone, the constituency of Prime Minister Modi, some 5000 RSS volunteers and nearly 6000 BJP workers were actively garnering support for the success of BJP candidates.[37] Commenting upon RSS's support to BJP during 2014-elections, late Arun Jaitly, a key BJP leader, cautiously remarked that "people, who do have a lot of ideological affinity to us, have been extremely active and helpful in this campaign." While Dilip Deodhar, an Indian analyst whose family has been active in RSS for generations, states that "BJP and RSS are married to each other."[38] The most devout RSS *prachariks* (workers) have been rewarded with appointments as ministers and public office holders; an apt example is Prime Minister Modi who rose from a waiter at a tea stall.

Manipulation of Communal Violence for Electoral Politics

According to a survey of NDTV cited by Human Rights Watch, the use of communally divisive language in speeches by elected officials rose by nearly 500 percent during the 2014-2018 period as compared to the time before BJP's power assumption. 90 percent of such speeches were attributed to BJP leaders.[39] RSS-BJP duo used violence to coerce and pressurize minorities for votes. As many as 7,484 communal incidents have been reported over the last decade between 2008 and 2017, killing over 1,100 people, according to data released to the *Lok Sabha* (lower house of Parliament).[40] Year on year casualties resulting from communal violence is animated by the graph given below:

Graph-1: Casualties Resulting from Communal Violence in India

Fatalties and Inuries - Communal Violence in India

943 849 701 580 668 823 644 751 703 822

167 125 116 91 94 133 95 97 86 111

2008 2009 2010 2011 2012 2013 2014 2015 2016 2017

Dead   Injured
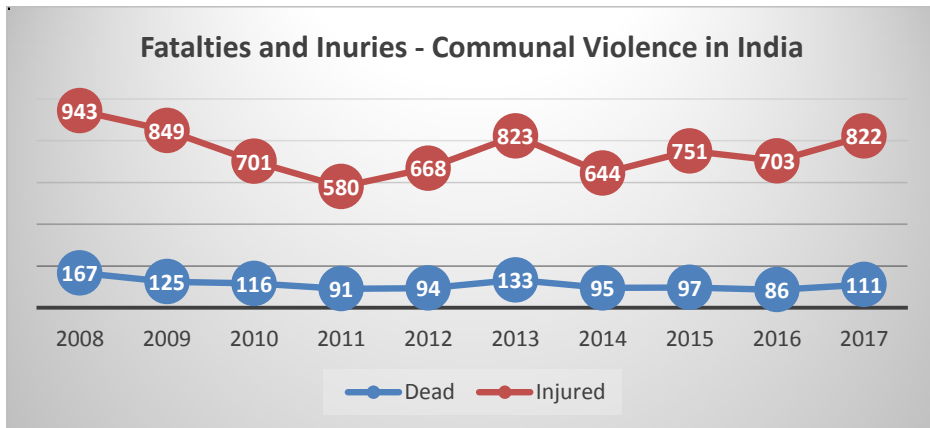
Source: Business Recorder[41]

Eight states: Bihar, Gujarat, Karnataka, Kerala, Madhya Pradesh, Maharashtra, Rajasthan, and Uttar Pradesh accounted for 85 percent of all the incidents.[42] This pattern of violence for securing votes still exists with a greater upbeat. Wilkinson theorized that minorities are protected only if the government relies on minority vote for its survival and political advantage;[43] stands vindicated and manifested by Indian treatment of its minorities. According to the Huffington Post (2017), India was declared the fourth most insecure country on religious grounds in 2015 behind Syria, Nigeria, and Iraq.[44] Most recent communal violence happened on the eve of President Trump's visit to India in late February 2020, in which more than 50 innocent Muslims were killed and over 400 injured.[45] Hence, Wilkinson's theory has been verified by the ensuing two case studies in which violence is used against religious minorities as a tool for securing votes.

- **Uttar Pradesh Communal Violence:** Uttar Pradesh is one of the most populous multi-religious states of India with 31 percent Muslims, a significant swing factor in elections. Of all the incidents of communal violence in the state of Uttar Pradesh, 57 percent of the riots and 67 percent casualties (295 killed) took place between 1989 and 1991 during state elections.[46] More than half of these communal riots had taken place in two constituencies aimed at increasing Hindu votes where BJP had lost narrowly in previous elections. Resultantly, BJP's vote bank increased by 24 percent, especially in the riot-affected areas, whereas this increase was a mere seven percent in the rest of the areas where violence had not erupted.[47]

- **Ayodhya Violence:** In another case, a series of communal violence was engineered in 1992 after the demolition of *Babri Masjid* by RSS cohorts.[48] At least 1000 people were killed; most of whom were Muslims across India.[49] The charged religious emotions were shrewdly exploited by RSS-BJP leadership to increase its vote bank in the next election. Resultantly, BJP's *Lok Sabha* (House of People) seats tally

rose from 119 seats in 1991-elections to 161 seats in 1996-elections. In the election campaign, BJP downplayed Hindu nationalist ideology even on the issue of *Ram Mandir* in 1992 overtly, but maintained connections with RSS covertly, to benefit from RSS support.[50]

Net Gains by RSS and BJP

In the past three decades, RSS-BJP nexus has deepened and became more methodical in manipulating the communal violence for political ends. RSS also benefited as its *Shakhas* increased by 10 percent by mid-2015 due to the tacit support of BJP-led government, which carried momentum subsequently.[51] On the other side, BJP's political performance remained on the ascendant trajectory with the exception of 2004 and 2009 elections; best being in 2019,[52] as reflected in Graph-2.

Graph-2: BJP Seats in *Lok Sabha* (1984 – 2019)

BJP Seats - Lok Sabha
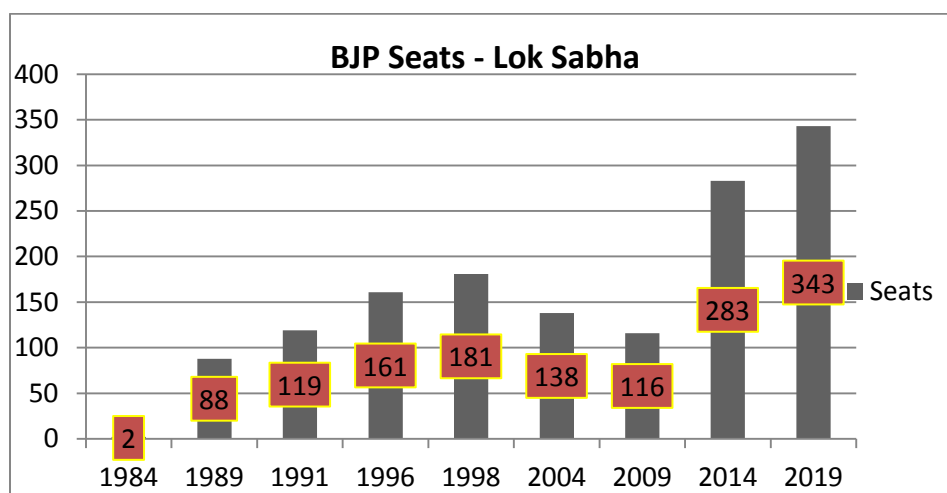
Source: Produced by Christophe Jaffrelot in his book titled "Religion, Caste, and Politics in India" and updated by the author

How RSS Benefits from BJP in Power

RSS and BJP immensely depend on each other for survival, growth, and influence in India. Since Gandhi's assassination in 1948 by an RSS follower, Nathuram Godse, RSS faced administrative and operational restrictions on its activities. Appointing devout RSS workers on government jobs is the main method of influencing India's policies.[53] For instance, Anil Dave was appointed as Advisor to the Chief Minister of Madhya Pradesh in 2003, who played a key role in the demolition of *Babri Masjid*.[54] Similarly, Modi along with numerous cabinet ministers and important public office holders had been notable *Prachariks* (staunch followers and workers) of RSS.[55] In Utter Pradesh, the BJP-led government was formed in 2017. Yogi Adityanath – a staunch RSS religious leader was nominated as Chief Minister. Yogi has become a symbol of hate and

communal violence in Utter Pradesh vindicating the profoundness of RSS-BJP interdependence. Shashi Shekhar writes that "the firebrand Hindutva leader like Yogi, politics is a means to further the mission of serving for a cause…. he comes from the league of saints who treat politics and religion as two faces of the same coin."[56]

It validates that RSS gets access to the corridors of power as a reward of BJP's electoral support which is used for propagation of Hindutva ideology and securing immunity from state institutions, especially police action and prosecution. The reciprocity of gains establishes the win-win equation for RSS and BJP.

Public Office Holders' Interaction with RSS

Interactions of *Sangh* (RSS) leaders with BJP Ministers have been admitted by the government citing it as a matter of routine affair.[57] RSS's Annual Conclaves (2003 and 2015) aimed at fostering coordination between RSS and BJP were attended by Vajpayee, L. K. Advani, Narendara Modi, V. Naidu, A. Jaitly, M. M. Joshi and numerous other cabinet members.[58] In 2015, Prime Minister Modi including 15 RSS-affiliates in his cabinet conclave.[59] RSS decides leaders and policies, and BJP is merely a political front face of it, claims Anand Sharma, a Congress leader. The symbolism of Modi and his top ministers attending RSS gathering underpins the transition of RSS-BJP relationship from covert to overt outlook.[60]

To sum up, it is a two-way traffic between RSS and BJP. Therefore, BJP is the vehicle of empowerment of RSS. What RSS thinks can happen on ground only if it enjoys legislative and state institutions support, which comes only if it plays in sync with BJP. Similarly, BJP cannot exploit Hindu majority factor without exploiting Hindutva card in which minorities in India and its Muslim majority neighboring states are object of RSS-BJP hostile strategy.

RSS Influence on Indian Domestic Environment and Policies

Internal power optimization of RSS-BJP nexus is critical to its external power projection, therefore, merits slightly lengthier description in the preceding part of this section.

- **Radicalization of Bureaucracy and Institutions:** Guy Peters states that "institutionalizing the bureaucratic form of governing was to ensure equal treatment of citizens." [61] Contrarily, the Indian bureaucracy has been gradually radicalized. Pradip K. Datta remarks: "Placing people who will survive changes of government and push governance towards the Hindu right is central to the plan… The RSS wants to influence the country's policies in defense and education."[62] Indian public service officeholders can associate themselves with RSS, undermining the principle of neutrality in the public service.[63] The Government of India had imposed a ban on this in 1986 after the murder of Prime Minister Indira Gandhi but later, most of the states lifted the ban under BJP's political pressure.[64] Structured interaction of

bureaucrats with RSS leaders [65] explains the propensity of RSS to indoctrinate and cultivate the top bureaucracy through BJP's facilitation. The biased conduct of police and other state institutions in myriad cases of violence against minorities in recent years substantiate the argument. In the recent anti-Muslim riots in Delhi, Police not only supported the violent mob but also torched the Muslims and their properties.[66] It has also been working to change the history of the Subcontinent to replace Muslims with Hindu heroes.[67] This elucidates the devastating regression of Indian state institutions due to Hindu radicalization.

- **Radicalization of Education Institutions:** To radicalize the youth, RSS has penetrated into the Indian education system. Under Vajpayee, former Prime Minister, the Delhi Chapter of RSS launched a network of schools indoctrinating RSS philosophy. As a result, by 2003, it had 14000 schools, 73000 teachers, and 1.7 million students in its folds. Nowadays, it has the largest student union in India with 1,101,000 members.[68] It capitalized on the pervasive anti-Congress sentiments against its declaration of emergency in 1977. BJP has also altered and reproduced public school textbooks to indoctrinate Hindutva ideology in the Hindu youth.[69]

- **Marginalization and Subjugation of Minorities:** Modi's reputation had been tainted by hatred and violence since Muslims' Gujrat carnage.[70] RSS goals spurting from the Hindutva philosophy are embedded in the BJP's campaign narrative. For instance, before election-2019, it promised to introduce Uniform Civil Codes termination minorities specific rights and to replace Articles 370 and 35-A of the Indian Constitution; laws to cede special laws protecting Kashmiris exclusive rights on lands and properties ownership.[71] He did it after being re-elected to the Premier's Office. Wilkinson observed the phenomenon of Hindus' economic gains as an outcome of communal violence in India. He asserted that communal violence was employed by the slum-lords and the real-estate tycoons to grab the valuable lands and then selling it at inflated rates;[72] Bombay and Calcutta are cases in point. In the same vein, some of the Hindu businessmen endeavored to get hold of Muslims' cloth business in Meerut and cigarette business in Jabalpur, Moradabad, and Kanpur. This resulted in the eruption of anti-Muslims violence and their forcible eviction.[73] This argument is further reinforced with proportionately greater Muslims losses of life and property as compared to other minorities in the communal violence incidences.[74] RSS-BJP's recent National Register of Citizens (NRC) and Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) bills aiming at reducing Muslims to the status of illegal immigrants,[75] are opposed by the minorities and Hindu civil society. It has also proven that Jinnah's "Two Nation Theory" was realistic.

- **Annexation of IOK and Plans of Demographic Change:** Following the strategy of *fait accompli*, the BJP-led Indian government revoked Articles 370 and 35A of the Indian Constitution to assimilate IOK as Indian Union territory. [76] Disregarding the global community's concerns and advice, Modi is heading for the next phase of effecting demographic alteration. RSS-BJP is set to roll out a land-grabbing scheme to allot 6000 Acres Kashmiri Muslims' land at a paltry rate of just one Indian Rupee per Kanal (600 square yards). [77] It plans to offer 50 percent GST waiver and cheap loans to Hindu investors in the garb of promoting industrial, IT, and tourism development in IOK.[78] Such a plan implies serious diplomatic, economic, and security consequences for India. With engineered policies of providing domicile and employment, Indian intent of converting Kashmiris from majority to minority is evident.[79]

- **From Secularism to Hindu Fascism:** Indian Parliament adopted a CAA bill to fortify Modi's Hindu-nationalist agenda. This move shall alter India's much-cherished secular character since 1947.[80] It followed violent protests and arrests of leftist intellectuals in India. Arundhati Roy reacts by saying, "We're up against a fascist regime in India... this government is trying to overturn the constitution in order to declare India a *Hindu Rashtra* (Hindu nation) – more significantly an upper-caste *Hindu Rashtra*." [81] The situation reflects fascist thinking of BJP, which is gradually descending India into chaotic polarization with attendant global consequences for India. Recent Human Rights Watch report on the persecution of Muslims and deprivation of fundamental citizen rights, released on April 9, 2020, amply validate the argument.[82]

Impact of RSS on Indian Foreign and Security Policies

Historically, RSS and BJP have been the hard opponents of the Two-Nation Theory and division of India on religious lines. Their *Akhand Bharat* (undivided India) slogan shows their ambitions of reuniting the entire Subcontinent under Hindu rule, which is likely to keep Pakistan-India relations on the boil. Indian National Security Advisor, Ajit Doval's recent claim of "India sharing 106km long borders with Afghanistan"[83] validates the assertion and complicates the Kashmir dispute – the principal Pak-India contention. This thinking has made South Asia's relatively smaller countries vulnerable. Under the Indian coercive policies seeking submission, they are compelled to seek external balancing, essentially from China, which will enhance power competition in South Asia especially in the context of US-China power contestation.

The RSS influence on India's external relations creates negative internal pressure on the Indian government to pursue an aggressive Pakistan policy. Thus, dissuading it from encouraging people-to-people interactions through art, sports, cultural, and religious events. Andy Marino puts Indian mindset as Narendra (Modi) was charged up and voluble on how all Pakistanis should be decimated.'[84] Glimpses of

such aggressive thinking were predominantly visible from Indian Airforce aggression along the LOC prior to 2019-elections in India, which resulted in an embarrassing loss of two aircraft and a pilot captured alive in Pakistan.[85]

Indo-Pakistan estrangement is aggravating due to non-conciliatory Indian regional policies. India has rendered SAARC dysfunctional and desires to make it an exclusive Indian domain through bilateral engagements, excluding Pakistan. Following the Chanakya's teachings, India has been deepening its relations with Iran and Afghanistan to use their soil for fomenting instability in Pakistan. This was admitted by Indian Prime Minister Manmohan Singh at the *Sharam-al-Sheikh* Summit[86] and later confessed by Indian intelligence spy captured in Pakistan – Kulbhoshan Jadhav.[87] On the diplomatic front, India has been persistently orchestrating to portray Pakistan as a terrorist state. It has raised objections on CPEC projects under the garb of its claim on Gilgit-Baltistan and Kashmir.[88] Additionally, it has been trying hard to get Pakistan labeled in the 'black' category at the Financial Action Task Force (FATF) plenary sessions.[89] Thus, India's aggressive policy against Pakistan under the RSS-BJP regime is likely to intensify as India consolidates power.

Since 1947, India and Pakistan have seen each other through the enemies' lens[90] and RSS ideology is reinforcing this perception. Acquiring hard power for Hindu hegemony been the ambition of RSS, adopted by BJP. As the Indian hard power is increasing, it is becoming increasingly belligerent (manifested by killing of innocent civilians along LOC), a proclamation of military doctrine (Cold Start Doctrine which projects its perilous over-confidence to wage a limited conventional war[91]), and post-Pulwama events (losing two fighter aircraft).[92] India is accruing hard power by projecting China's threat. But its primary preoccupation is Pakistan not China[93] as validated by the deployment of bulk of its operational commands close to the Pakistan border. However, the recent Sino-Indian standoff at Ladakh is becoming a serious concern for the Indians.

The BJP government has permitted the creation of Theater Commands[94] along with an expensive shopping list of defense hardware including missiles, air defense systems, fighter jets, submarines, and warships, drones, etc.[95] Earlier, it has already contracted the purchase of S-400 anti-aircraft missile systems worth $800 million with Russia.[96] It is now pushing the case for building a third aircraft carrier to realize its dream of a blue water navy and establish its hegemony on the Indian Ocean and beyond before China could dominate the Indian Ocean.[97]

These developments are stressing the regional deterrence regime. Indian hard power accumulation is potentially destabilizing for South Asia's security environment and arms it to be rogue and hegemonic – in line with RSS philosophy. India's application of hard power is dependent upon the Pak-India deterrence regime. Despite Indian conventional preponderance, the nuclear capabilities of Pakistan have preserved strategic equilibrium in the region and deter conventional war. Therefore, India understands that as long Pakistan is in possession of nuclear weapons, all-out war is nearly impossible. Therefore, the debate on the revision of 'no first use' nuclear policy has been triggered by BJP leaders, which may prove perilous for the entire region.[98]

Pakistan has been experiencing a hybrid threat, mainly emanating from India.[99] Having understood the viability of the deterrence regime, India had switched to the policy of indirect strategy to bleed Pakistan instead of destroying.[100] The manifestation of such a policy change is evident from Indian efforts to isolate Pakistan diplomatically, targeting Pakistan by manipulated information warfare (exposed by EU Disinfo Lab[101]), launching a so-called surgical strike by India in Azad Jammu and Kashmir area along the line of control (LoC) to undermine Pakistan's security forces[102] (an unsubstantiated Indian claim), using Afghan and Iranian soil to foment instability in Pakistan and targeting CPEC projects evidenced by Kulbhushan Jadhav's arrest on Pakistan's territory and confession of perpetrating terrorism.[103] So far, Pakistan's robust conventional and nuclear capabilities have deterred India from any escalation to all-out war, it may, however, get out of control due to miscalculation and incorrect threat perception.

Conclusion

RSS is a well-organized, the most influential, and fast-expanding violent Hindu nationalist organization that enjoys immense influence over BJP. It espouses unchallenged influence over entire India to consolidate Hinduism initially and then establish Indian hegemony over the entire Subcontinent. RSS-BJP nexus has taken the parliamentary and constitutional path to manipulate state institutions, manage lacunas in the Indian legal framework hindering Hindutva domination by using communal violence and Pakistan bashing as means. RSS, by the virtue of its influence over BJP, enjoys tremendous clout to re-model the entire fabric of Indian society in accordance with fundamentalist Hindu socio-political and cultural ethos. RSS needs BJP in power, and BJP needs RSS for dominating the Indian political system. RSS spurts when BJP comes to power but retains its ground when other parties rule. Therefore, it is logical to conclude that RSS enjoys a quasi-permanent influence in Indian decision-making either through consent or through protesting dissent. In a nutshell, RSS postures reflecting it as an extremist militant organization with a terrorist outlook.

From Pakistan's perspective, the RSS influence on Indian policymaking shall deepen the mistrust between India and Pakistan and aggravate instability fueling arms race without a robust crisis control mechanism. In addition, the tilting of geo-economic, military, and balance of power trajectory in India's favor is likely to enhance Pakistan's insecurity especially in the context of Indo-US strategic partnership under the BJP government. India's fiddling with deterrence regime by tempering 'No First Use' is potentially disastrous and uncalled for. Both countries are burdened with heavy historical baggage of mutual suspicion and cultural difference, which results in a strategic outlook characterized by perpetual friction.[104] In essence, the rise of BJP in politics enhances the power ambiance of RSS in policymaking, which in turn, radicalizes the Indian policies. With their hegemonic aspirations, the regional stability will remain in peril.

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SPREAD OF COVID-19 AND ITS IMPACT ON PAKISTAN: A NEED FOR PROSPECTIVE PLANNING

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Abstract

COVID-19, a global pandemic, has spread in about 215 countries of the world. It has caused enormous damage to the lives, economies, and socio-political fabric of the societies. More than 14 million people stand affected world-wide, with death toll crossing 0.75 million. The expert virologists apprehend that the worst situation is yet not over. The IMF, World Bank, and WTO have issued warnings about the impending global recession. It has also been reported that low-income countries and weak segments of the societies have been the major victims of this malady. Keeping in view the fragile economy and unsound healthcare system of Pakistan, WHO and experts of various fields have predicted multiple effects on various aspects of our national life. The paper in hand attempts to analyze the magnitude of the spread of COVID-19 in Pakistan and its implications for our national security, with a view to offering policy recommendations.

Keywords: COVID-19, Coronavirus, Pandemic, Affected-Persons, Projections.

Introduction

Covid-19, which surfaced in December 2019 in China, has rapidly spread in the world and affected about 215 countries and territories so far.[1] Dr. Tedros, Director General of WHO, says, "The global spread of the virus has overwhelmed health systems, and caused widespread social and economic disruption."[2] Over 16 million people worldwide stand affected by this dangerous virus, with over six lacs and fifty thousand deaths (as of July 2020). The most advanced countries of the world, with relatively better health systems, seemed helpless, at least in the first two months, to cope up with the magnitude and lethality of this virus. The most powerful nation of the world, the US, is struggling to cope up with the situation. The striking features of this malady, which has been declared as 'a global pandemic' by WHO, are rapidity of its spread, non-availability of any authentic cure or vaccine, and severity of damage to the human respiratory system, particularly, to the people above-fifty years of age and those suffering from other diseases. Social distancing was seen to be the only means to prevent the spread of the virus. Three guiding principles were spelled out by WHO, accordingly, to control the spread of this virus, viz: *Speed, Scale, and Equity.*[3] Most of the affected countries responded with massive lock-downs, causing all sorts of movements virtually to halt.

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The first COVID-19 case in Pakistan was reported on February 26, 2020. As of July 2020, over two lacs and seventy-five thousand confirmed cases have been reported in various parts of Pakistan. Since the testing capacity is too limited, which has just crossed twenty thousand per day, for the population of more than 200 million people, it can be inferred that the actual number of affected persons is likely to be much higher.[4] Pakistan has been categorized by WHO at level-2, in terms of its health system to sustain the effects of such a pandemic, only above a few Sub-Saharan countries. South Asia is home to 40% of the world-poor, i.e., living on less than $1 per day. The official figures of 32% people living below the poverty line in Pakistan are likely to go beyond 40% because of COVID-19, as predicted by none else than the Prime Minister of Pakistan.[5] The severe economic recession has been predicted world-wide by the IMF, World Bank, and Asian Development Bank. The policy-makers in Pakistan are facing a difficult situation to confront two-fold challenge: one, to control the fast-spreading COVID-19 pandemic; second, to save the economy from complete melt-down and, thereby, overcoming impending socio-economic crises.

The paper in hand explores the magnitude of this challenge and implications, thereof, for the state of Pakistan, covering the domain of national security as well. The underlying assumptions of the study are: a) Pakistan was already facing a straitened economic situation which seems to be exacerbated by the rapid spread of COVID-19; b) virus is fast spreading in the society but due to low testing capacity the exact number of affected persons is unknown; c) notwithstanding the fast spread of the virus, Pakistan had to ease out restrictions on economic activities and movement of people mainly because of extremely weak socio-economic conditions; d) health of the people and economic soundness of the country are significantly related to the concept of comprehensive national security, and; e) national approach to meet this challenge reflected some sort of disharmony indicating severe political polarization in the face of this challenge. The purpose of the study is to present an analysis of the situation, with a few to offer some policy recommendations for prospective planning to offset the negative impacts of COVID-19.

Significance of the Study

A comprehensive review of the literature indicates that few serious efforts have been made by academics and intellectuals in Pakistan to carry out research and analysis of the spread of COVID-19 and its impact in Pakistan; whereas, volumes of papers are appearing on daily basis all around the globe which do not only focus on analyzing various effects of this pandemic but also projecting the short and long term impacts on individuals, societies, and nations. It is expected that the paper in hand will help generate further research on the subject.

Research Methodology

The paper primarily follows a qualitative approach with sufficient use of statistical tools, tables, and graphs. Data consists of secondary resources; mainly, reports of international institutions, such as WHO, IMF, World Bank, and Pakistan's

state institutions. International literature, specifically papers published after COVID-19 spread, has extensively been used. The paper aimed at exploring questions, such as what is the magnitude of the spread of COVID-19 in Pakistan as compared to other countries of the world; what are the major findings and directions of WHO, so far, about the spread of the COVID-19; what will be the effects of this pandemic on various aspects of our national life; and what can be the impact of this pandemic on the national security of Pakistan, particularly, the areas of Gilgit-Baltistan (GB) and Azad Jammu and Kashmir (AJK).

The COVID-19 is spreading so fast that it has become difficult even to compile reported figures, let alone the exact figures, which are estimated to be far greater, in the wake of the low testing capacity of most of the countries in the world. The situation is changing every hour and every day. However, for this study, data up to July 22, 2020, is being included and security aspects of only AJK and GB have been discussed to delimit the study as a manageable academic endeavor.

The Present State of Spread of COVID-19

Over 14 million people have been affected worldwide and the death toll has crossed the figure of six lacs and fifty thousand. Pakistan has also been witnessing a gradual increase with each passing day. The state of COVID-19-affected people in Pakistan is given in Table-1.

Table-1: Number of Affected Persons[6]

Regions	Population	Confirmed Cases	Active Cases	Deaths	Recoveries
AJK	40,45000	1,937	615	47	1,275
Balochistan	12,344,739	11,469	1,953	135	9,381
GB	21,20530	1,878	348	45	1,485
Islamabad	2,001,579	14,701	2,517	161	12,023
KP	35,519,927	32,523	5,788	1,153	25,582
Punjab	110,017,465	90,816	22,296	2,095	66,425
Sindh	47,893,244	114,104	17,766	2,041	94,297
Total:	21,39,42484	267428	51283	5677	210468

Source: Authors' Compilation by retrieving data from http://covid.gov.pk/

Trend and Scale of Spread of COVID-19

The first case of COVID-19 in Pakistan was reported, a 22-year-old man, Yahya Jaffrey from Karachi, who had returned from Iran on February 20, 2020, and made a swift recovery. The number of affected persons till the 8th of April was negligible, i.e., less than 500 persons in total. However, after the 22nd of April, there has been an exponential increase of about an average of 2000 to 4000 persons daily. Fortunately, the number of deaths as compared to the US and European countries is

yet not so high. Figures 1 and 2 depict general trend and scale of the spread of COVID-19 in Pakistan based on the data available at official website.

Figure-1: Cumulative Cases
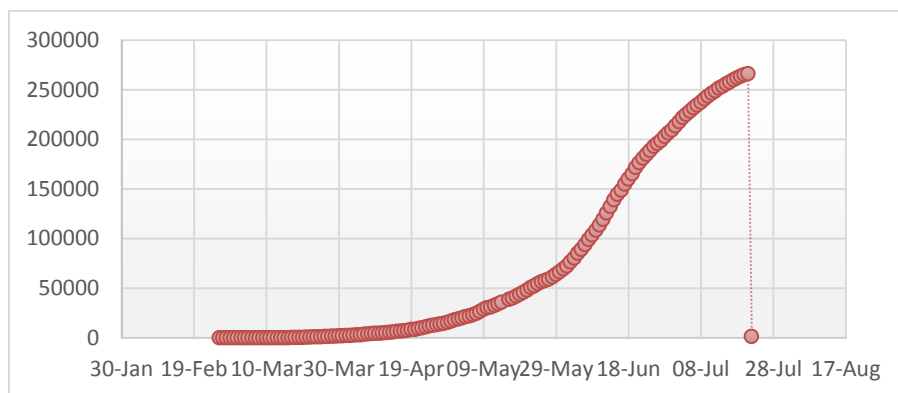
Source: Authors' Compilation by retrieving data from http://covid.gov.pk/

Figure-2: Province-wise Cumulative Cases
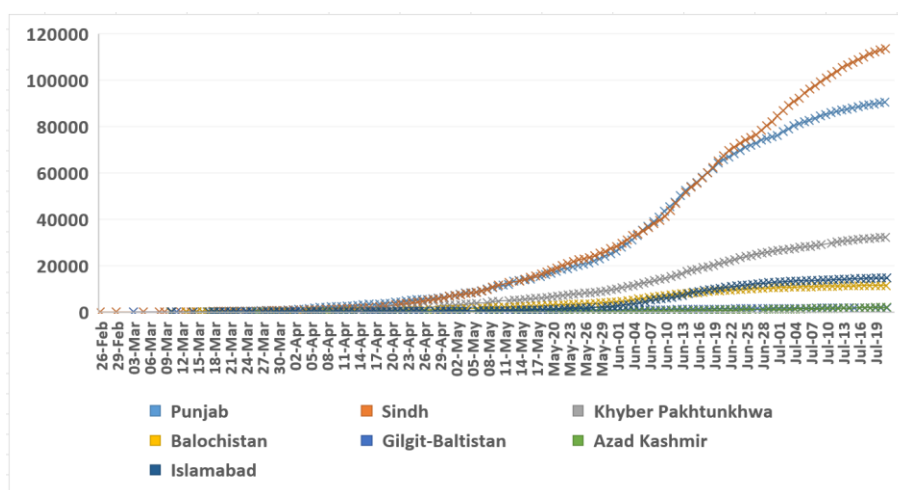
Source: Authors' Compilation by retrieving data from http://covid.gov.pk/

State of Health Facilities in Pakistan

Pakistan is counted among those countries, which have low human development indices (HDIs); and COVID-19 has massively exposed such vulnerabilities especially in the health sector of Pakistan. 70% of health services are being provided by the private sector because the public sector health system has been neglected over the years due to incoherent government policies. The twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi are the case in point where only six public sector hospitals, excluding military hospitals, are available to treat Coronavirus patients. These

hospitals were constructed more than fifty years ago and no other general hospital has been added for decades. Pakistan spends only 2% of its GDP on healthcare against a 10% global average; not taking the factor of mismanagement into account. It also spends much less than its neighboring countries, Iran and India.[7] In such a state of affairs, the present federal and provincial governments have tried hard to establish temporary health facilities amid COVID-19, which is reflected in Table-2 below.

Table-2: State of Health Facilities in Pakistan amid COVID-19[8]

Regions	Designated Hospitals	Lab Testing Capacity	Isolation Facilities (Beds)	Quarantine Facilities (Beds)	Ventilators
Islamabad	1	12	10	350	100
Balochistan	10	5	534	5897	49
Khyber Pakhtunkhwa	7	14	856	2760	150
Punjab	6	30	955	10948	1775
Sindh	4	19	151	2100	800
Azad Jammu & Kashmir	3	3	310	530	12
Gilgit-Baltistan	4	3	126	972	6
Total:	35	86	2942	23557	2892

Source: Authors' Compilation by retrieving data from http://covid.gov.pk/

Approach of Government to Meet the Challenge of COVID-19

The federal government took some important initiatives to meet the challenges of COVID-19. Formulation of the National Command and Operation Center headed by the Federal Minister for Planning, Development and Special Initiatives was an important step in this regard. However, the disharmony between federal and provincial governments seem to be more of a political nature than the administrative one, as all major decisions are taken through consensus. It has been observed by the analysts that both federal and provincial governments could not gauge the magnitude of COVID-19, thus, precious time was lost, which could have been utilized for rapid testing, tracking, and isolating the affected individuals at the initial stage. However, the Prime Minister's decision of smart lock-down aimed at mitigating the economic fall-outs has generally been well received by the public and also the international community.

Directions of WHO about COVID-19

The localized outbreak of COVID-19 soon evolved into a global pandemic with three defining characteristics: *Speed and Scale, Severity, and Social and Economic Disruption.*[9] The disease has spread worldwide with over six million cases as of July 2020; overall, 20% of cases are severe or critical with crude clinical Case Fatality Rate

(CFR) of about 3% (hence, increasing in older age groups and those with certain other ailments). The world health, social, and economic systems have gone through serious setbacks, which would have deep socio-economic consequences. Whereas, the lock-down strategy has helped affected countries to control or slow down the spread of this pandemic. Various reports and studies indicate that such restrictive measures would have negative impact on individuals and societies, particularly, disadvantaged groups including poor, migrants, internally displaced persons, and refugees.[10]

An extensive report by WHO on the spread of COVID-19 substantiates the finding that "due to rapid pace of changes, the extent of the spread and lack of real-time testing and reporting systems and multiple levels of management, collection, validation, and aggregation of data, none of the available resources can provide accurate real-time data at the national level," let alone the global level.[11] WHO has, however, spelled out the following guidelines/directions to combat COVID-19:

- WHO laid down three guiding principles for controlling the spread of COVID-19; a) Speed: the explosive nature of Covid-19 costs lives every day that demands increased-level of implementing effective response and building capacities); b) Scale: "Everyone in the society has to play a role in building the capacities to control this pandemic;" and c) Equity: "Everyone is at risk, till the time virus is controlled everywhere in the world."[12]
- Since COVID-19 is a truly global crisis, the only way to overcome it is by staying together and directing collective resources, where there is a greater risk.
- There is an urgent need to plan for a phased transition away from restrictions associated with COVID-19 in a manner that will enable sustainable suppression of transmission.
- Without careful planning and in the absence of scaled-up health and clinical capacities, the premature lifting of physical distancing measures may result in an uncontrolled resurgence of the pandemic and amplified second wave of cases. "The risk of reintroduction and resurgence of the disease will continue and will need to be substantially controlled through the rigorous application of public health interventions."[13]

WHO has also spelled out strategic objectives to tackle COVID-19, which are: mobilize all sectors in communities to take ownership by participating in the controlling measures, control the sporadic cases and clusters, and prevent community transmission, by rapidly testing, isolating and providing appropriate cure; suppress community transmission through infection prevention and control measures; reduce mortality by providing appropriate clinical care; and develop safe and effective vaccines and therapeutics. To reduce chances of being infected or spreading COVID-19, the suggested precautioning measures are: regularly and thoroughly clean your hands with an alcohol-based hand rub or wash them with soap and water; maintain at least 1 meter (3 feet) distance between yourself and others; avoid going to crowded

places; avoid touching eyes, nose, and mouth; make sure you, and the people around you, follow good respiratory hygiene; stay home and self-isolate even with minor symptoms such as cough, headache, mild fever, until you recover; if you have a fever, cough and difficulty breathing, seek medical attention; and keep up to date on the latest information from trusted sources.[14]

Projections of Further Spread of Pandemic

Numerous mathematical models have been used to project the spread of COVID-19 around the globe. The Susceptible-Infectious-Recovered Model was introduced in 1927 by W.O. Kermack and A.G. McKendrick, which is considered a comparatively more reliable model about the prediction of the spread of infectious diseases.[15] The Autoregressive Integrated Moving Average (ARIMA) was introduced by a group of engineers led by Norbert Wiener in the 1930s-1940s.[16] It is used for forecasts, using time series data. Similarly, some studies on COVID-19 have been conducted based on environmental forecast models. The environmental models allude towards a positive relation between cold and dry weather and the spread of COVID-19, whereas, inverse relation with hot and humid weather.[17]

Most of the predictions and forecasts about the spread of COVID-19 have proven the abortive world over. The spread and effects of this pandemic remained asymmetric so far. The study conducted in the context of Germany recommended that restrictions and curfews in European countries should continue till the end of December 2020.[18] Many mathematical model-based studies projected very optimistic estimates about the worldwide spread of COVID-19, which have later proved wrong, similarly, the highly exaggerated forecasts about the US have equally been proved wrong. Therefore, it is evident that there is hardly any reliable model available to date to predict the exact number of persons with even the tentative timeline. Governments world over are relying on estimations and common-sense analyses to plan about this pandemic. WHO has warned on May 14, 2020, that COVID-19 would stay for a longer time, like HIV.[19]

In the context of Pakistan, the Ministry of National Health Services Regulations and Coordination submitted a report on April 11, 2020, to the Supreme Court of Pakistan regarding COVID-19, which predicted that the number of affected persons would rise to 50,000 by April 25. However, this report proved incorrect as numbers of affected persons by May 12 were 32000. A mathematical-based study predicted that COVID-19 would be reversed in Pakistan by the first week of June, which was also proved incorrect.[20] Whereas, a study says, "an integration and analysis of various research studies and numerous reliable data reflect that the COVID-19 pandemic will not be as devastating in Pakistan as it has been seen in the US, Italy, Spain, France, the UK, Belgium, Iran, and the Netherlands."[21] The SIR model is considered as a comparatively more reliable model. A study based on this model predicts that the number of infections in Pakistan will peak on Day 91 (the 26th of May), where 5,921,1209 (59 million) individuals could be potentially infected.[22] The number of infections would rapidly decrease and by the 120th day (the 24th of June) when the number of infected

cases stands at 369, 8192 (3.6 million), whereas, 198,761,399 (198 million) cases would have recovered, which is approximately 90% of the Pakistani population, which is also proved as incorrect. Another study conducted by the Kohat University says, "The cumulative number of infective persons in the lock-down scenario is predicted to be in the range of 57651-153100, whereas, numbers can rapidly double or triple if the spread of the epidemic is not contained through strict preventive measures. To keep the cumulative Infective Persons around 60,000, it is proposed to keep a strict lock-down situation intact till mid-June 2020. The pandemic is expected to fade away completely with 97% Infective Persons recovered by August-September". [23] As discussed earlier, all predictions about COVID-19 seem to be an illusion. A senior officer of the National Command and Operational Control, on consultation, said that there were no projections available in Pakistan. Policymakers analyze based on available numbers and plan for a maximum of 20 to 30 days. No one can safely predict when Pakistan will attain plateau and at what numbers, he said.[24]

China's Response to COVID-19 Outbreak: A Model for Epidemic Preparedness and Management

It is a fact that the sudden outbreak of COVID-19 caught China by surprise. However, it was China's unrelenting response to the outbreak which made a difference. The Chinese government and its people adopted a whole-of-the-nation-approach and remained undaunted as they took on this formidable task relentlessly. Following a human-centric approach, the Chinese government put people's lives and health first thing first, right from Day One. They acted according to the overall principle of shoring up confidence, strengthening unity, ensuring science-based control treatment, and imposing targeted measures. They mobilized the whole nation, set up collective control, and acted with openness and transparency. Some of the important steps taken by the Chinese government to fight against COVID-19 were enhancing epidemic response capacity, identifying cases through large-scale surveillance, locking down cities and ensuring social distancing, putting national reporting system in place, establishing new healthcare facilities within no time, and preparing medical teams for fighting the epidemic.[25]

Socio-Economic Effects of COVID-19

Economic turmoil associated with the COVID-19 pandemic has wide-ranging severe impacts upon financial markets. Major events included the Russia–Saudi Arabia oil price war that resulted in a collapse of crude oil prices and a stock market crash in March 2020. The United Nations Development Program (UNDP) expects a $220 billion reductions in revenue in developing countries and expects COVID-19's economic impact to last for months or even years. Some financial experts are also expected a fall in global GDP and growth rate. According to the World Bank's electronically-published report "The Global Economic Outlook during the COVID-19 Pandemic: A Changed World," the COVID-19 has spread with disturbing velocity, contaminating millions and carrying monetary action to a close stop as nations forced

tight limitations on development to end the spread of the infection. As the wellbeing and human cost increases, the financial loss is as of now apparent and speaks to the biggest monetary shock the world has encountered in decades.

The June 2020 Global Economic Prospects portrays both the immediate and short-term outlook for the impact of COVID-19 and the drawn-out destruction it has managed to the possibilities for development. The benchmark gauge imagines a 5.2 percent withdrawal in global-GDP in 2020, utilizing market conversion standard loads, the most profound worldwide downturn in decades, regardless of the exceptional endeavors of governments to counter the downturn with financial and money related arrangement-support. Over the more drawn out skyline, the profound downturns activated by the pandemic are relied upon to leave enduring scars through lower investment, a disintegration of human capital through lost-work and tuition, and fragmentation of worldwide trade and supply linkages especially maritime.

This emergency features the requirement for a critical activity to pad the pandemic's wellbeing and monetary outcomes, secure weak populaces, and set up for an enduring recuperation. For developing business sectors and growing nations, a significant number of which face overwhelming weaknesses due to the spread of COVID-19, it is basic to reinforce general wellbeing frameworks, address the difficulties presented by casualness, and actualize changes that will bolster solid and manageable development once the wellbeing emergency decreases. This course of action is precisely the biggest consideration of Prime Minister Imran Khan, right now, to fight COVID-19 just to ensure reaching of riches to poor and low-middle classes struggling hard for their subsistence. At the moment, almost all international financial media houses are indicating severe contractions of global economies and forecasting the worst kind of economic recession in the world, even severe than the Economic Depression of the 1930s. Some indicators include:[26] WTO is expecting world trade to fall between 13% to 32%, and economies of underdeveloped regions and Asia will be badly hit.[27] Experts agreed that COVID-19 has brought third and greatest economic shock of the 21st century post-9/11 and financial crisis of 2008. The GDP of China, the evolving economy of the world, has already felt shockwaves of dropping financial markets worldwide. The US stock markets have also been jolted by the crash of oil prices amid restrictions of lockdown with a sudden decline of 20%. Global oil prices are down to 21-year low and US oil turned negative for the first time in history.

The Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD) has projected a reduction in global GDP growth from 2.9% to 2.4% for the year 2020. International Air Transport Association (IATA) has estimated a loss of $63 billion to $113 billion to the aviation industry. The global film industry is expected to lose over $ 5 billion.[28] More than 30 million people have filed for unemployment benefits in the US since COVID-19 spread. Unemployment in the world has also increased manifold and keeps on increasing dangerously. Many advanced economies are expected to enter a recession this year. Shares in internet-based (especially 5G) telecommunication industry and weapon manufacturing giants have dramatically surged as more people are using electronic gadgets while using social media as a pandemic-lifestyle. For instance,

Online-shopping companies' shares are at their peak. There is one silver-lining visibility of an impressive fall in world pollution.[29]

COVID-19 is likely to cause major economic damage to the world in the days to come. In South Asia, India seems totally clueless about how to confront this pandemic, both in terms of health crisis and severe economic recession amid a hostile environment of Sino-Indian Standoff. On the other hand, economic challenges being faced by Pakistan during the pandemic, as highlighted by various analysts, are contraction in aggregate demand for goods and services, disruption in production activities and supply chain management, and substantial reduction in trade volume, both domestic and external. A massive fall in investors and consumer confidence in economic activities is a disturbing phenomenon portraying a tightening of financial conditions leading to the complicated situation related to retiring of foreign debts. Piling up of debt is directly affecting government spending, thereof, further contraction in the economy, which is already facing lesser imports and exports. Table-4 highlights Pakistan's major economic indicators and their impact on the national economy.

Table-4: Effects of COVID-19 on Pakistan Economy

	IMF			World Bank		ADB	
Economic Indicators	**FY 2020 (Pre COVID)**	**FY 2020 (Post COVID)**	**FY 2021**	**FY 2020 (Post COVID)**	**FY 2021**	**FY 2020 (Pre COVID)**	**FY 2020 (Post COVID)**
Real GDP Growth (%)	2.4	-1.5	2.0	-1.3	0.9	2.6	3.2
Inflation (%)	11.8	11.3	8.0	11.8	9.5	11.5	8.3
Fiscal Deficit (% of GDP)	7.2	9.2	6.5	9.5	8.7	8.0	-
Exports Growth (%)	5.6	-2.1	4.7	-19.7	-5.3	-	-
Imports Growth (%)	-8.8	-16.0	3.0	-26.3	-7.7	-	-
Remittances Growth (%)	3.4	-4.8	-1.5	6.5	-6.0	-	-
Current Account Deficit (% of GDP)	2.2	1.7	2.4	1.9	2.0	2.8	2.4
Debt (% of GDP)	**84.6**	**89.8**	**87.8**	**90.6**	**91.8**	-	-

Source: Economic Affairs Division[30]

IMF is of the view that a fall in oil prices and weaker import demand provide some support to the current account, but the COVID-19 shock would have a severe impact on the balance of payments, especially because of declined remittances and exports. It will result in new external financing needs of about $2 billion in the last quarter of FY-2020. According to IMF, Pakistan's debt as a percentage of GDP would reach to 89.8 percent in FY-2020 and would be slightly reduced to 87.7 percent of GDP in FY-2021. As per the World Bank, Debt to GDP ratio will reach 90.6 percent in FY-2020 and 91.8 percent in FY-2021. Additionally, the volatility of oil prices and difficulty in rolling-over of bilateral debt from non-traditional donors (China, KSA, and UAE) would compound Pakistan's external risks and contribute to higher financing gaps.

Social Effects of COVID-19 on Pakistan

International media is regularly airing the views of experts of different fields, who foresee unprecedented socio-political, psychological, and cultural effects caused by prolonged isolation and economic deprivation. A separate study for each aspect is required to evaluate the impact. The effect on the education of children is the case in point. The pandemic has affected educational systems worldwide, leading to the widespread closures of schools, colleges, and universities. According to the data released by UNESCO on March 25, 2020, school and university closures due to the spread of COVID-19 were implemented nation-wide in 165 countries including localized closures, which affected over 1.5 billion students worldwide, accounting for 87% of enrolled learners. The state of affected students in Pakistan is given in Table-5 below.

Table-5: State of Affected Students – Pakistan

School Type	Females	Males	Total
Preprimary	3,865,068	4,771,315	**8,636,383**
Primary	10,093,144	12,838,161	**17,609,476**
Secondary	7,478,381	5, 879, 237	**13, 357, 618**
Tertiary	842,222	1,035,879	**1,878,101**

Source: UNESCO[31]

Impact of COVID-19 on National Security

COVID-19 has impacted every aspect of national life including national security in an intimidating way. It has been indicated by leading experts of various fields that nations all across the globe will have to struggle collectively to offset the impact of COVID-19. The estimated impacts of COVID-19 on global, regional, and national security are:

Global Security

It is an emerging notion of worldwide predicting discussions on COVID-19 among international economists, social scientists, and political analysts that the world will pass through the worst kind of economic recession even greater than the recession of the 1930s, which is likely to exacerbate the existing socio-political fault lines posing serious security challenges. Amidst the spread of Covid-19 and ongoing Indo-Pacific skirmishes between China and the US-led regional powers, experts are alluding to the issues of security concern that there would be an increase in the number of the poor in the world, further widening the gap between the developed and the least developed countries. It has been apprehended that some of the developing countries may slip from the ladder of development and fall in the least developed countries. Economic and trade wars are likely to ensue, particularly, between the US and China, in which other countries will also be entrapped. It will become difficult for countries like Pakistan to maintain a balance. Unprecedented unemployment in the US, Europe, and East Asian countries would result in visa

restriction on immigrants, thereby, squeezing the scope of employment for the labor of developing and underdeveloped countries. Laid-off employees are being deported by Middle Eastern, European, and other countries.

70% of loans from international financial institutions are taken by developed countries. With contracted economies and liquidity crunch, they are likely to bid for more loans, thus, further squeezing the opportunity for developing and the least developed countries. Loans, if offered, will be on very inflated interest rates, thus, compounding the issue of debt-trap. Weakened economies of the countries would have impacted their sovereignty, forcing them to make compromises in external affairs. It is also apprehended that to sustain the war industry of global powers, more proxy wars will likely be initiated. Debt accumulation of over 80-90% of GDP, as indicated by leading donors, is a big security concern.

Regional Security Dynamics

The South Asian region is usually considered as a disturbed region, once seen in terms of peace and stability as both nuclear states of the region, India and Pakistan have a history of mutual distrust, enmity, and armed conflicts. The post-pandemic scenario does not seem to provide any positive security perspective for the region, which is, at present, confronted with *Hindutva* nationalist agenda, Sino-Indian standoff at Ladakh, rising atrocities of Indian armed forces in Indian occupied Kashmir, unceasing shelling across the LoC, and emerging border dispute between Nepal and India. In such a disturbing situation, the spread of COVID-19 further harms the existing regional security environment.

Heightened trade rivalry between the US and China would increase the relevance of India for the US in the region, which may accelerate hostile subversive activities against Pakistan (being a partner of China's Belt-Road initiative). Such activities are likely to increase, particularly, in adjoining areas of India and Afghanistan borders, such as AJK, GB, Khyber-Pakhtunkhwa (KP), and Baluchistan to hinder CPEC projects. Recent terrorist attacks in Pakistan during pandemic and arrest of two Indian-launched terrorists on June 12, 2020 in GB allude to the impending danger of more sabotage activities. Due to contracted world economies, the supply chain of different commodities would be affected. India would try to take advantage of it, as hinted by Indian Prime Minister Modi in his speech on May 12, 2020, to prevent China and Pakistan to take advantage of increasing demands in foreign markets by using US' clout. The recent stand-off between China and India in Ladakh indicates the precarious security scenario of South Asia, where three nuclear states are at loggerheads with each other.

AJK and GB have recently become a focus of Indian military organs as reflected by the disclosure of retired Major Gaurav Arya of Indian Army on May 9, 2020, and arrest of two Indian-launched terrorists in GB, one month later. In such a hostile situation, COVID-19 may result in extreme unemployment in that region due to repatriation of labor, joblessness, a decline in tourism, and vulnerability of people

regarding hostile foreign agencies' pre-planned subversive activities. It has been highlighted at numerous forums that there has been a conspicuous ideological drift, particularly, among the youth in AJK regarding the future geographical-outlook of the region". As the use of electronic devices is increasing manifold especially among youth amid pandemic, it is likely India will take advantage of an increasing trend of using social media to disseminate its false-propaganda through anti-Muslim and anti-Pakistan approach. *Hindutva* mindset is dangerously alarming the bells of the deceptively-erected temple of Indian-secularism. India's consistent false and hostile propaganda against Pakistan's longstanding ideological narrative *"Kashmir banay ga Pakistan"* by using social media platforms must have been strongly contested and blocked with a clear rejection of BJP-driven RSS Hindu-nationalist agenda *Hindutva*. It must be highlighted that Kashmiri leaders never accepted the Indian occupation of Jammu and Kashmir as Sardar Ibrahim, General Hayat Khan and more significantly Sardar Abdul Qayyum Khan were ardent supporters of the Two-Nation Theory. Indian psychological warfare approach towards AJK and GB while taking the full advantage of COVID-19 is dangerously pacing up against Pakistan.

Recommendations

Foregoing in view, the Government of Pakistan should direct all ministries and autonomous bodies to undertake analytical studies about the impact of COVID-19 on various aspects of national life. A similar exercise needs to be carried out at the provincial level. It will help in identifying the affected areas for future policymaking. However, this paper posits the following recommendations to reduce the impact of COVID-19:

- Since healthcare has been neglected for decades, COVID-19 may be taken as an opportunity to revamp this sector. The 18th Amendment should also be revisited to enhance the role of the federal government in national health and education planning and spending. It is, indeed, an irony that nuclear Pakistan is being bracketed with African Saharan countries as far as healthcare standards are concerned.

- Twin cities of Islamabad and Rawalpindi may be taken as the case study for assessing the provision of health services to the general public and bringing about discernible improvement in the shortest possible time.

- Since lock-downs have been eased out, there is a greater need for effective surveillance and media campaign for motivating the public to adhere to SOPs. Arrangements should be made for announcements in markets and places of gatherings. Religious scholars, educationists, and volunteers may be engaged to educate the public regarding injurious effects of COVID-19 and how to take precautionary measures.

- CPEC projects including the construction of planned water reservoirs need to be accelerated to boost the economic activities

amid COVID-19. These megaprojects should be completed in time, particularly, the projects in AJK, GB, and KP, which can help generate job opportunities and reduce unemployment. Pakistan should not wait for normalcy rather taking the advantage of major players' involvement in COVID-19 activities.

- The Government of AJK should be pushed to initiate and complete projects of infrastructure development, i.e., roads, bridges, schools, and hospitals instead of wasting time and funds on non-developmental expenditures. It is crucial for national security as well as mitigating the socio-economic impact of COVID-19. The Government of GB along with the AJK government should also be encouraged and engaged to counter hostile propaganda and subversive activities. Serious efforts need to be made to promote national narrative through the production of relevant literature, plays, movies, and also organizing seminars, lectures, and workshops.

- Universities and research institutions may be asked to pick-up themes related to impacts of COVID-19 for serious academic research to help future policymaking as well as people's wellbeing.

Conclusion

COVID-19 is an unprecedented and catastrophic pandemic befallen on mankind. It has overwhelmed even the best health systems of the world, shattered economies and left unimaginable socio-economic effects on the societies. It will take years to gauge the damage caused by this pandemic, whatever statistics are available; they allude to a dismal picture of the near future. As per the assessment of WHO and other UN agencies, the developing and the least developed countries are the worst hit. Even in the developed countries, the weaker segments of the societies suffered the most. Pakistan has been struggling for the last so many decades to climb the ladder of development, but still, it is counted slightly better than the least developed countries as about 40% of its population is living below the poverty line. COVID-19 is likely to leave long-lasting impacts on various aspects of our national life. The paper in hand has attempted to provide a policy perspective on the prevailing situation. It is expected that the paper will help policy-makers and research scholars to carry out further research, which is so important for improvement in the process of policy formulation and implementation, particularly, in the wake of the spread of COVID-19.

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PAKISTAN IN THE FATF GREY-LIST: CHALLENGES, REMEDIES AND INTERNATIONAL RESPONSE

Musarat Amin, Muhammad Khan and Rizwan Naseer[*]

Abstract

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) grey-listed Pakistan due to the latter's non-compliance to the United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR)-1267. The FATF also demands Pakistan to put strict controls on money laundering and financial lifelines of terrorist organizations in Pakistan. The plan of action was reached between Pakistan and FATF to ensure sufficient action to enforce anti-money laundering policies and freeze assets of designated terrorist groups in Pakistan under UNSCR-1267 and UNSCR-1373. The NACTA in collaboration with FBR, State Bank of Pakistan, FIA, and the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan has mounted operations against illegal movement of money within Pakistan. It also has choked financial lifelines of terrorist organizations and curbed Hawala/ Hundi methods of laundering money. Pakistan is struggling to stick to the 26-point action plan to address the necessary concerns of FATF. This paper put forth the ramifications for being blacklisted by FATF and also highlights the Trump administration's tough stance towards Pakistan. This paper also offers concrete recommendations to exclude Pakistan's name from the FATF grey-list.

Keywords: FATF, Grey-list, Money laundering, NACTA, Pakistan.

Introduction

The Financial Action Task Force (FATF) is an intergovernmental organization which was primarily established (1989) to counter money laundering by G7 countries. Its objective is to implement legal and operational measures for combating money laundering and choking terrorist financial lifelines. The FATF also reviews the threat to the integrity of the international financial system. It is a policymaking body that works to bring about national legislative reforms in these areas. It also identifies vulnerabilities at the national level with the primary objective of protecting the financial system from being misused by money launderers and terrorist financiers.

According to a report by the Belgian Financial Intelligence Processing Unit, FATF shifted its scope from the drug-money laundering and added proceedings towards consequential offenses as the rising global economy and international trade had triggered more predicated offenses globally. From September 2001 onwards, terrorism financing was another source of financial crime added to the mandate of FATF,

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terrorism was a major challenge which was surging because of the financial lifelines. The G-7 states rendered it necessary for the task force to work out on policy implementations of countering terrorist finances.

With the surge in counterterrorism operations globally members of FATF have increased exponentially. A total of 37-member states are a part of FATF up to date along with eight associate members including Asia/Pacific Group on Money Laundering(APG), Caribbean Financial Action Task Force (CFATF), Eastern and Southern Africa Anti-Money Laundering Group (ESAAMLG) [1], The Eurasian Group (EAG), (MONEYVAL) selected by the Council of Europe to analyze the money laundering, The FATF of Latin America (GAFILAT), The inter-governmental group against money laundering of West Africa (GIABA) and the Middle East and North Africa Financial Action Task Force (MENAFATF), all these bodies also come under the jurisdiction of the FATF. Moreover, as of 2015, it also entertains observer member states, organizations, institutions in order to engage them in the functioning of the body e.g. U.N, IMF, Saudi Arabia, and World Bank. [2]

Efforts have been put in place by the task force to introduce a standardized scale to be used as a reference for future analysis of the states' international and regional organizations part of the international finance system. In 1990, the FATF developed a series of forty recommendations on anti-money laundering measures and also put forth concrete recommendations on choking terrorist financing. Those recommendations set the principles for the states to take effective action against such crimes and also legislate to implement those legally binding measures in their respective countries. Although the member states are a part of the task force and fall under the jurisdiction of it, the FATF also has the mandate to review even non-member states of the task force.

Pakistan and the FATF "Grey List"

A review committee of the task force publishes a blacklist since 2000, which lists non-complying countries to the practices of FATF[3].Those non-complying states are either unable to formulate effective policies, their implementation or fail to comply with FATF rules. Another category of the countries that is trying to curb terrorist financing but the measures taken are insufficient and with strategic deficiencies. That list is known as the "Grey List". As Pakistan has been waging a fierce battle against transnational terrorist groups, therefore, FATF encouraged greater compliance with provided recommendations.[4] Pakistan's Prime Minister Imran Khan has long been a critique of other political parties (Pakistan Peoples Party (PPP) and Pakistan Muslim League(PML)Nawaz and held them responsible for money laundering.PM Imran Khan stated that "the money laundered from the poor countries to the rich countries must be treated like terror financing as it killed more people than latter".[5]PM Imran Khan took stern action against corrupt politicians and National Accountability Bureaue(NAB) assumed a proactive role during his government.PM Iman Khan's efforts including tax reforms, data collection on financial information, strict monitoring of financial

transaction will help alleviating money laundering but is likely to take time to uproot such practices be empowering institutions.

United Nations Security Council Resolution (1267)

United Nations Security Council Resolution (UNSCR) 1267, passed unanimously in October, 1999 by recalling previously passed resolutions like UNSCR-1189(1998), UNSCR-1193(1998) and UNSCR-1214(1998) to designate Osama Bin Laden and his associates as terrorist. These resolutions rebuked the Taliban regime in Afghanistan and asked states for compliance to these resolutions by shutting down terrorist sanctuaries and training camps on their soil. It was also the responsibility of the states to ensure that their territory was not misused for terrorist training camps and installations. The UNSCR-1267 also demanded all member states to freeze assets and financial resources associated with the Taliban. It also urged all the member states to cooperate for effective measures against Osama Bin Laden and his associates. Though Pakistan launched multiple military operations in FATA and considerably destroyed terrorist infrastructure but the United States continued to exert more pressure and demanded to "Do More" because the Bush and Obama's administration was not satisfied with policy measures.

Pakistan was re-named in the FATF grey-list of 2012, due to its non-compliance with the U.N Security Council Resolution 1267, which calls Pakistan for imposing a travel ban, asset freeze, and arms embargo on the militant groups affiliated with Al-Qaeda. Among those groups some are like Tehreek-i-Taliban Pakistan (TTP), Lashkar-e-Tyba and its charity front named as Falah-e-Insaniat Foundation (FIF), Lashkar-e-Jhangvi (LeJ), Al Rashid Trust and Harkat ul Jihad Islami (HUJI) are included in the list as well, some specific individuals as well like TTP's Mullah Fazlullah, Hafiz Saeed, leaders from Haqqani network and Malik Ishaq from LeJ[6]. It had been kept in the grey list from 2012-2015, the reason for including Pakistan in the grey list was provided by the task force itself in its public statements explaining the jurisdiction done by FATF on the strategic Anti-money Laundering and Counter Financing Terrorism strategies and actions have not done sufficiently in countering the deficiencies found in the deterrence or no action plan has been committed yet throughout 2012-2015. However, amendments were in order when in 2013, the government of PPP, amended the "ATA Act" in order to enable the Anti-terrorism Act to confiscate the properties of the affiliated groups, as well as act against the financers of the terrorist activities within the state. Pakistan was excluded from the grey list in 2015, on providing the details of the significant development in the improvement of Anti-Money laundering and Countering Finance Terrorism plan and developing a sound legal framework for not only jurisdiction but its regulation in committing towards action plan for deterrence against the highlighted deficiencies by FATF as well[7].

Pakistan was put into the grey list of the FATF in 2018 again, based on the lack of "Strategic Deficiencies" in curbing of corruption, tax evasion and terrorism finance, as per the declared causes by FATF [8]. One of the reasons to include is the building pressure by the U.S. onto Pakistan to take action against the U.S. declared groups whereas

Pakistan is working with its own strategy to avoid collateral damage. [9] The U.S. is not only the largest financer of the FATF, but the president of the task force is also the treasury of the U.S department who also heads the office of Terrorist Financing and Financial Crimes as well. With a strong influence in the task force, it is a well-suited mandate for the U.S to remind Pakistan about their "Do More" policy with voting in favor of placing Pakistan in the list. Such decisions stand more political because of the U.S. interests.

Furthermore, according to a report by *Dawn News*, another reason for the inclusion in FATF Grey-list is the presence of Jamaat-ud-Dawa and Falah-e-Insaniyat Foundation, headed by Hafiz Saeed, as these were designated as terrorist organization by the United Nations, but are allowed to work freely in the country and collect funds for their functioning and development[10]. Pakistan's courts after listening to cases against these organizations freed them. Therefore any action dictated by the U.N or the United States may lead to the clash of institutions in Pakistan.[11]

In most cases in order to review the performance by the state under observation, it is difficult to analyze the crimes directly, as the guilty don't report their crime themselves, therefore, the FATF measures the vulnerability of these crimes by the law implementation and the regulation. According to the *Basel Money Laundering Index*, associated with the Basel University[12], that analyzes the risk from money laundering and terror financing declared Pakistan at 46the position out of 146 states. The index scores the states aggregating the scores from indicators i.e. regulations, corruption, rule of law, political disclosure and financial status of the state. The Global Terrorism Index in 2017 done by the Institute of Peace and Economics ranks Pakistan on 5th position from the most affected from terrorism after states like Afghanistan, Iraq, Syria and Nigeria etc, [13] such indicators influence the decision making of the task force as well, with the inclusion in the grey list the position of the state becomes worse and thus affects its development and international partnerships promoting financial and economical development as well. In the case of Pakistan, these rankings affected Pakistan's stature internationally. There is politically corrupted money laundering in Pakistan that politicians committed but the terrorist groups were not much involved in money laundering to finance their activities within and outside the country. Therefore the strict conditions of FATF do not imply in letter and spirit on Pakistan.

The international objections regarding money laundering and terrorism financing against Pakistan also arose with respect to the rising money laundering and financing terrorism. In the year 2017, a party functioning under Hafiz Saeed known as the "Lashkar-e-Taiba", had even managed to raise funds however, despite its property being seized by the government officials[14], this incident paved way for other terrorist and extremist groups to activate and function with Pakistan with their illicit activities. There were expressed more objections by the U.S against Anti Money Laundering (AML) and Anti-Terrorism Financing (ATF) in Pakistan. According to the report published by the U.S State Department in June 2018, several objections were raised in the uneven implementation of the Anti-Terrorism Act. [15] The report further objected on how the affiliated groups and parties of Hafiz Saeed were not prohibited from raising

funds and was not denied the financial services they had been acquiring. The report also pointed towards the 2017 decision announced by the Lahore High Court on not extending the detention of Hafiz Saeed on judging the evidence being insufficient provided by the government.[16]Charity in Pakistan is now more strictly monitored by the government agencies towards such organizations to ensure that the money is not being used for financing extremist or terrorist activities. This action directs towards the objection of FATF on uneven strategic implementation of regimes. Moreover, on January 20, 2018, the U.S along with Britain submitted a letter to the task force nominating Pakistan for the grey- list. The other states were France and Germany to cast vote in favour of the U.S. Keeping into account all these facts, the inclusion of Pakistan in the grey list was a foreseen event.

The international objection against AML and ATF in Pakistan was also published in the report by the U.S State Department in June 2018, where objections were raised in the uneven implementation of the Anti-Terrorism Act which was adopted in 2010 and was revised with the updated recommendations by the FATF and the UNSC resolutions (1267, 1189, 1193 &1214) as well. The number of court cases which have been lingered on further add blames the Law Enforcement Agencies of the state[17]. Courts in any country demand witnesses and evidence in such cases to punish terrorists and their aides. But in Pakistan witnesses feared to appear before the court and that is how terrorists were released on the grounds of lacking evidence and witnesses. That is why military courts were established in Pakistan to punish hardcore terrorists.

The other states shortlisted in the grey list are Ethiopia, Iraq, Yemen, Serbia, Syria, Sri Lanka, Trinidad and Tobago, Tunisia, and Vanuatu. The causes for their addition in the grey list by FATF includes their non-compliance with the anti-money laundering and countering terrorism financing regimes, their insufficient progress towards the deterrence from the cause and their non-committance towards an action plan against the rising issues within their designated state, tax evasion, corruption invading the financial sector of the state thus affecting the state and its partners in the global market etc.

Plan of Action reached with the FATF

The FATF stressed upon Pakistan for implementing an action plan which includes the following objectives:

- Pakistan has to identify and asses terrorist financing risks and a supervision to counter them.[18]
- Remedial measures on money laundering cases in the light of guidelines laid down by financial institutions.
- It is to ensure whether authorities are taking sufficient action to enforce anti-money laundering policies and also cooperating.
- It is to verify that authorities are identifying cash couriers and imposing strict controls on the illicit movement of capital which might be used for financing terrorism.[19]

- To improve the level of coordination between provincial and federal agencies.
- It is to demonstrate that law enforcers were curbing terror financing activities of the designated terrorist entities and persons.
- It is to demonstrate that the prosecution leads to an effective and dissuasive sanctions and also capacity-building of persecutors and the judiciary is done.
- Freezing the assets of designated terrorist groups under UNSCR-1267 and UNSCR-1373.[20]
- It is to ensure that federal and provincial authorities were cooperating to enforce penalties of such groups and individuals.
- Finally it is to demonstrate that designated groups, individuals and the identities are deprived of their facilities, resources and services. In this paper even measures taken by the Pakistani government are beyond this action plan but Pakistan's name is due to be out of grey-list.

Pakistan's Progress to Curb Financial Crimes

After Pakistan got grey listed in FATF in between 2012-2015, National Counterterrorism Authority (NACTA) took the lead in regulating the movement of money within and across different land routes in collaboration with the financial institutions of Pakistan that includes Federal Board of Revenue (FBR), State Bank of Pakistan (SBP), Federal Investigation Agency (FIA), The Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan SECP, NACTA and other intelligence agencies to imply control on the money laundering and terrorism financing within the country. To keep a limit to the amount of money inbound and outbound from Pakistan, the SBP and FBR initiated the Money Declaration Forms for international bound passengers, requiring the passengers to declare their amount of money brought in or out from the state[21], thus applying a threshold to the amount not more than U.S $ 10,000 per visit out of the state. There is a heavy turnover in the branchless banking now a day, where stringent control has been clamped by the SBP for the effective protection of transactions country wide. Another source of money laundering discovered by the law enforcement was the funds collected by the NGO's and NPO's is another resource to launder money and that is why government forcibly shut down some NGOs in Pakistan.[22] Not only their legitimate registration, regulation audit and abidance by the penal provisions will be kept in check but their regulation of donation collection will also be observed, but special conditions are also laid down by NACTA for donation collection as well[23]. The fundraising events are also kept under observation by the regional inspectors and officers to ensure legitimacy of the organization, fund collection and their implementation on the deserving party as well.

In 2018, a more stringent approach has been adopted by the financial institutions of Pakistan in collaboration with NACTA. According to a review report of *International Corporate Review Group* (ICRG)[24], Pakistan has reported that no financial service of any sort has been allowed to the designated groups or individuals within the jurisdiction of Pakistan. Moreover, there is a continuous monitoring being conducted

for ongoing transactions to prevent chances of money laundering for terrorism financing. In the year 2017, in a bold measure Pakistan has frozen 117 bank accounts withholding a total of Rs. 48.2 million[25], as these transactions were indirectly linked with the associated customers who were enlisted by United Nations Security Council as terrorist financers. Furthermore, there is a considerable improvement in the Law Enforcement Agencies (LEA) in ensuring Law and Order in the state, whereas prior to 2017, more than 150 cases of money laundering and terrorism financing have been registered by the state.[26] The Pakistan financial authorities have also started a thematic review of the stock market brokers as well, after some cases of non-compliance were registered. Money/Value transfer services (MVTS) were another major resource for money laundering and terrorism financing therefore, based on intelligence information the high-risk areas with these MVTS are under strict monitoring.

The Security and Exchange Commission of Pakistan (SECP) is intensifying efforts to counter money laundering as well as terrorism financing. Where one of its efforts includes the Memorandum of Understanding (MoU) with NACTA to enhance coordination level to take initiatives for combating but also creating awareness amongst the general public and the financial institutions about the latest Anti Money Laundering laws and Countering Terrorism Financing framework adopted by states as per the recommendations and concerns of FATF.[27] Moreover, in order to ensure that the criminals involved do not get away from rule of law, by claiming to be the owner of any company, NGO and the financial institutions are instructed to identify these owners and maintain a customer or an individual portfolio of the people withholding an account or any association with any financial authority. Further work done by the state authorities includes the introduction of the "know your customer" regulation by SECP on banks[28], stock exchange, security broker, dealers, trusts and other non-banking institutions to avoid any kind of misuse of funds by any party or individual. The SECP has also introduced an Anti-Money Laundering Unit and an Anti-Money Laundering Consultative Group in the self-regulatory bodies like the industrial development groups and stock exchange to further ensure security within these institutions.

Sources of Terrorism Finances and Money Laundering
Channels Used for Money Laundering

Most of the non- state actors, are responsible for the significant rise in money laundering and financing terrorism. These parties include terrorist organizations, independent individuals and other extremist and terrorist affiliated groups. People associated with such activities follow composition and well-informed nature of the law and order situation of the concentrated area for the activity. Hawala/Hundi system, kidnapping, theft, robberies, funding via fraud NGO's, illegitimate business and other petty crimes are the major sources for these crimes. A major link between all these activities is the terrorist inculcation involved in running these activities. Terrorists move capital to other countries through money laundering to finance terrorism.

The act of terrorism itself is a costly action, in order to materialize any terrorist plan takes a lot of money to carry it out. Terrorism costs money[29], the budget allocation

for the operations of Al-Qaeda is $300 million itself giving $30-40 million per year [30], along with its heavy recruitments, hints at the extensive money laundering and other illegitimate finance resources availed by the organization to operate. In the report of FATF, named *Guidance for Financial Institutions in Detecting Terrorist Financing,* it claims that Al-Qaeda of gaining finance either through states, or through several illegitimate revenue generating operations including running several illegitimate businesses, fraud, extortion, kidnappings, hawala usage and human trafficking as well [31], it has its hands in all sorts of pies, with access to every kind of market and businesses in several states as well. In Pakistan, post 2012, re inclusion of Pakistan in the grey list, with the rise of terrorist activities, Money Laundering and Terrorism Financing sources rose to high level thus promoting the covert operation of law enforcers within state.

The concept of money laundering and terrorism financing are somewhat contemporary, however, the major source for regulation of this systems is century old method known as Hawala/Hundi or Chiti Banking, or also known as Poey Kunan (Flying Money) in Thailand. It is mainly in application by the criminals due to the method itself being risk free and saving the money from being detected and reported. It, being an alternative remittal system or informal banking system was used for making payments since long. In this phenomenon, the money is not transported physically, rather it is delivered by trustful *Hawaladar who* makes the payment to other party on his own after being informed about the party by his network source. In some cases, large payments are also done in the form of valuable items, e.g. gold, gemstones, valuable watches or antiques. These hawaladars, may be some shopkeepers, business associates or other individuals who already contain necessary capital for further payments. This method enables the concerned parties, not to leave any trace in banks, or any other financial system. What makes such source more reliable and attractive is the lack of supervision. This method of money laundering has been used to move money across borders to fund terrorist groups/organization and their activities.

Within Pakistan the system of Hawala comes the second most reliable source for crimes. The State Bank of Pakistan has reported as Hawala being the dominant source for not only money laundering but the financing of terrorism as well. According to the 2002 U.S Treasury Department study on Hawala as the alternative remittal system and its role in money laundering, it explains Pakistan having the Hawala system for drug trafficking, money laundering and other crimes as well. Moreover, it also referred Pakistan, India and Dubai in the Persian Gulf as the "Hawala Triangle" and is known to move about $500 billion through this process, also the Pakistani's involved in this system are estimated to get back $7 billion each year[32]. The highest rate of the Hawala system is used near the vicinity of the Pak-Afghan border where the terrorist moved the money in and out from the country more than a decade ago. The SBP initiated introducing national money changers [33] in order to eradicate illegitimate money-changer and exploit this Hawala/ Alternative Remittance System (ARS). Moreover, the required companies that need to transit or move money within the state or internationally are all required to register and get a license from the Securities and Exchange Commission of Pakistan. Another measure that NACTA took in 2015 was to shut down a number of religious organizations and madrassas on the suspicion of

Hawala system. It was discovered that out of the banned organizations, 72 of them were involved in the Hawala system[34], after taking such concrete measures of Anti-Money laundering laws on choking terrorism financing. The FATF removed Pakistan from the grey list acknowledging its initiation of legal framework of AML regimes.

Options at Hand for Excluding Pakistan from the "Grey List"

Pakistan's reentry into FATF is because of the U.S. tough stance towards Pakistan. The necessary options at hand for taking Pakistan out of the grey list are limited. The 26-point action plan to address the necessary concerns of the task force towards Pakistan and its financial system includes the control illicit movement of money within state and across borders by freezing of assets both movable and immovable to prevent the transactional capacity of the terrorist groups.

National law enforcement agencies enforcing quick arrests and detention to the groups involved in laundering money within the state can encourage the human growth index and other crimes emanating from the terrorism finance and money laundering techniques, this would further encourage a positive outlook in the review by the task force on the case of Pakistan. Moreover, the UNSC resolution regarding the speedy investigations of money laundering and terrorism financing should directly be implemented as per the UNSC resolutions 1267 and 1373 respectively. Strict check and control on the supervision on the stock market activities and banks is also another important point for consideration, which will assist in the recognition of the vital improvements done by the state within the given time for making amendments.

Under the anti-money laundering and terrorism financing regimes, inculcate a system where the banks run the list of their clients with the affiliated list by U.N under resolution 1267, the major flaw in the system is the submission of the names by the ministry of interior to FIA or Financial Monitoring Unit (FMU) in a hard copy, which leaves heaps of chances for faults and flaws. This system of record needs to be changed and switch to a digital platform to ease the record keeping and easy to track for fault. It also is rapid and precise to match record of offender with clients if any.

More international collaboration between Pakistan and other states for the purpose of Anti-Money Laundering and Anti-Terrorism Financing regimes, provide a strong assurance to the other state party the serious commitments on the FATF concerns, which will help Pakistan in gaining more international support and assistance. In the FATF review done in September 2018, an agreement has been reached between U.K and Pakistan on Anti-Money Laundering laws and a bilateral agreement is also under process for the exercise of extradition by Pakistan in U.K. That bilateral agreement will enable Pakistan to bring the culprits back into the state who were responsible for laundering money and stashing assets in U.K with black money. The rising concerns of the Task Force which were mentioned in the review of Pakistan after being listed need to be taken care of as soon as possible. These concerns mainly include the noncompliance of the state authorities implying sanctions against parties violating the AML or CFT policies, curbing the cross border illegal currencies through Hundi

which has been discovered to be an important source for money laundering and financing terrorism within the state. Through so called charity organization an efficient system for the supervisory mechanism on the banks, stock market and the companies. That will help curbing such practices and will provide a positive outlook of the law enforcement agencies of Pakistan. Another measure for exclusion from the grey list is the necessary transparency of justice in political system to promote democratic values within the government.

Ramifications on the State in Case of being blacklisted

There is another threat to the state of Pakistan, after the re-inclusion in the grey list that accounts for the inclusion of Pakistan in the black list of Financial Action Task Force. Which declares the blacklisted states as the Non-Cooperative Countries or the Terrorists. Which are the declared states known for not cooperating and implementing the laws necessary to meet the international standards of peace and security. The possibilities for Pakistan being blacklisted does not exist yet, however, if Pakistan does include in the blacklist, there are strong implications and ramifications for the state. Being a struggling state itself, further implications for the state includes direct sanctions on the international transactions, foreign loans and import and export of the state. Moreover, there could be major demise in the international standing/ ranking of the state, the foreign banks and companies will pull out from the state and a massive fall in the flow of the foreign currency as well. The large Pakistan current account deficit could increase, and the stock market could fall with a very low dip in the shares as well. All these ramifications are sufficient to draw the state towards destruction.

More ramifications following would be the reason for the destruction in the internal situation of Pakistan. Where there being no jobs for masses in Pakistan, an increase on the debts of individuals, increase in the taxation and inflation. With the rise of all these security compromise, chaos at the national level would be the next big development post Pakistan being listed in the black list. Another implication post black list would be the continuous surveillance on every big transaction the state makes. Pakistan would have to combat with even less and limited resources than ever before. The diplomatic, economic, political, social, cultural etc., every kind of association with regional and international actors would be compromised, ultimately cutting off all types of association of Pakistan from the international community. The implications alone would be compatible enough to devalue the state of Pakistan from a developing to the least developed state.

Trump's Policy towards Pakistan and its Stature

With Donald Trump's rise to the presidency, the anti-Pakistan rhetoric got a fillip in the U.S. The grey list re-inclusion started with the weakened Pak-U.S ties, where U.S after inaugurating its new administration had adopted a tough stance towards Pakistan, declaring Pakistan of sponsoring terrorism and not doing sufficient for countering terrorism. Pakistan has been waging war against terrorism even in those

times when Taliban had not threatened Pakistan neither Al-Qaeda posed any serious threat to Pakistan and its people. Pakistan's sacrifices and losses in war against terrorism are immense. What makes the United States unhappy is the fighting war as directed or desired by the U.S whereas no sovereign nation in the world can allow such unjust pressure as the U.S is exerting on Pakistan.

Pakistan's comprehensive counterterrorism policy National Action Plan has achieved greater success in destroying terrorists' infrastructure and choked their financial lifelines. Another major blow to Pakistan's trust was placing Pakistan's name in 2018 on special watch-list in violation of International religious Act-1998. Pakistan needed funds to continue war but the United States withheld $900 million Coalition Support Fund for the fiscal year 2017.Despite such challenges from the United States, Pakistan continued its war against transnational terrorist groups and their local partners in Pakistan. Pakistan's name in grey-list of FATF has stigmatized Pakistan internationally especially for donor countries and potential investors who were eying to invest in Pakistan. Even the China and Saudi Arabia changed their earlier stance and remained silent amid voting whereas Turkey opposed Pakistan's inclusion into FATF grey-list.[35] Given Pakistan's contribution in war against terrorism and then its name among other grey-listed nations like Yemen, Ethiopia, Iraq, Syria, Sri Lanka, Serbia, Triniad and Tabago is not logical. Therefore, it reflects that Pakistan's name is only because of the political reasons. The accusation against Pakistan was that it was unable to take effective measures against individual terrorist entities like Jamat ud dawa and Jaish-e-Muhammad. Another major factor that pushed Pakistan into grey-list was compliance to the UNSCR-1267. The major demand of the FATF was to impose financial sanctions on designated terrorist groups. Pakistan government had already built an action plan to plug strategic deficiencies as identified by the watchdog. Failure to reach an action plan with FATF could possibly black-list Pakistan like Iran and North Korea. However, there are hard core struggling examples where Pakistan has been seen coping with the best of its ability with the choking of terrorism finance, terrorism itself, money laundering and other related crimes emanating from these. Pakistan stepped up its efforts in war against terrorism especially after the implementation of National Action Plan. Pakistan worked relentlessly to destroy safe havens of terrorists and also mounted operations against terrorist groups KP, FATA, and Balochistan. The formulation of anti-terrorism Acts (1995 and 2010), enhancing the role of FIA in countering terrorism and managing operations, introduction of NAP, the operationalization of NACTA had been better measures. In the more recent years of 2017-2018, Pakistan complied to action plan of FATF by implementing its policies in financial institutions (banks, stock market) and law enforcement agencies to adopt a strict approach towards such challenges.

Conclusion

Pakistan needs to address the internal security situation as there is always a spillover effect from money laundering and terrorism in small areas. A closer analysis would further help in ensuring cities free of such criminal activities. Despite plenty of job opportunities in Pakistan, people still opt for the fastest route to earning. They engage in money laundering, hawala and hundi that is used a channel of moving money

by terrorist groups. The state Bank of Pakistan with the help of nationwide banks is alert to any suspected transaction even more than fifty thousand transactions will be asked to counter Hawal/Hundi practices. To curb these practices government has widened tax net and introduced tax reforms so that people may register as taxpayers. There were several NGOs and NPOs found involved in such activities and Pakistan banned their operation. Now NGOs have to provide proof of funding and its allocation on declared projects. Concerning Hawala/Hundi in Pakistan, it is widely practiced which should be countered by reducing tax on proper transactions. According to a report by *the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics*, there have been recognized certain loopholes in the Section 111 of the Income Tax Ordinance of 2001, which is still in use along with the Economic Protection Freedom Act of 1992, there are loopholes within these policies that facilitate the operation of the system of Hawala/Hundi which sums up to make about 36% of the transactions made in Pakistan.[36] The Asian Pacific Group (APG) whose delegation visited Pakistan during August (13-18), 2018 mentioned that there was absence of coordination and between the inter-ministerial departments and the center and the provinces which cause dawdling on the implementation of FATF action plan. It should be the primary focus of the state authorities to ensure effective management and compliance by the higher officials to work for getting Pakistan out of the FATF grey-list as soon as possible. Such measures will contribute towards the reduction in terrorism and ML/TF activities.

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HINDU NATIONALISM, MODI FACTOR AND THE IDEOLOGY MATRIX IN CONTEMPORARY INDIA

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Abstract

Hindutva has become a social reality with its overarching imprints on Indian polity and its subsequent reflection on India's political landscape. The revocation of Article 370 and the amendment in the Citizenship Amendment Bill are symptomatic of these undercurrents. The domestic underpinnings under Modi had been primarily guided by the Hindu nationalistic narrative. The non-acceptance and non-accommodative overtures in the guise of majoritarian values spearheaded India's transition into a narrow and parochial polity. The Modi phenomenon dwindled the construction of Nehruvian state based on mutual coexistence and composite culture. This paper attempts to dissect BJP's ideology matrix and its historical evolution. It explicates the manifestation of Hinduness in the tenure of Modi government from 2014 onwards. It further delineates the emerging contours of state and society in India and analyzes the contemporary ideological undercurrents within India.

Keywords: Hindutva, Composite Culture, Saffron Tide, Rashtra, Majoritarian.

Introduction

Prior to India's general elections in 2019, BJP introduced its *Sankalp Patra* (Election Manifesto). Its far most priority was a zero-tolerance approach to terrorism followed by national security and strengthening the armed forces of India. The very first point "Nation First" of the manifesto contained 14 points that had outrightly indicated that Modi's 2.0 would be more aggressive than imagined by the policymakers in the region. The underpinnings of the election manifesto catapulted Bhartiya Janata Party's (BJP) receptiveness among the middle and upper-middle-class Hindus nationals in India. The byproduct of polarized sloganeering paid BJP with a landslide victory in 2019-elections.

This article is based on the analysis of Modi's leadership and his association with the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and its Hindutva ideology, and how that has influenced politics, polity, and society in India. The dramatic rise of Hindutva in the political environment of India is not just a coincidence. Hindutva ideology's origin and manifestation have deep historical roots. It refers to the primordial construct of Hindu identity. Hindutva derived from Neo-Sanskrit term which means "Hinduness in the masculine." The origin of Hindu nationalism in India dates back to the early 20th

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century.[1] Hindutva holds a staunch belief that Hindus have been subjugated historically by invaders and imperial powers which has made them a victim in their native land. It has consequently led to a posture of docility. It is widely argued that the invaders became the part of this land and integral feature and could not be driven out or integrated inside the nation.[2] They exploited Hindus at large and got control over the land. The Hindutva ideology believes that the Muslim rule in India caused tremendous destruction, widespread religious suppression, and economic deprivation for Hindus. V.D Savarkar, the founder of RSS, had a similar belief that the hatred for Muslims amongst Hindus considerably divides the nation and unites Hindus.[3] This very construction of identity placed in the oppositional matrix has defined the contemporary contours of Indian polity which has become majoritarian in Modi's first and second tenure.

In the post-election scenario, the only point (from the manifesto) Prime Minister Modi has religiously fulfilled is Nation First. The other points including doubling farmers' income, on the path of Gram-Swaraj, India as the world's third-largest economy, Infrastructure, health for all, good governance, *Yuva Bharat* (tomorrow's India), education for all, women empowerment, inclusive development, etc., have been overshadowed with the pretext of national security. Modi's 2.0 is persistently failing in economy, development, health and governance but its national security mantra is rescuing the government – amid Indian media that creates desired optics for Modi's policies.

Within the 2.0 national security paradigm of Indian establishment, it was quite predictable that Modi will start from Kashmir. The abrogation of articles 370 and 35-A was part of the manifesto. The sub-point 14 of the first point of the BJP manifesto stipulates that "BJP reiterates its position since the time of Jan Singh to the abrogation of article 370. Also, it read that BJP is committed to annulling the article 35-A of the constitution of India as the provision is discriminatory against non-permanent residents and women of Jammu and Kashmir.[4] The abrogation came right after the election results leaving the Muslim population of Indian Occupied Kashmir in disarray.

India made a good plan for the abrogation of article 370 but miscalculated the reaction. The abrogation appeared at a time when Pakistan's foreign policy was resurging and quite successful in internationalizing the Kashmir dispute. Although India abled to convince the international community that Kashmir dispute was still there because of cross-border terrorism from Pakistan, the abrogation of article 370 drastically changed this international perception. Pakistan's reaction at public and policy levels was quite calculated and surprising for the Indian establishment.

The abrogation of article 370 strengthened BJP's resolve to take stringent actions as per the desires of the radical Hindu voters. The enactment of the National Register of Citizens (NRC) and the Citizenship Amendment Act (CAA) proved to be a boiling point for the opposition parties in India. The regional parties in India especially Trinamool Congress in Bengal and left-wing in the South have their reservations on BJP's Kashmir policy. However, these parties could not politicize the issue due to fear of the hyperbolic reaction of radical Hindu forces. NRC and CAA provided the Indian left

and opposition to take BJP to the task. Both constitutional changes have become the only soft belly of BJP in the last 5 years.

In Modi's 2.0, Kashmir's question and CAA have become the failure of BJP's foreign and domestic policies respectively. More surprisingly, the lockdown in Kashmir and nationwide protests against CAA in India have been complementary to each other. Both issues are taken as examples of racial hatred towards minority communities. After the abrogation of article 370, Pakistan's stance on the matter was received with a cold shoulder but the leadership in Pakistan kept warning the world that much was yet to come. CAA proved those warnings and alarmed the regional countries in particular and the world in general about an expanding Hindutva ideology, if not stopped that would trigger the nuclear threshold.

Hindu Nationalism: A Historical Pretext

Hindu nationalism emerged as a ferocious response to Indian composite culture. It questioned the basis of Indian secular culture and negated the notion of coexistence having termed the rules of invaders exploitative. Hindu nationalism derives social and political expression in the spiritual tradition of Hindu's dominance. It largely defines the contours of Indians and non-Indians and intends to make a Hindu dominated society. It divides the nation and creates diversity in religio-cultural lines. Hindu nationalism wants a strong assertion and is non-accommodative towards other religious identities and ethnicities. It considers them a threat to the one Hindu identity. Hindu nationalism seeks to eliminate diversity and establishes one strong Hindu nation.

The current manifestation of Hindutva pivots around the central conception of *Hindutva.*[5] Hindu nationalism discredits the historical progression of Indian civilization as diverse where religious and social identities existed side by side in a peaceful manner rather it believes that Hinduness was the central feature around which the Indian civilization has evolved and progress. It remained politically dominant until the intrusion of foreign invaders and the ethos and spiritual values of Hinduism also remained a dominant theme. The Hindu identity according to Hindu nationalists is constituted by three characterizations, i.e., *Jaati, Rashtra and Sanskriti. Jaati* is a common race where *Rashtra* denotes a collective nation and *Sansikriti* is the culture of a common civilization.[6] The natural view of Hindu identity puts other identities in a confrontational matrix and describes them as a threat to Hindu identity This character of Hindu vs non-Hindus defines the contours and undercurrents of opposition towards non-Hindu identities and ethnicities.

Hindu nationalism in its history remained wary of the Muslim rule and its subsequent dominance. The Muslim rule had spanned over entire India hence making Indian society heterogenous. This heterogeneity was contradictory to the claims of one Hindu identity promulgated by Hindu nationalists. The opposition and enmity towards Muslims gave Hindus an opportunity to instrumentally use the variable of identity to raise unity in the ranks of Hindus and also cultivated a common hatred towards Muslim identity. Hindu religion has tremendous internal diversity and fragmentation amidst

the absence of a central text, belief, or doctrine. The rituals and norms structure also varies across different regions. The prevalent hierarchical social order and caste system are the defining characteristics of Hindu identity.

Hindu nationalism precipitated as an anticolonial undercurrent which opposed the European colonial rule on scriptural grounds. It denounced the notion of "White Men Burden" by eulogizing the scriptural and spiritual advancements of Hinduism. This thinking served as an impetus for the many reformist movements of Hinduism in the modern history[7] The modern underpinnings of Hindu nationalism are in stark opposition to Indian composite nationalism, the narrative of the Indian National Congress. Hindu nationalism attempted to promote the association to the nation along religious and cultural lines. It further capitalized on the notions like *Baharat Maa* to promote and foster militant nationalist struggle. It also founded the ideological and cultural basis for the Indian independence movement. *Brahmo Samaj* movement was a cultural and religious reformist movement in India.[8] This movement received well by westernized Indians and discredited the caste discrimination and called for the reinterpretation of Hindu scriptures. The movement of *Arya Samaj* was also a reflection of Hindu reformism which started at the end of the 19th century.[9] This movement wanted to end the dominance of *Brahman* values and wanted to end the prevalent hierarchical structure caste discrimination of the Indian social structure. Swami Vivekananda and Aurobindo are two influential figures who have everlasting imprints on Hindu ethos and Hindu majoritarian values.[10] Vivekananda wanted to cure western materialism through Hindu spirituality. He had been a very impactful figure who redefined the central notion of Hindu nationalism. He questioned the legitimacy of western superiority and presented Hinduism as an alternate to the western culture and its material undercurrents. The spread of Hindu values cultivated the spirit of national unity and made Hinduism a popular and dominant discourse in Indian polity.[11]

The Saffron Tide

BJP was formed in 1980 after the collapse of the Janata Party and was led by Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Lal Krishan Advani. BJP in its first phase steered itself away from the ideology of RSS and emphasized socialist traits of Gandhian philosophy. The elections of 1984 were a setback for BJP as it could only clinch two seats. The narrative of Gandhian socialism could not get much acceptance in the polity. Following the defeat in 1984-elections, BJP managed to evoke a close association and working relationship of BJP, Shiv Sena and Vishwa Hindu Parishad. They picked up common symbols and raised unity around the Ayodhya *Ram* temple issue to consolidate, expand and harness public support. *Ram Janmabhoomi* movement strengthened BJP and its allied parties considerably.[12] The outrightly communal approach and its popular manifestation made BJP a significant political force. It effectively used religious symbols and garnered public support. The *Rath Yatra* was an effective political move where Advani dressed up like *Ram* had a countrywide campaign to donate for *Ram* temple. The televising of *Ramayana* and the *Mahabharata* on *Door Darshan* also created steady support for the cause of BJP and benefitted it politically.[13] It consequently led to the

increased support of BJP and it made a significant turnaround in 1991-elections by having clinched 120 seats in the Lok Sabha.

Following the demolition of the *Babri* Mosque in 1991, communal riots sparked which took a very devastating turn and led to the loss of many lives. It made the political environment of India polarized and volatile. The crude display of politics by BJP in the aftermath of the demolition of BJP consolidated more support for Hindu nationalism. BJP had increased acceptance and it grew more popular in the backdrop of this eventuality. The saffron tide became an alternative for the otherwise composite culture of Indian polity. It made BJP a plausible alternative for the disenchanted voters of Congress and those who were at centre-right and seeking the dominance of Hindus. These all factors precipitated and resultantly led to a victory by BJP in 1996-elections. Although this government could not last long and could only hold reins of power for thirteen days, the victory in elections was demonstrative of a fact that BJP is now a robust political force at the national level who has significant political capital to make government. The power slipped out of the hands of BJP when *Janata Dal* supported by Congress made a government with Deve Gowda as Prime Minister. Inder Kumar Gujral was made the Minister of External Affairs. The withdrawal of support of Gowda by Congress after a year made Inder Kumar Gujral as the Prime Minister of India.[14] BJP with other like-minded regional parties evoked an alliance in 1998 called the National Democratic Alliance (NDA). The upcoming elections brought BJP and Vajpayee in power again. This government again could hold power for merely one year and with new elections in 1999, BJP made a robust inroad in power with Vajpayee as Prime Minister again for a complete tenure. In the span of 18 years, the saffron tide became the undeniable political reality of India.

Modi 1.0 and the Resurgence of Hindutva

The comeback of BJP in 2014 came in the aftermath of the two unimpressive tenures of the Indian National Congress and its United Progressive Alliance (UPA). The emphatic comeback of BJP in this tenure also brought Modi at the forefront. Modi came in the limelight in Gujarat when the Chief Minister Keshubhai Patel faced serious allegations of corruption and embezzlements for which he had to resign.[15] Modi benefitted from this opportunity and got himself nominated for the Chief Minister of Gujarat in 2001. The months after his appointment as Chief Minister of Gujarat, the worst communal riots broke out. Militant Hindus orchestrated arsons and claimed the lives of Muslims in the vogue of impunity. It came in the backdrop that Muslims had torched 58 Hindus on a train. The state of Gujarat, law enforcement agencies and all institutions were complicit in this heinous act. Official statistics revealed that 850 Muslims lost their lives in these riots.[16] The unofficial records and sources confirmed that more than 2000 Muslims lost their lives and 150,000 Muslims sought refuge in camps for the safety of their lives.[17]

Modi was blamed for not managing effectively and to have condoned with the militant Hindus who made that violence a nightmare for Muslims. Modi even did not pursue the perpetrators and also did not agree to the resignation of him and his

cabinet.[18] Instead, *Sangh Parivar* tried to use the Gujarati community to provoke them for violence.[19] Modi became an icon of terror and was denied visas for the UK and USA; his career truly hinged on 2002's massacre. Had there been no riots Modi would not have won the 2003-elections in Gujarat with thumping majority.[20] In the domestic pretext, it made Modi a leader and ardent hardliner in the ranks of Hindu nationalists and also brought him in the first line of leaders of BJP. This was the reason that when Atal Bihari Vajpayee tried to remove Modi from his seat, the BJP leadership including L.K. Advani supported Modi and he was not removed.[21] Modi stayed as the Chief Minister of Gujarat from 2001 to 2014.[22]

BJP's resurgence and the rise of Modi were simultaneous in the years 2012-2014. The United Progressive Alliance (UPA) depicted the governance in the last years of its rule marked by many scandals and misgovernance. Modi expected the nightmare of Gujrat had substantively transformed the outlook of Gujrat. Gujrat was presented as a model in comparison to Congress's governance.[23] The supporters and protagonists of Modi argued that Modi did not let any catastrophe like Gujrat happen again. He was presented as an inspiration and tales about his self-made aura helped him greatly in becoming BJP's candidate for the Prime Minister in 2014-elections. His extended rule over Gujarat was presented as the decade of development during which the state of Gujarat managed to hit double-digit economic growth. He ensured huge investments in Gujarat and brought business tycoons on the same page. This reputation, later on, helped him in becoming the Prime Minister of India.

BJP made itself a substantive alternative for Hindu traditionalists and the Indian middle class. BJP consolidated ideological base and further expanded itself to incorporate the issues of governance, economic growth and national security in India. The outlook of BJP seemingly is the combination of security, ideology and governance. BJP underscores the same tenets in its public oration, tirade and electoral manifestos. BJP has not restricted itself a myopic ideological party but also reflects the shared vision of India which includes all the prevailing issues of statecraft along with a hardcore ideological base. The thumping electoral win of BJP in 2014 and the percentage of votes was reflective of this phenomenon.[24]

BJP has completely sidelined the senior leadership like Advani and Jaswant Singh. Jaswant Singh broke association with BJP and said to have been pushed to the wall.[25] BJP combined traditional Hinduism with issues of modern statecraft. RSS played a vital role in the electoral landscape after the nomination of Modi and announced to give 2000 volunteers to BJP to run the electoral campaign of Modi.[26] BJP tried to inculcate the soft phase of Hindutva in 2014 with a mild approach towards contentious issues and more talked about the economy, development and governance although the *Ram* Temple was still there in the electoral manifesto of 2014-elections.[27] Modi's public speeches talked about smart cities, connectivity, roads, infrastructures, tourism and technology. Modi engaged the business community, Indian middle class and youth to get wider electoral support and it worked for him.[28] All these factors massively helped BJP and gave BJP a thumping and unprecedented mandate. BJP for the first time single-

handedly got simple majority and the National Democratic Alliance (NDA) reduced Congress to rather a very nominal existence in Lok Sabha.

During his first tenure of government (2014-2019), Modi cultivated a wave of soft Hindutva across India. He displayed aggressive nationalism and tried to instill national patriotism by making national security a major focus. Modi's foreign policy pivoted around border security, internal security, and defense modernization. Modi invested in mainstream media and made it excessively pro-government and polemicized the rhetoric. India under Modi had exacerbated border tensions with Pakistan, China, Bangladesh, and Nepal. The aggressive overtures were used as cosmetics to broaden political support at home. With China, India had a volatile border dispute along the McMahon line, western Himalayas, Doklam, Aksai Chin and Sikkim.[29] BJP built rhetoric of not compromising on internal security. The superficial discourse was built around the surgical strike on Pakistan in the aftermath of Uri attacks. In the aftermath of the Pulwama attacks which were carried out by an aggrieved Kashmiri who was humiliated at the hands of Indian security forces, India staged a chimerical mantra of Balakot strikes. India tried to make an incursion in Pakistan's mainland and dropped payload on an unmanned land in Jaba and escaped. The next day India was given a response in a dock fight where its two planes were shot down and the pilot was held captive. The pilot was released afterward as a goodwill gesture. This entire development took place with the Indian elections in the near offing. Modi successfully used this rhetoric of teaching Pakistan a lesson in the domestic pretext and through media, tirade maneuvered the domestic impulse. Dr. Zafar Nawaz Jaspal in his book has highlighted the stratagem of surgical strike and its maneuvering by Modi-led government.[30] BJP built rhetoric of attacks from Pakistan-based terror groups, Maoist attacks, Chinese border intrusions and illegal immigrants from Bangladesh jeopardizing India's internal security in its electoral campaign and this polemic marked an, even more, the stronger return of BJP back in power for the consecutive term with the highest ever mandate of Indian history. It is, though, a sad fact that mob lynching of minorities and cow vigilantism and hooliganism of Hindu radical nationalists became a ubiquitous phenomenon in Indian polity during Modi's rule.

Modi 2.0 and the Emerging Realities in India

Modi's 1.0 was a success story only because of India's large size economy and mushrooming businesses. As the priority in the first five years was to improve the economy and then start fulfilling the ideological pledges, the 2.0 began with the falling Indian economy. The abrogation of 370 and CAA might be the right decision in BJP's perspective, the timing is wrong. Both decisions have not triggered governments in the world but verily triggered the international community worldwide. More interestingly, it was not the international community that came to voice for Kashmiris or CAA affectees rather the local Kashmiri diaspora and Indian liberal or left alliance reached the international community to take voice on behalf of the unheard voices.

The second term of Modi in power has not only polarized Indian society but also divided it permanently. The reaction against BJP's policies has been increasing

within Indian society. At the crossroad of socio-political transformation, the old liberal order in India has crossed the horn with the new Hindu nationalist social order. The state machinery and the entire political apparatus have stood by BJP's aspiration. However, the regional divide, liberal segments in almost all states, and a constitutional contest between states and federation have barred BJP from establishing a political order of its desire. The second tenure of Modi is cultivating a phase of hard Hindutva in the Indian polity. The ideological standpoint of BJP is now coming at the forefront which is reflective of non-accommodative behavior towards at large. The highest ever mandate given to BJP in 2019-elections has made Modi and BJP overconfident to redress all the issues who have ideological commitments attached to them. Modi, Amit Shah and Ajit Doval are spearheading India's trajectory to a rather narrow polity with Hindutva at the helm of affairs.

The revocation of article 370 was the first major onslaught of Modi. An inhumane curfew is placed in Kashmir since the revocation of article 370. The miseries and repression of Kashmiris continue unabated. It has given fresh momentum to the local insurgency movement in Kashmir. The educated youth and people from all walks of life are joining the resistance movement. The examples of this phenomenon are Manan Wani, Rafi Bhatt and Raiz Naiko. The illegal annexation of Kashmir on August 5, 2020, makes the already precarious region more volatile. The human rights violations and the atrocities of Indian armed forces are impinging Kashmiris intensely and severely.

The amendment in CAA is the second reckless step taking by Modi in the first year of his second tenure. This amendment specifically targets Indian Muslims and downgrades them to second-class Indian citizens where they will have to prove their citizenship. It has sparked a national level controversy in India and is tantamount to revoking India's secular identity and a significant step towards making Hindu *Rashtra*.[31] The countrywide protests against the Citizenship Amendment Bill (CAB) and NRC have emerged as a daunting challenge to the Modi-led government in its second tenure. The Ayodhya judgment given by the Supreme Court of India is symptomatic of the change and wave of Hindutva prevailing in India. It was a judgment given to satisfy the will of the majority. Indian justice dispensation is dual-faced when it comes to communal prosecutions and matters. Earlier a decision was given against Afzal Guru with no credible evidence of him involved in the Indian parliament attacks of 2001. In 2019, a court in India has acquitted three Kashmiri men from the Lajpat Nagar blast case after 23 years in jail.[32]

It is pertinent to mention that Modi's 2.0 is not limited to changing the domestic landscape of the Indian society. It is aimed at creating an impact across the borders of India in South Asia. The resistance at the domestic level is limited to the state level but it is not alone. The South Asian states including Pakistan, Nepal, and Bangladesh have voiced against BJP's actions impacting the region in particular and Asia in general. What is missing is a genuine collaboration between the protestors in Indian (both Kashmir and CAA affectees) and governments of regional countries. The voices raised against BJP in South Asia are not at the government level except Pakistan and

only social activists have spoken against the injustice. The recent standoff with China in the Galwan valley has badly dented Modi's repute. Modi's muscular nationalism is for every other country in the region except China. India's apparent consternation with China was a fact check for Modi's aggressive and offensive foreign policy but Modi chose to demonstrate docility. The dispute of the Line of Actual Control (LAC) was the litmus test of Modi's foreign policy but India's cautious and restrained response demonstrates that India under Modi takes China calculus very differently as compared to the other neighbors in the region. The border issues with Nepal are also resounding. Nepal's parliament recently changed its map through a constitutional amendment after India's claims on its certain territories. The Northeast of India is also facing consternation with secessionist movements.

Conclusion

The heightened bashing of Pakistan, rhetoric and tirade have provoked more radicalization in the Indian state and society. The hard phase of Hindutva has triggered India's stride into a narrow and parochial polity. The minorities are unsafe and insecure in Hindutva-led Modi's India. The belligerent onslaught by Prime Minister Modi in his 2.0 term does not augur well for the region. The grossly illegal revocation of article 370 and CAA have changed the contours of state and society in India. Pakistan needs to focus on how to deal with a proto-fascist Hindu nationalist Prime Minister. It would be important to remember that Pakistan may not be at war with Hindutva, but Hindutva is at war with Pakistan given the islamophobia mindset of Modi, Hindutva followers, and BJP.

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POLITICAL DYNAMICS OF FUNDAMENTALISM: A CASE STUDY OF INDIA AND THE US

Mahrukh Mustansar[*]

Abstract

The inculcation of religion in politics traditionally creates a dogmatic society. The religious divides have become evident due to the influence of religious convictions on politics. Fascism and Communism were the essential products of such political practices where religious motivation was exploited to attain power. In the past few years, the re-emergence of such conduct has taken place in the largest democratic secular nations of India and the US. Therefore, a deeper understanding of the link between modern religious fundamentalism and political dynamics is essential to determine the motivation behind such political practices. The findings based on the discourse analysis suggest that violent religious interpretations have close ties to the political dynamics of these nations, consequently, promoting hate towards minorities and other religious factions. The Hindutva Ideology in India and White Supremacist or Alt-Right movement in the US are a direct consequence of the union of extreme religious believes and politics.

Keywords: Religious Fundamentalism, Hindutva Ideology, Ku Klux Klan, White Supremacist, Alt-Right Movement.

Introduction

There is something, evidently happening on the horizon of modernity. It is hard to untangle the rope of religious fundamentalism with politics, but it is essential to realize the consequences of certain actions toward religious fundamentalism in the modern world. When religious fundamentalists feel threatened, they are more likely to go at extremes. A western Sociologist, Durkheim, foresaw the demise of religious believes back in 1950. He stipulated that when people will discover consumerism, they will start to lose interest in the traditional values that promoted humanistic grounds. Religions that promote peace and humanitarian values would be disappeared, which will leave no space for deeper interpretation.

> *Time has witnessed whenever civilization goes at its peak, it takes away humanity altogether. Moreover, the system that passes on the traditional humanistic values starts to collapse in the chase of power because there is a growing threat regarding public identities. When religion and power hunger are tied together, they do not produce policy victories.*[1]

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According to Karen Armstrong, fundamentalism is a concept of the West, which is misunderstood. She observed that most of the fundamentalists are non-violent. Fundamentalism in all religions shows a deep fear of "annihilation", which is often exploited by the modern secularists. In the West, the relation between politics and religion has been very violent and even the century could not sort out.[2] She eloquently illustrates the relationship between fundamentalism, tradition, and modernism as:

> *Fundamentalism is not simply a way of using religion for a political end. These are essentially rebellions against the secularist exclusion of the divine from public life and a frequently desperate attempt to make spiritual values prevail in the modern world. Nevertheless, the desperation and fear that fuel fundamentalists tend to distract the religious tradition and to make more prominent it's more aggressive aspects at the expense of those that preach toleration and reconciliation.[3]*

Today, the term 'fundamentalism' associates with a wide religious and political view. Most disturbingly, it is connected with different forms of religious extremism and, thus, religiously focused on violent extremism. It is the religious modalities of violent terrorism that have taken a central stage in the global political and social context. Fundamentalism focuses on the status of mind which advocates and believes that all the group members should return to the specific ideal from which they have strayed away. Fundamentalists reject a variety of opinions and cannot tolerate any difference of opinions. They believe only on their own interpreted definition of religions.[4] Religious fundamentalism divides people. It focuses more on the differences in mankind; it encourages a kind of xenophobia, i.e., fear against members of different religious groups or foreigners. The modern era is an example of the rise of fundamentalism.[5]

> *Fundamentalism is a modern phenomenon; its inception started after the 1880s, which means after mass-consciousness and mass-communication. The most used and misused medium of mass-communication is social media. Therefore, accepting and believing an easy and facile understanding of religion has become more convenient than obtaining a deeper understanding of it. This is why modern religious fundamentalism is supported by the radical interpretation of religion [due to facile understanding] that leads to extremists' mindsets.[6]*

Rise of Religious Fundamentalism: A Radical Truth of Modernity

The rise of religious fundamentalism is a radical truth of modernity that is based on religious nationalism. Religious fundamentalists claim for power by making religion-based exclusive ideologies. They aim religious freedom and claim for peace for their own conformed members, which provide justification and use of state-based non-democratic force to fulfill its goals. This phenomenon often projects militant violence against minorities to a certain achievement of power. Modern religious fundamentalists also use contemporary means to make a modern modification of traditional religions and world views. Fundamentalism has essentially led to the theological crisis of the modern world.

Modern psychology brands this religious fundamentalism as the dark religion. Almost everyone in the world is being subject to this process in one way or the other starting from families to consultation rooms to temples to churches to mosques and even at the political level.[7] The examples of the dark religion exist in the rise of Hindu fundamentalism as well as Christian fundamentalism.

Philosophy behind Religious Fundamentalism in Political Dynamics

The modern world has witnessed the rise of religious fundamentalism in politics more than any other era before. India and the US both are considered as secular nations, however, the recent political sphere is suggestive of promoting an extreme right-wing violent religious ideology. Hindu far-right and Evangelical or Alt-Right Christians largely supported a candidate, who was using religion as a driving force for their campaigns while undermining the rights of other religious minorities. It has been observed at multiple instances over the past few years where minorities were discriminated against violently beaten and even murdered without the government taking any stand for the victims. This behavior is, therefore, encouraged in such political dynamics and both countries (India and the US) now find themselves amid a concrete divide of left versus right, liberalism versus conservatism and majority religion versus other religions. Although it might be perplexing to understand the link between far-right and alt-right, both groups have a long history dated back to the Aryan race identity which was one of the core ideologies of Nazism. The followers of Hindutva and White Supremacist ideologies believe that they have all came from a pure race, therefore, all the rest of the races are impure and do not deserve the same social status. This study, therefore. critically analyzes and discusses the political dynamics of Hindu fundamentalism (Hindutva ideology) and Christian fundamentalism, respectively.

Hindu Fundamentalism

There has been an increase in Hindu fundamentalism in today's era. The major manifestation of Hindu fundamentalism exists in the movement against "external influences" in India – the Hindu fundamentalist party Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS). Political opportunism is obvious in RSS because it has a very slight empathy towards the minorities. Also, it was one of the RSS members who assassinated Gandhi in 1947. According to the claim of RSS, Gandhi was very affectionate towards Muslim minorities; there are many examples evidently present in the history and modernism, where this religious fundamentalist party has driven the minorities to death. However, it is a beneficial slogan for them as it encourages a tribal memory of Hindus which allows them to manipulate Hindu doubts about Indian-Muslims.

The Hindu Political Discourse

The main crisis of the political discourse in Hindu fundamentalism is Hindutva Ideology. Hindutva ideology is a blend of Hindu fundamentalism and Hindu radical nationalism. It also claims to be deeply religious, profoundly aggressive, and distinctively political form of militant nationalism. From the earliest gleaming of

its beginning, its factors have combined complexities with compromise, hostility, and contradictory elements as tactical devices for achieving overriding power. Hindutva ideology has also imposed radical Hindu nationalism upon entire India. The term 'Hindutva' suggests the concept of 'one State' under the umbrella of one culture, one religion and one language. This concept was established in the name of their Lord Rama, which states a single 'Hindu Nation' for an entire Indian Continent has obligations that it must be led by the doctrine of *Arya Dharm*.[8]

Hindu fundamentalism together with Hindu nationalism is a tied force with Modi's political ideology. As a politico-ideological force, it originated from the manifestation of religious sects under the colonial rule of government. The reversal and acceptance of such colonial identities by Hindu revivalist movements of the early 20th century and Vinayak Damodar Savarkar's expansion of Hindutva in Constituents of Hindutva (1922) have supplied the ideological foundations of Hindu Nationalism.[9] It was primitively conceptualized as the idea of a religious and social movement that happened to get connected with their political ideology, the consequences were the institutionalization of Hindu fundamentalists with the creation of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS) and the Bhartiya Janata Party (BJP) which created nothing but radical shocks to the minorities.[10]

However, in the late 1980s, Hindu nationalism never gained the political leverage and advantage of BJP. It was created after a reorganizing of the major political institutions keeping Hindu fundamentalism along with Hindu nationalism; the BJP got a rise to power at an extraordinary pace. In 1984, BJP only had two seats in the Lok Sabha (the lower house) of the Indian parliament. By 1991, it succeeded to attain 119 seats which show the extraordinary upsurge of Hindu nationalism with the course of time.[11] The swift increase of support for BJP has been open to investigation by a broad display of social scientists. At the broad level, explanations were under consideration in the political and social situations, which made BJP a more attractive voting choice by Indian voters to gain their political leverage based on religious fundamentalism.

People, who discriminate Hindutva against Muslims, are the huge voters of BJP but still, India declares itself a secular country. There is an emphasis on some essential transformed structure in the Indian political prospect as the origin of this dominance to power. Varshney regards the most significant rise of transformation of dominant political structure is basically the declination of the Congress Party in the late 1980s. He explains the Congress Party as one of the most powerful organizations, which was associated with the establishment of a nation that has got rusted, clay footed, and colossus.[12]

Hindu Fundamentalism

Statistically, Hinduism and Polytheistic religions are considered to be inclusive for the other religious practices and groups. However, the assumption that such religions, especially Hinduism, does not have a problem with extremism, would be utterly incorrect and ill-advised.[13] Today's Indian society does not see their children

having any compromise between the old ways and the modern society. They see the majority of them choosing a life that steers away from the traditional concepts that used to define a "good life." It is being recognized by the Indian society that modernity is the ruling ideology. Whereas, religion and faith in a traditional sense are "pushed to the corner."[14]

Political Cohesion and BJP

Political cohesion is a sensitive act between religion and ethnic groups. It is the harmonizing act between different ethnic and religious groups. The incident of September 11, 2001, has created Islamophobia in the West. However, there are also major violent trends in Hindu extremism that are being ignored by the world, specifically the US. Hindu extremists in India are hyperactive and completely aligned with the BJP government. This racist and extremist mentality can be traced back to the days when the *Sangh Parivar* was brought into conflict with other forms of Hinduism, especially the teachings of Gandhi. He was accused by Hindu nationalists being responsible for the partition of the Subcontinent. This conflict eventually led to the assassination of Gandhi by Nathuram Godse, a former RSS member, and Savarkar's associate.[15]

Pierre Van Den Berghe in the article "Multicultural Democracy: Can it work?" proposes India as being a functional 'multicultural democracy'. He states that democracy in India has many political and religious groups that are organizing to be recognized. These groups try to obtain special rights regarding the defense of their collective interests.[16] Pierre further states, this predicament "generated a spiral of escalating stridency and frequent violence. India has become the country where caste and communal violence are the most routine, institutionalized order of the day."[17]

In 1952, monogamy was implemented on Hindus and flexibility in its implementation was removed as a criterion of social reform by Article 25 of Indian Constitution, which declared "that the state may interfere with the right of a citizen freely to profess, practice and propagate religion to legislate social reforms."[18] However, the implementation of this article led Hindus to sense the discrimination. This fire was further fueled by BJP, not letting other Indian communities to keep their decrees because these laws were seen as a threat to what it meant to be an Indian citizen from the Hindu standpoint. This fabricated threat was tactfully used by BJP which then allowed them to politicize the issue under religion, hence, leading to its heavy religious role in Indian politics today.

Mandal Commission (Mandalization)

Furthering this fear around what Indian citizenship should entail, in the 1990s, V. P. Singh implemented the suggestions and recommendations of the Mandal Commission. India, since its inception in 1947, has always supported discrimination as a means to repress minorities and lower castes. The Mandal Commission was created in 1978 by a non-congressional entity to formulate a policy that would hinder religious and

lower caste discrimination. They suggested that the government positions and university quotas for these populations to be increased from 27 percent to 49.5 percent.[19]

Mandalization refers to the execution of Mandal Commission recommendations in which the lower and poor class population can claim their rights as citizens of India against the tyrannical rules exerted by the upper castes.[20] Such rights being granted to the lower caste left a bad taste for the upper caste as well as middle class communities. This led to many anti-reservation movements in many areas of India with protests that even led to the self-sacrifice by upper-caste college students.[21]

Uprising of BJP

Upper castes in India had long enjoyed the security, status, and stability, which came by just as belonging to a certain caste. However, this all seemed to have been collapsing by the Mandal Commission's recommendations. This led them to have a sense of exposure that they did not experience before. BJP set its sights on these vulnerabilities and formulating its rhetoric that echoed with the upper class and the extreme Hindu fundamentalists. They suggested a "cultural purification mantra" and a reinstatement of the superiority of the caste system in order to safeguard their own social and political interests.

Philosophy of Hindu Fundamentalism

The Hindu nationalist agenda between the 1980s and 1990s was heavily marketed by using mass media outlets. This is also an excellent example of religious communities conforming to the spread of their agenda utilizing the changing atmosphere of technology and mass media, which created a level of outreach to the general public which was never before imagined by these organizations. The utilization of media technological advances and selective segregation of India into the global economy are prominent examples of Hindu nationalism to maneuver modernization and spread its tentacles of influence. Moreover, there are certain facets of modernization which played an important role in the spread of Hindu nationalism. Consequently, it became clear that religious identity was able to acquire the imaginative hold over Hindus in India to accommodate and conform to the processes of modernization. Hindu fundamentalists have had many political victories because they were able to place their leaders into government from 1999 to 2004.[22]

Modernity has seen the trend of religious fundamentalism as a rising force. A film covering many incidences of communal violence was not just shown in only one district Gujrat but in other cities as well.[23] This film displayed an incident that happened in 2015 where the mob of 1000 Hindu activists attacked an innocent Muslim family because of the rumor that they had slaughtered a cow. Vigilantes from 'Save the Cow' movement directed a mob to appear on site, encouraging the rumors of slaughtering a cow and placing blame on the Muslim family. As a result, the Muslim family was badly beaten; the elder of the house was beaten to death and his son was

severely injured. Indian media also got involved and it was explained that 'Save the Cow' movement was a mandatory religious duty as Hindus to guard their cows, religiously holy to them. Meanwhile, a BJP politician defended the violent mob by saying that it was a failure on the part of local police to react effectively.[24]

Assessment on Hindu Fundamentalism

It is noted that Hindu fundamentalism has become a part of today's Hindu politics. Likewise, Hindu political leaders encourage spreading the violent aspect of Hindutva ideology, such as BJP that plays a significant role in spreading Hindu fundamentalism and violence within the society. Politicians in India must represent all citizens encompassing all religious beliefs and cultures. Indian communities are being depressingly affected by religious fundamentalism that is taking rise in recent times due to spread of Hindutva ideology by Prime Minister Narendra Modi. "The Modi government has gradually but surely weakened the values that any democratic polity should fiercely protect."[25]

Christian Fundamentalism and Dynamics of US Politics

The idea of modern religious fundamentalism was presented with the publication of "The Fundamentals", a variety of essays that published between 1909 and 1920. This publication fascinated Christians to believe in definite religious doctrines of Christianity. The term 'fundamentalist' has also been used to describe a faction of Protestant Christians who had an extremely separatist position in regards to modernity. Later on, this term became more associated with extremists of every religion of the world.

For example, the two competing parties in US politics fundamentally differ in various aspects like policies, strategies, and social issues. In 1960, when John F. Kennedy, a Roman Catholic, was elected president, it sparked a wave of major division of ideologies amongst the nation. The liberal ideologies and religion created a far-right movement of the Klu Klux Klan. Similarly, in 2016-elections where religion yet again was center stage, white Christian (Evangelicals) heavily voted for Donald Trump which further perpetuated white supremacy, racism, and nationalism. This far-right movement and openly discriminatory behavior led to mass shootings and extremism within the US against minorities. Christian fundamentalism has been, therefore, a growing issue in the US which is leading towards the modern form of extremism.[26] In contemporary era, Christian institutions are the West's most powerful campaigners against LGBT equality, family planning, and gender equality. Such differences lead to Christians perpetuating acts of violent extremism against people who differ in ideology or who are going against the teachings of their own religion.[27]

Christian Fundamentalism in US Political Discourse

A flow of fundamentalism was experienced by three Abrahamic religions in the 20th century. Christian fundamentalism took a rise between 1910 to 1915 when 90 essays

were published by the Bible Institute of Los Angeles. This set of 90 essays is called "The Fundamentals: A Testimony to the Truth." This rise in Christian fundamentalism was further followed by the rise of Evangelical Christians in the US from the 1940s to the 1970s. Later in the 20th century, a new force was given to Christian fundamentalists in the US by religious figures including Pat Robertson and Jerry Falwell.[28]

The label 'fundamentalist' had its roots in American Protestantism.[29] Like its religious counterpart, the phrase "secular fundamentalist" is used to identify an individual or institution as an extreme fanatic and dogmatic. As discussed above, religious fundamentalism can be stated as a kind of religious interpretation that strictly adheres to the scared-scripture text, such as the Bible, as a source of absolute, plain, and consistent truth. Christian fundamentalism is one of the several processes of biblical interpretation. Secular documents also encompass interpretation and if a document holds normative implications, there may be various issues with its interpretations. For example, the US political system and its constitution, which is a normative document, have tied together with religion due to the similarity between constitutional interpretation and Biblical interpretation.[30]

Philosophy behind Religious Fundamentalism in US Politics

In the 1960s, the US Supreme Court prohibited prayer and Bible readings in public schools, which was a huge problem for Christian fundamentalists in the US. Fundamental religious conservatives, massed heavily in the South, began shifting toward the Republican Party in the 1960s over the race issue. Religious sentiments reinforced that shift and religious conservatives became an ever-larger voice in the Republican Party, which encouraged white supremacists and racism. In the US, the current political strategy on religion since the 1960s has been shaped by the Republican Party. Their strategy is very conservative concerning abortion and same-sex marriages because of their (more conservative) interpretation of the religion of their constituents.[31]

During the 1960s, religious fundamentalism dominated the political field in the West. The fast-paced ever-changing nature of democracies, which is still present today, has created a strong divide between ethnicities, races, gender, and religion. This manifested into a stark contrast of political parties. It can be said that the initial trigger for heavily Evangelical-based Republican Party was the potential of racial equality. The influx of people from different cultures created a sense of unity between those already settled. This made these groups threatened about their socio-economic superiority due to equal rights and opportunities as given to the minorities. Thus, the strategy was to establish norms and values that only original Southerners and Americans alike would have been privy too, which led to the development of racial polarization. For example, the Ku Klux Klan remerged basing their values on religion after previously being abhorred and deemed violent. These values relied heavily on the dislike of gays and lesbians as well as blacks, Jews, and other immigrants.

On the other hand, the Democratic Party found solace in grouping the original outcasts or those who generally did not fit into a popular category in the Republican

Party. The Christian left became focused on activism and political change, which generally went against the principles preached by the political right. This activism gradually developed into secularism and, thus, they were understood as liberal. In US politics, most Americans, who do not identify with any religion, have increased in the last decades, tend to support the Democratic Party.[32]

Exclusionary Source of Divinity in US Politics

Secular fundamentalists may take a provisional and practical view of explanation; ironically, it is an exclusionary source of divinity which functions on the basis of their fabricated interpretations, i.e., as opposed to the divine truth. Secular fundamentalists blind their minds off to the actual religious knowledge, hence, rejecting the actual religious prospects that serve humanistic traditional values at an individual or national level. They seek binary vision which often leads them to extremism. According to Reinhold Niebuhr, fanaticism can originate from secularism creating false views of life, which are solely conditional.[33]

> *Modern society is based on a binary vision. It diverts itself from the basic teachings of religion, and it is built on the denial of transcendence. It is more focused on violence obsessed strategies for the hegemony. These strategies are often backed up by the sense of revenge, the fear of unknown, the feeling of superiority on the basis of race and color, and also, the devastating interpretation of scriptures by false clerics.*[34]

Religious fundamentalism plays a very important role in shaping US politics. It has deep roots in Christian fundamentalism, which has now become evident in the current political scenario that has given rise to white supremacy and racism in the US.[35] Donald Trump during his electoral campaign even raised the issue of racism, which became a captivating voting point for white Evangelicals and conservative Christians who rejected the fact of globalization. Hence, secular fundamentalism apprehended the rise of political liberalism and embraced a strictly literal understanding of religion as a foundation of mysticism in the social sphere.[36]

Assessment on US Fundamentalism

The power of citizens is evident from the broad direction of government policies rather than over a particular policy decision. Representative ways in which ordinary citizens have exerted influence are granting the voting right to women and abolition of slavery, etc. Influence by citizens has been achieved through their participation in political movements that contributed to changes in the US society. Citizens can also exert influence through public opinion polls; the latter shows the direction and the degree that citizen's opinions can influence public officials. To better understand this sort of influence, the US Social Security Program has such overwhelming public support that it is protected across the political spectrum from wholesale revision. Citizens' opinions admittedly drive issues, such as abortion, immigration, same-sex marriage, etc.

The power of ordinary citizens is less than the influence over a particular policy decision than of influence over the general direction of government policy. One example is political movements, such as civil rights and women's rights movements. These movements are not driven by elites or business lobbies but by ordinary people seeking a fair share. And, once they succeed, they bring about substantial changes in society and policy. Public opinion also affects policy, particularly, in those cases where it is intense and unmistakable as in support of social security. The power of people was also apparent when they handed Republicans a huge victory in 2010-midterm elections, thereby, ending Democrats' control of both the Presidency and Congress; a development that changed the national policy agenda. Citizens' power can also be seen in party realignments, which involve large and permanent changes in the party coalitions and platforms, as in the case of the New Deal realignment of the 1930s. It is the movement of voter support between the parties that fuels a realignment and it is the continuing attachment of these voters to the party of their choice that sustains a realignment. Another example of the power of people is constituency influence in Congress. Members of Congress are inordinately attentive to constituency opinion given the fact that they depend on their constituents for reelection.

Conclusion

Extremism does not belong to a religion. In fact, it is the use of religious misinterpretation for the gain of violent nationalist and religious agenda.[37] Religion has existed since the origin of humanity. However, the inception of religious fundamentalism is thought to be in the 1800s after the dawn of mass consciousness, therefore, religious fundamentalism is a modern phenomenon. Modernism and theology have a flawed relationship. The absolutists exhibit believes that are extremely rigid and unrelenting, and such beliefs have led to religious fundamentalism. The blanket understanding of secular fundamentalism paints a clear picture of religious fundamentalism. This wave of modern religious fundamentalism in politics is thought of being both shielded and impulsive in competing. With every passing year, it has been observed that religion is slip knot with the politics, however, extremism is more thriving in the secular states, such as India and the US.

The US Constitution mentions the separation of church and states explicitly, which makes the US a secular state. The 42nd Amendment of 1976-Act declared India as a secular state. The discussion about the relationship between religion and politics in these secular states has always been neglected since their inception. Massive right-wing extremist movements in the politics of these states have significantly influenced the political elites to make policy decisions based on religion. The manifestation of religious fundamentalism has finally appeared in the political domain explicitly with the rise of extreme right-wing political ideology succeeding in the electoral process; BJP winning in India and Republican Party with an extremely conservative ideology of Donald Trump, winning in the US. Consequently, these political dynamics have given rise to right-wing fundamentalism and open corridors to further discrimination of minorities.

Many incidents of such discrimination and violent acts towards minorities have been observed and some of which have been mentioned above. Open discrimination and violence against Muslims in India have been widely documented. One of such incidents in the recent recorded history was the cow slaughtering incident, in which a Muslim family was wrongfully accused over a rumor of slaughtering a cow and the family was beaten to death by a hate charged crowd. Many other incidents have been reported where destruction of places of worship and violence towards minorities have taken place in India without any consequence to the perpetrators. Furthermore, a similar situation exists in the US; in 2019, over 500 attacks on Muslims have been documented.[38]

It is a matter of a personal choice to believe in the divinity and true theological spirit. However, religious fundamentalism in the era of modernity lacks the public importance, hence, strictly adhering to the literal meaning which is often being fused with politics and self-interest of the leaders and philosophers. In the public sphere, logic prevails. On questions of morality and ethics, modern rationalism is handling the choices that deny the humanistic values and significance of moral values. It promotes the rise of religious fundamentalism which has also produced many clanks in the political discourse.

The crisis of the modern world and its manifestations have started to exist more in terms of religious fundamentalism and its interwoven association with politics has given birth to hatred towards the other communities (religious, national, and race), particularly, in the US and India. More importantly, it has a growing base of violence and rejection of humanistic values. It is crucial to appreciate the consequences of certain actions toward religious fundamentalism in the modern world. When religious fundamentalists feel threatened, they are more likely to go to extremes. There are many examples available in history as well as modernism where the religious fundamentalists have perpetuated fatal violence against minorities. Analytically, the crisis of modernity is a consequence of the systemic failure of government and authorities to ensure that true equality exists in all sectors of society. This contemporary system corrupted with the strict adherence to the fabricated religious interpretation; suits the ideologies and interests of elites.

First, the crisis of modernism is escalating due to the misemployment of religion in the social and political spheres. The influence of religion on politics in these secular states (India and USA) has led to the rise of extremism. Secondly, there is a clear homogenizing factor in the ideological power of religious nationalism, whose trajectory will apparently permit no particular culture or way life to hold any differentiation that goes deeper than the expression of public concern.

In order to stop the expansion of such extremist ideas and further worsening the human condition, there must be countermeasures in place to eliminate the thought process that is causing the eradication of humanistic values. First and foremost, the advent of social media in conjunction with traditional mass media is leading to doubt and uncertainty regarding the different others in the population across the world. In these times of information overload, it is hard to determine the authenticity of the

information being consumed and even harder to anticipate the consequences of such information or misinformation. Recent times are evidence enough that there is a massive amount of misinformation leading to a certain political ideology. Consequently, it has led to an extreme narrative towards minorities and other religious groups. These strategies have been widely successful for political elites in winning elections and furthering their political agenda. The media outlets work that spread such hate and misinformation continue to do so without any consequences. The responsibility of oversight of the media lies upon the governing body of that particular nation so that the right information is always divulged to the public. This would be the first step towards possible re-education of the masses which can potentially lead to minimizing extremist behavior and mentality.

Behavior modification techniques and in some cases psychological help is also imperative to course correction of the masses. A strong behavioral health program can establish and promote tolerating behavior among the masses. The lack of behavioral help is abundant at an international level, even in the first world countries that have all the resources and funding to provide such help. Throughout the centuries, psychological help has been neglected due to the fact that it portrays a certain stereotype of a weak individual and stigmatizes them as mentally incapable of flourishing in the community. There must be a push to normalize the acceptance of the need for psychological help in order to remove religious and cultural stereotypes that lead to extremist ideologies and hate crimes. Again, governing bodies of the nation must be heavily involved in the restructuring of the behavioral health program of the communities most vulnerable to such extremist behaviors.

Lastly, misguided and fabricated interpretations of religion are directly related to altered psychological health and growing intolerance among the masses. Media of all kinds has been implicated in promoting such miseducation and consequently, leading to extreme behaviors in vulnerable international society. The role of religious leaders in all communities is extremely important to counter such miseducation. It is the role of the governing bodies to establish religious studies guidelines that must be followed by all religious educators so that the miseducation and utilization of religion for political gain can be minimized or eventually, eradicated completely.

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INDIA'S NAVAL EXPANSION AND STRATEGIC PARTNERSHIP WITH THE US IN THE INDIAN OCEAN REGION: IMPLICATIONS FOR PAKISTAN

Maira Afzazze Saeed and Umbreen Javaid [*]

Abstract

India views the Indian Ocean as an embodiment of its strategic presence in the region. India has realized the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean since its independence and is keenly interested in maintaining sustainable maritime operations. This strategic importance of the Indian Ocean has diversified India's national security objectives intertwined with its national interests. On top of that, the US has strengthened its relations with India in the last two decades; as a result, the Indo-US partnership is deemed to help India in becoming a pre-eminent maritime power in the Indian Ocean region. This has expanded India's role as a net security provider in the Indian Ocean region. In this sense, Indo-US. strategic cooperation and bilateral agreements have granted the former an exceptional strategic role in the latter's strategic calculus and security interests in the Indian Ocean region. Moreover, the US strongly supports India's military rise in the India Ocean region as a rightful Chinese competitor. China is not ready to accept the Indian naval exceptionalism. In response to Indian engagement in the Indo-Pacific region, China is increasing its naval presence in the Indian Ocean region. This paper attempts to explore linkages between India's naval rise in the Indian Ocean region due to Indo-US strategic partnership. Both powers have made a strategic handshake to contain rising China. In addition, the paper also explores the implications of India's naval ambitions in the Indian Ocean region and its implications for strategic stability and Pakistan.

Keywords: Indian Ocean, Navy, Indo-US Strategic Partnership, Pakistan, Net Security Provider.

Introduction

In pursuit of acquiring great power status, India is committed to transforming its navy into a 'blue-water navy' with advanced platforms that could protect India's key national interests in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). In order to perform a wide range of naval operations, including naval diplomacy and exercising the Assured Second-Strike Capability (ASSC), India's navy aspires to acquire a range of conventional and nuclear capabilities. These modernization plans indicate that the prevailing conventional asymmetries among the regional navies are likely to grow, thus, resulting in a strategic imbalance in IOR, accelerating a shift in the existing balance of power in India's favor. Furthermore, as India aggressively operationalizes these capabilities, the

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potential naval skirmishes are likely to entail instability increasing the chance of escalation between rival states in the region.

India views the Indian Ocean as an embodiment of its strategic presence in the region. India has realized the strategic importance of the Indian Ocean since its independence and wants to create its dominance in the region. India's naval ambitions compelled it to create hegemony in IOR. In fact, India's naval modernization and its expanding strategic interests in the Indian Ocean have made it a pre-eminent maritime power. India is keenly interested in maintaining sustainable maritime operations to protect its national interests in IOR.[1] Interestingly, the Indo-US partnership has helped India to become a pre-eminent maritime power in the region. The convergence in Indian and US interests is likely to stir an environment of competition in the region as China is also looking to increase its presence, in response. The foremost factors behind China's rationale to increase its presence are its connectivity, road routes, and the dilemma of Straits of Malacca.[2]

In recent years, the Indo-US strategic partnership has expanded. The "strategic handshake" between two powers is primarily to contain China and encourage India to act as a counter-weight to China. The US interests are now aligned with India's interests and so far, the convergence of interests has resulted in a "technological handshake."[3] The cooperation is to meet the mutual security challenges to both countries in IOR and South Asia overall. However, these developments and cooperation carry strong repercussions for other players of the region, specifically, Pakistan.[4]

This study is based on deductive reasoning applying a top to bottom approach. It adopts the exploratory model of reasoning by utilizing sampling of existing literature on the subject. Furthermore, this paper attempts to trace linkages between India's aggressive posture in IOR and the effects of Indo-US partnership in asserting India's hegemony in the region. The paper also maps the history of Indo-US strategic cooperation under Obama and Trump administrations which has helped India to augment its naval muscles in IOR specifically and in general, encapsulates its expansion in strategic cooperation. Moreover, after mapping the cooperative arrangements between India and the US, this paper outlines the implications of this strategic cooperation for Pakistan that calls for a check on a destabilizing strategic equation in IOR.

India's Maritime Strategy

To begin with, the Indian maritime strategy document titled 'Ensuring Secure Seas: Indian Maritime Security Strategy' has laid the broader aims and objectives of its exploration of blue waters. The strategy document broadly identifies that India's maritime ambitions pivot around its vital geostrategic location and the evolution in Indian civilization as cosmopolitan.[5] In addition, India's maritime expansion is in view of the Indian Ocean environment which is linked with her economic, military, and technological growth. Moreover, the environment also allows India to rationalize its

interactions with its allies and partners in the Indian Ocean to widen her national security imperatives and political interests stretched gradually beyond IOR.[6]

Indian maritime strategy is designed in line with its aspirations to enhance its stature in the comity of nations. In order to sustain the economic growth, to address the perceived security-related challenges, and to acquire great power status, India accords great importance to IOR. The primary tools to achieve these objectives are diplomacy, enhanced trade, and establishing strong strategic relationships. Indian Navy is expected to perform all of these functions ranging from war preparedness to naval diplomacy, particularly, during peacetime. By acquiring 'blue water' capabilities, Indian Navy aspires to undertake its traditional role, like ensuring the coastal defense of the country, providing sea-based nuclear deterrence (entailing its assured second-strike capability), projecting nation's soft power beyond its shores, and maximizing the sphere of influence in the region.[7]

Various natural factors put India in an advantageous position to exploit its significant geostrategic importance. Being located between the Middle East, Central Asia, and Southeast Asia, India has the ability to exert influence in all these regions. As Indian peninsula penetrates deep into the ocean, it gives India opportunity to be undisputed master of Arabian Sea and the Bay of Bengal. India also possesses a huge network of ports, comprising of 12 major and 187 minor ports, which handle almost 90 percent of its foreign trade carried out through sea. Furthermore, the large coastline of 7,516.6km also prevents it from potential commercial crises in the event of natural calamity.[8] To exploit these factors, the Indian government has become increasingly passionate about enhancing country's naval capabilities.[9] Reportedly, it aims to become 200-ship navy in the next decade. In the defence budget for the year 2015-16, 16% share has been allocated to Navy.[10] All these factors, in combination with well-planned maritime strategy, pave the way for Indian ingress into IOR and achieving its hegemonic designs in the region.[11]

Motivating Factors behind Naval Modernization

The study of principles mentioned in different official documents reflect that the efforts behind Indian naval modernization plans are driven by multiple factors that shape navy's perceived role during war and peace. Indian aspiration to enhance the reach of its navy is the primary driving factor behind naval modernization. Maritime Strategy document (2007) highlights the primary and secondary areas of interest extending to South China Sea and East Pacific Region, which hold significant importance for India's "Act East" policy.[12] This policy is a diplomatic initiative to promote economic, strategic and cultural relations with the vast Asia-Pacific region at different levels.[13] To exert greater sea-control and deny China of its increased influence in this area, India is likely to assertively use its nuclear attack submarines and aircraft carriers.[14]

From India's view point, the two potential nuclear adversaries in immediate neighborhood, specifically, Pakistan's allegedly non-adherence to "No First Use" (NFU)

posture and unclear nuclear threshold greatly alarm India. This calls for the development of a sea-based ASSC.[15] Furthermore, in the contemporary world, where only a handful of navies possess blue water capabilities, the advanced naval fleet equipped with sophisticated technologies is generally regarded as a symbol of national prestige. It is not surprising to note that Indian naval officials consider these developments to be an expression of national esteem and power. India has justified its naval nuclear modernization for an assured second-strike capability.[16] The INS Arihant submarine can be equipped with up to twelve K-15 Submarine Launched Ballistic Missiles (SLBMs). India has developed other variants of its SLMBs including K-5 and K-6 with extended ranges. India has also developed sea-based version of its Nirbhay cruise missile and is inducting Dhanush missile. Likewise, INS Arihant has also conducted deterrence patrolling and after the Pulwama fiasco in 2019, India had deployed its nuclear submarines. All these latest developments signify Indian efforts to develop its ASSC based on its naval nuclear capabilities.[17]

India as a Major Defence Partner of US in IOR

In the wake of the abrupt economic and military rise of China, the US perceives India as a major ally in the region and strongly supports its maritime expansion. The US and India share common interests in IOR. Both states recognize the strategic importance of IOR as it has played a significant role.

> *The Indian Ocean Region is at the nexus of global trade and commerce, with nearly half of the world's 90,000 commercial vessels and two-thirds of global oil trade traveling through its sea lanes. The region boasts some of the fastest-growing economies on Earth and is home to a quarter of the world's population. While the region offers unprecedented opportunities, it is also confronting a myriad of security challenges, including terrorism, transnational crime, trafficking-in-persons, and illicit drugs. To combat these challenges, the US seeks opportunities to broaden and strengthen partnerships with India, Sri Lanka, the Maldives, Bangladesh, and Nepal to respond to shared regional challenges.[18]*

US interests in IOR are indicative of the fact that it wants to contain China by providing technological, military, and economic support to India in the region. India and the US share a wide spectrum of mutual interests in the Indian Ocean that pulls them together to establish closer ties.[19] Though the two states usually emphasize more upon transnational challenges, such as piracy and extremism; however, the China factor seems to be the most dominating of all these reasons prompting enhanced bilateral cooperation. Considering India as a rightful competitor with China, the US strongly supports India's military rise in the Indian Ocean.[20] However, during the 1980s, the US was primarily concerned with the Soviet Union rather than China. Therefore, China remained a secondary priority.

Indian experts argue that defense partnership between the two countries has now become indispensable. The foundation stone of Indo-US strategic partnership was laid during Bush's era and the partnership dates back to Clinton administration but it got pace when the US agreed to transfer nuclear technology to India in 2005.[21] This

partnership was further bolstered during the President Obama administration. The partnership achieved major goals accomplished through the strategic and technological handshake between the US and India. Indo-US defense trade has reached $ 18 billion from $ 1 billion as it blossomed during President Obama's reign.[22] Both countries launched the Defence Technology and Trade Initiative (DTTI) in 2012. Seven joint working groups were established under DTTI to explore projects and programs to increase collaborative work. Likewise, both countries also signed two science and technology project agreements worth $ 2 billion.[23]

In June 2016, the US designated India as a "Major Defence Partner." The status is unique to India as it attempts to "elevate the US defense partnership with India to a level commensurate with that of the US closet allies and partners."[24] The status was given in the backdrop of framework signed by then US Secretary Ash Carter and former Indian Defence Minister Manohar Parrikar for US-India defense relationship in June 2015. India and the US agreed to sign the Logistic Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA) in 2016. Under LEMOA, both countries agreed to conduct close military operations. The agreement will give access to both countries "to designated facilities on either side for refueling and replenishment" including "port calls, joint exercises, training, and humanitarian assistance, and disaster relief.[25] The convergence of interests under President Obama and Prime Minister Modi was the trilateral MALABAR naval exercise in the Bay of Bengal in 2015. Previously in 2007, China lodged its protest against the multilateral naval exercises in the region, but PM Modi went ahead with the inclusion of Japan. The naval exercise was aimed to enhance cooperation at the multilateral level while India steered the whole exercise.[26]

Under the current administration of President Trump, the defense ties with India are exponentially growing. Both countries are on a path to solidify their defense partnership which has not been witnessed in previous administrations. To bolster their defense ties both countries have agreed to conduct land, sea, and air exercises.[27] However, it is noticeable that Trump administration is on following the policies adopted during President Bush and Obama's tenures. Both presidents "aspired to move closer to India strategically and succeeded measurably in areas like arms sales."[28] All these efforts by previous administrations have yielded a surge of US export of arms to India. The arms sale has increased by up to 557%, between 2013 to 2017.[29] In fact, "American arms sales to India currently stand around $18 billion and could climb after the approval of a deal to allow India to buy $1 billion worth of naval guns and ammunition,"[30] according to the New York Times citing Stockholm International Peace Research Institute.

The US House of Representatives passed a $621.5 billion defense expenditure bill, in July 2018, that proposes to advance defense cooperation with India. The India-related amendment to the National Defense Authorization Act-2018 (NDAA) passed by the House requires the Secretary of Defense in consultation with the Secretary of State to develop a strategy for advancing defense cooperation between the US and India. NDAA passed by the Senate. President Trump's administration has granted a special status to India tagged as Strategic Trade Authorization (STA-1) status in July 2018. The

status has been previously granted only to NATO allies including Japan, South Korea, and Australia. The status permits India to import hi-tech defense products from the US. These items would help India in bolstering its defense (and offense) against its arch-rivals, Pakistan and China. The hi-tech items will be exported to India without a transaction-specific license. The special status will speed up India's purchase of defense technologies and ready-made products from US defense companies.[31]

The first-ever 2+2 dialogue is the hallmark of Trump administration's strategic relations with India. The dialogue is an attempt to elevate both countries' strategic partnership. The joint statement released after the dialogue stated that:

> *The two sides further decided to establish secure communication between the Minister of External Affairs of India and the US Secretary of States and between the Minister of Defense of India and the US Secretary of Defense. Both countries mutually agreed upon steps to strengthen defense ties further and promote better defense and security coordination and cooperation.*[32]

The 2+2 dialogue process was held in September 2018 and it yielded two prominent agreements including the Communication Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA) and the Basic Exchange and Cooperation Agreement for Geo-Spatial Cooperation (BECA). On top of that, the dialogue process further solidifies the Indo-US defense cooperation in the Indian Ocean and both agreed to start exchanges between the Indian Navy and US Naval Forces Central Command (NAVCENT). This will gel and foster Indo-US maritime cooperation in the western Indian Ocean. COMCASA will help India to import hi-tech defense products from the US, which will help its land, sea, and air forces. The import of hi-tech defense technologies from the US and access to defense communication network will ensure the interoperability among the US and Indian military. Likewise, BECA will allow India to get geospatial information from the US for civil and military purposes.

A new draft bill was presented in the US House of Representatives on April 8, 2019. The proponent is Joe Wilson, a senior member of the US Committee on Foreign Affairs. The co-sponsors of the bill are three Democrats (Brad Sherman, Tulsi Gabbard, and Ami Bera) and two Republicans (George Holding and Ted Yoho). Mr. Bera and Ms. Gabbard both are Indian Americans. Whereas, Mr. Sherman, Ms. Gabbard, Mr. Yoho, and Mr. Holding are the co-chairs of the Indian caucus.[33] The bill is aimed at accelerating Indo-US strategic and defense cooperation and to overcome the obstacles in strengthening the partnership. The proposed bill suggests that India's status as a major defense partner has been recognized and reiterated. The content of the bill further stresses US commitments to work closely with India on the front of bilateral defense trade. This will allow India to transfer technology from the US on a fast track. This bill permits India to get license-free access to a variety of dual-use high-end technologies which will help it to support and strengthen its forces. This proposed bill suggests US firm resolve to act as a counterweight to the Chinese rise in IOR, Asia Pacific region, and South Asia. The bill seeks to consider this a US policy to approve and facilitate the transfer of advanced technology and strategic capability – consistent with

US conventional arms transfer policy – to support combined military and non-military missions with India. Further, the bill recommends that the US should continue to enhance defense and security cooperation with India in order to advance US interests in South Asia and greater Indo-Asia-Pacific regions.[34]

This proposed bill is the embodiment of 2+2 dialogue in which both sides agreed to communicate at secretary levels. It suggests that the Indian Minister of Defense and US Secretary of Defense will conduct a joint assessment of India's defense requirements "to support and carry out military operations of mutual interest for the US and India."[35] The joint assessment will help ease the defense export control regulations and policies to facilitate India to get hi-tech defense products and capabilities and also to maintain and solidify its status as a major defense partner. As per the amendment in the US Arms Export Control Act, the US can export arms to India in a similar way as it exports toward NATO, Japan, South Korea, Australia, Israel, and New Zealand. The bill also proposes the adoption of a reporting mechanism for assessing the progress over the above-mentioned bilateral agreements.

India's Diplomatic Initiatives in IOR

PM Modi government is proactively engaging with littoral states. It has coined a term for its Indian Ocean outreach initiative, "Security and Growth for All in the Region" (SAGAR).[36] This helps India to actively engage with like-minded states in the region and to counter China's increasing ties with littoral states. Modi government is particularly focusing on deepening maritime cooperation with Seychelles, Mauritius, and Sri Lanka. The establishment of surveillance radars, delivery of patrol vessels and aircraft, and agreements on infrastructure and investment development are few examples in this regard, not to mention India's active engagement in the Indian Ocean Region Association (IORA) and Indian Ocean Naval Symposium. Furthermore, the grant of $ 100 million to Vietnam for the acquisition of Indian naval ships and its strategic cooperation with Japan including the joint naval exercises reflect India's growing ties in the Pacific.[37]

India's Naval Build-up

The Indian modernization and procurement of ships have been characterized by indigenous shipbuilding efforts at the levels of government, private and joint ventures.[38] The Indian shipbuilding industry has progressed at an accelerated rate in recent years and has been able to design and produce varied and complex designs ranging from Corvettes, Submarines, and even Catamarans. India is producing surface combat vessels with advanced structural and capability designs that will allow it to project its military might far away from its shores.[39]

Currently, India is operating one nuclear powered Akula submarine (a series of nuclear-powered attack submarine – SNN) leased from Russia. The type was commissioned in the Indian navy in 2012 as INS Chakra. Talks are underway to lease another Akula-class submarine.[40] In 2015, Indian authorities sanctioned a project to

indigenously build nuclear-powered attack submarines.[41] The conventional submarines of the Indian navy are numbered at 14 hulls. 10 are the Russian (Soviet) Kilo-class submarines while the other 4 are German designed Type-209 submarines modified to fulfill the Indian navy's requirements. Future Indian diesel-electric submarine fleet will be comprised of French Scorpène-class submarines being built locally in India. These are scheduled to incorporate an Indian designed AIP system and will be armed with Exocet, anti-ship missiles. The hulls of the first six boats have been completed and all are expected to be enter service by 2020.[42]

The Kolkata-class destroyers with stealth features are being built by Mazagon Dock Limited. The ship will carry BrahMos cruise missiles as offensive armament and employs Barak-1 and Barak-8 in short and medium-range anti-aircraft missiles. The Kamorta-class is designed as a dedicated anti-submarine vessel and with a hull and superstructure that reduces its cross-section. Four ships of the type are planned with three have been inducted.[43] The Indian navy has concluded a contract with South Korean Kangnam Corporation for the supply of eight minesweeper or countermine ships. These ships will play a pivotal role in safeguarding India's sea lines of communication as well as protecting its commercial and naval assets.[44] India, currently, operates two conventionally powered aircraft carriers, INS Vikramaditya and INS Viraat. INS Viraat carries the older Harrier jump-jets while Vikramaditya's air wing is equipped with MiG29Ks. Two aircraft carrier designs have been developed indigenously; the Vikraant class is conventionally powered and is currently under construction. The upcoming INS Vishal is a proposed nuclear-powered carrier.[45]

The joint development of Barak-8 with Israel gives the Indian navy the ability to shoot down not only aircraft and cruise missiles but also a defensive capability against Ballistic missiles. The Barak-8 is a highly maneuverable, solid-fueled, an active homing missile with a reported range of up to 70kms. The GSAT-7 satellite allows the Indian navy to coordinate operations in an area of 1000 square km. The space platform can also communicate with strategic submarines for passing on orders and information through the use of multiband transponders. This gives it the ability to achieve link up with submarines operating at various depths. The Indian navy also has an extremely Low-Frequency transmission facility at Kattabomman Island. The Indian navy is also planning to build a naval base at the Assumption Island in Seychelles. This will give India the ability to station naval assets well away from the reach of its regional enemies, such as China and Pakistan.[46]

Implications for Strategic Stability of the Region

The combined pressure emanating from the Indian conventional and unconventional build-up will result in strategic instability in the region. Pakistan, in particular, would be much vulnerable due to the conventional superiority of the Indian navy as the asymmetries grow in the coming years. Pakistan has already established the Naval Strategic Force Command, although it currently does not possess any platforms or delivery measures.[47] Sea-based deterrence complements deterrence stability only if both nuclear adversaries possess assured second-strike capability and the robust

institutions to actualize that capability. If either of the states involved, i.e., India outweighs the other in any of these aspects, it results in strategic imbalance leading to instability. The Indian induction of SLBMs has added another factor that acts to undermine the fragile strategic stability between India and Pakistan as it negates Indian "minimalistic posture" as SLBMs carried by the four planned SSBMs warrant a few dozen warheads of varying yield.[48] The Indian nuclear fissile material stock of highly enriched Uranium has been earmarked for naval propulsion plans and is one of the reasons why Pakistan continues to oppose the talks on the Fissile Material Cut-Off Treaty (FMCT).[49]

The Indian investment in Helicopter Landing Decks along with air support from aircraft carriers will give India the ability to open another front in case of any future conflict, i.e., by invading the coastal areas of Pakistan and thus, lowering the threshold. China also perceives the Indian naval strategy as threatening to its vital sea trade routes via the Malacca Strait and this can be one of the reasons why the former is investing heavily in the One Belt One Road initiative across Asia. The Indian navy's capabilities allow it to disrupt the shipping lines passing through the Strait of Malacca from where China imports 80% of its oil. The Gwadar seaport will play a crucial part in securing the energy lifeline of China through the CPEC project.[50] The preceding discussion reveals that the Indian navy is seen as a stabilizing factor in the region by the US and its western and Asian allies. Stability is a relative term, the interests of a state dictate the definition of stability and thus, varies accordingly. From the regional states' point of view, India's assertive naval posture is destabilizing the whole region.

Implications for Pakistan

- **India as Net Security Provider:** The US is seen to have franchised its role to India in the so-called Indo-Pacific region. India has also taken up the western narrative of it being seen as a Net Security Provider in the region. This may be because the US has a limited capability to engage at multiple fronts simultaneously. Such designations for India, however, continue to fuel its sense of grandiose which subsequently emboldens it to pursue strategies of belligerence towards its neighbors, especially, Pakistan.

- **Strategic Export Controls Waiver:** The export control wavier granted to India has brought both countries, India and the US close to each other. This will help India to uplift its domestic defense industries to realize the 'Make in India' dream of its leadership. This will significantly impact the already existing asymmetries between India and its regional arch-rival Pakistan. India is developing a two-layered ballistic missile defense and it required the latest technology to improve the propulsion technology of its interceptor missiles. STA-1 will help India to improve the propulsion of its ballistic, cruise, and submarine-launched ballistic missiles (SLBMs). India is actively pursuing an ASSC. In case it achieves an ASSC, as it has numerously tested nuclear-capable SLBMs, then it will be a pre-eminent naval

force in IOR with nuclear weapons in its armament. STA-1 is a dangerous development as far as Pakistan is concerned. It is a fact that most of the Indian naval developments in the Indian Ocean are Pakistan-centric. STA-1 status will help India to purchase and transfer technology from the West in order to completely neutralize Pakistan and counter Chinese ingress in the Indian Ocean.

- **Cooperation in Missile Defense:** US cooperation with India in missile defense is not new. The US has helped India in developing its space launch vehicles in the 1960s when US scientists helped Indian scientists in building a rocket propulsion system. [51] The Trump administration's 2019-Missile Defence Review has summarized the objectives of Indo-US missile defense cooperation as "the threats posed by offensive missile capabilities are no longer limited to a few regions around the world. There are now a number of states in South Asia that are developing an advanced and diverse range of ballistic and cruise missile capabilities. Within this context, the US has discussed potential missile defense cooperation with India. This is a natural outgrowth of India's status as a Major Defense Partner and a key element of US Indo-Pacific Strategy."[52]

The Missile Defence Review document did not explicitly mention Pakistan as a threat to India. However, it did not exclude it as the only missile capability possessor in South Asia. It is a fact that both countries are involved in a missile arms race. The emphasis of the Trump administration to discuss potential missile defense cooperation with India to counter missile threats emanating from hostile states is indicative of the fact that the US may help India in countering Pakistan's missiles.

Possible Outcomes of the Indo-US Cooperation Draft Bill

The objective of this bill is to essentially highlight the prospects of Indo-US defense cooperation. This bill is not crafted in isolation and it endorses the previous developments of STA-1 status to advance Indo-US defense cooperation under the National Defence Authorization Act (2018). This bill has reiterated US recognition of India as a major defense partner. This bill strengthens Indo-US relations at another level. It removes numerous legal and political barriers to advancing their future cooperation. Without Presidential consent, India can now acquire defense technology from the US. In the coming few years, Indian import of arms will likely double and such developments are unfavorable for the strategic stability of the South Asian region.

Status of Non-NATO Ally

The recently proposed bills drafted by US Congress representatives will further strengthen Indo-US defense collaboration and will eventually grant India the status of a Non-NATO ally. India has already been declared as Major Defence Partner of the US in South Asia and the so-called Indo-Pacific. This will enable India to foster its cooperation in missile defense with the US in South Asia.

Recommendations for Pakistan

Pakistan is thriving in a region where the interests of major powers converge as well as diverge. Pakistan is allied with China and has offered its deep seaport Gwadar as a gateway to the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). The project is envisioned to increase economic cooperation and infrastructure development in Pakistan. Likewise, it is a flagship project of the Belt-Road Initiative (BRI) to end China's Strait of Malacca dilemma. On top of that, China's BRI project was announced in response to the US Asia Rebalance Policy, which envisioned India as a strategic partner to contain the rise of China. Pakistan, undoubtedly, became a party to this geopolitical transformation in the region. Formulating recommendations for Pakistan while living and becoming part of this geopolitical transformation is not an easy job, however, in the backdrop of the findings of this research, some key recommendations are as follows:

- Pakistan's role in CPEC should be more proactive and it should open gates for neighboring countries to participate in the project. This will increase the stakeholders in the project further promoting economic integration and thus, reducing the chances of conflict in the region.
- In doing so, Pakistan should announce its foreign policy objectives to clarify its position on regional cooperation and to further avoid the chances of conflict in the region.
- Pakistan should engage with India in formulating a sea-based nuclear restraint regime by specifically focusing on the definition of the role of SLBMs in the Indian Ocean.
- Indian and Pakistan navies should develop a hotline to avoid sea-based conventional confrontation in peacetime.
- A quadrilateral working group at the ministerial level of India, Pakistan, China, and the US should be formed to discuss sea-based nuclear CBMs.

Conclusion

India's national security objectives are clear in the sense that it sees IOR as an extension of India. The rising Chinese ingress in IOR is posing considerable challenges to its dominance and hegemony in the ocean. China's Strait of Malacca dilemma has reinforced its regional connectivity plans with in-built challenging outcomes for India in IOR and South Asia. In response, the establishment of Indo-US defense cooperation is seemingly the only way for both countries to contain China. In doing so, the Indo-US defense cooperation has resulted in significant military uplift of Indian forces including its naval expansion in the Indian Ocean. India's naval expansion and modernization will greatly benefit from the Indo-US defense cooperation. India-US naval exercises are the first step towards creating a broader coalition and partnership in the Indian Ocean to counter China in particular and creating sustainable cooperation to give an uplift to India's defense industry in general. The Indo-US cooperation has posed a significant threat to strategic stability in IOR and South Asia by contributing to existing asymmetries. The growing equation of strategic partnership will embolden India to

pursue belligerent and aggressive strategies against its arch-rival, thereby, fueling a never-ending arms race in IOR, and yielding strategic asymmetries between the competing states. Pakistan is a key player in South Asia, however, the broader economic interests of the US are linked with India which are likely to further increase convergences between the two states and enhance their bilateral defense cooperation on a sustainable basis, thereby, further raising the stakes for Pakistan in IOR and a warning for ensuing strategic instability in the region.

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STRATEGIC CONVERGENCE AND COMPETITION IN THE INDO-PACIFIC REGION: POLICY OPTIONS FOR PAKISTAN

Khadija Younus[*]

Abstract

With Indo-Pacific being the stage for US-China strategic influence, South East Asia's geopolitical scenario is likely to be transformed considerably. By declaring India as a Net Security Provider, the US has backed its outreach in the region by officially adjoining Pacific and Indian Oceans as the Indo-Pacific region. Major countries of the region including China, Russia, India, and Pakistan are in the phase of diversifying and reconfiguring their relationships. Within this scenario, Pakistan and India are likely to pursue their strategic interests that take them in opposite directions. While the US endows India with its strategic partner status, CPEC in Pakistan has emerged as a litmus test for China's BRI. The contestation is to have a direct bearing on the strategic matrix of South Asia generally and Pakistan particularly. This qualitative research under the framework of realist/neo-realist and complex interdependence's assumptions undertakes to account for this Sino-US strategic convergence and competition that is leading to a security dilemma in South Asia with implications for Pakistan. It concludes cooperation between the US and China is to enhance Pakistan's security both internal and external while competition is to erode it. Alongside, this paper formulates some policy options for Pakistan's decisionmakers for ensuring the security and socio-economic development of the country.

Keywords: Indo-Pacific Region, Pivot to Asia, BRI, CPEC, Strategic Convergence.

Introduction

US naval officer and historian, Admiral Alfred Thayer Mahan, once said: "Whoever controls the Indian Ocean dominates Asia. This ocean is the key to the seven seas in the twenty-first century, the destiny of the world will be decided in these waters."[1] The Asia-Pacific or Indo-Pacific region (interchangeable terms) is increasingly becoming a focus of attention for competing interests of the US and China to gain strategic influence. This power quest is likely to transform the geopolitical scenario not only in the Asia-Pacific region but also in South Asia. The Indo-Pacific region signifies the importance of joining the US, India, and other major Asian states - Japan and Australia - to curb China's growing influence in this region, like the "Cold War". Competing interests of the US and China are likely to transform the strategic environs of the Indian Ocean and the Pacific Ocean and will have pronounced implications for South Asian.

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By declaring India as the Net Security Provider, the US has backed its strategic presence in the Indian Ocean as well as outreach to the Pacific Ocean, thus, officially declared both regions as the Indo-Pacific region. According to the US National Security Strategy-2017, the Indo-Pacific region is the center of geopolitical competition between free and repressive visions of the world. The US resurgence to the Indo-Pacific region aims at curbing China's continuous rise as an economic giant while placing India at the center of its policy besides acknowledging it as the leading power worthy of the US defense and security agreements. Thus, major countries of the region including China, Russia, India, and Pakistan are in the phase of diversifying and reconfiguring their relationships.[2] These changing geopolitical configurations are leading to the emergence of a new global order having a strategic shift of the US from 'Trans-Atlantic' to 'Trans-Pacific' politics. The Indo–Pacific region is, therefore, turned out to be a new global stage for geopolitical, economic, and military competition among great powers characterizing this 21st century as 'The Asian Century'.[3]

This qualitative method-based research attempts to examine major powers' quest for strategic and economic influence in the Indo-Pacific region vis-à-vis the US Pivot to Asia and China's Belt-Road Initiative (BRI). While India and Pakistan's placement is central, the alignment is to have a considerable impact on South Asian security calculus. Within this environment, what security issues Pakistan is likely to face alongside prioritizing its strategic interests in the midst of great powers' quests are to be examined. The hypothesis entails that US-China strategic competition in the Indo-Pacific region has a significant impact on Pakistan's security whereas a cooperative milieu is necessary to enhance its security and wellbeing. The theoretical assumptions of realism (neo-realism) and complex interdependence theories are helpful in examining the Sino-US relations at economic and strategic levels. The paper concludes by proposing policy options implying that the balancing of Pakistan's foreign policy choices is to be a logical and sensible course of action for the country's security and socio-economic development.

Background to US-China Strategic Competition

The rising geopolitical relations among great powers are based on the interests of acquiring economic might while being well aware of a gigantic shift in the 21st century characterized by geoeconomics. The notion of power has taken predominantly an economic dimension and is a potent driving force determining almost every move in domestic, political, and global spheres. Against this backdrop, US-China relations especially at the economic level have a potential bearing on the existing global order. Since the end of the Cold War, the US has enjoyed the only superpower status of the world. However, China's gradual ascendance as an economic power is likely to challenge the western liberal system. In this context, China is to be a true peer competitor for the US. The recent US strategy of making alliances with Asian powers is indicative of the offshore balancing strategy especially with India that manifested in the Asia-Pacific region and later in the Indian Ocean Region (IOR). It is considered to be the strategy aimed at containing China - a country on the course of integrating Asia, Africa, and Europe through mega-infrastructure and connectivity projects under its BRI.[4]

Counting on Asia-Pacific dividends, it a region that includes East Asian, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Oceania region. Its significance hinges at fast-paced East Asian economies, home to almost half of the world's population, one-third of the world's economy, an abundance of natural resources, growing financial markets, and international trade sea routes. Though the Asia-Pacific region has undergone a number of structural changes, like the US rebalancing rooted in Trans-Pacific Partnership (TTP) to prevent the Sino-centric regional order, from strengthening and related developments. Nevertheless, opportunities, such as human capital, natural resources, money markets and international sea-lines of communications for achieving development and growth, are far greater than any other regions of the world.[5]

This region has seen phenomenal growth in the regional economies, such as China, by expanding investment and trade markets and developing new maritime trade routes connecting the Pacific region with IOR especially through BRI. This development has challenged the US preponderance in the region and strengthened the perception that US supremacy has been dared by the economic growth of China and soon the latter is to overpower its neighbors economically and will eventually lead to stripping the US off its power as the sole superpower. Presently, both the US and China are seen to be contesting each other's influence and presence in IOR alongside the evolving strategic assertions for opposing interests. Both are equally involved via their respective visions— Pivot to Indo-Pacific and BRI—with relevant policies of convergence and competition. However, none of the two is vocal about pursuing policies of containment, balancing, or geopolitical underpinnings against each other.[6]

The Indo-Pacific region is the center of vital interest for Beijing and Washington for multiple benefits. The US is taking notice of ascendant China and has considered its strategic shift towards this region as a necessary component of US geostrategic strategy. The US "Pivot to Asia" was initiated to assure its partners and allies in the region that Washington had not faltered after participating in decades-long wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. Also, that it had not been crippled by economic and political nuisances at home and most importantly to tell the world that the country is not to isolate from world matters.[7]

Moreover, the US strategic outlook is a mix of diverse fundamental goals entailing to maximize its geopolitical and national interests. The same may be true for its Asia pivot initiative which, according to analysts, is infused with strategies countering rising China's economic power and accruing greater economic dividends amid deteriorating economic indicators at home. Furthermore, the US has also developed a sense of suspicion regarding China considering it to be a totalitarian political system, an extrovert military posture, besides ambitious future economic projections. Nevertheless, rising China especially under President Xi Jinping's leadership has shaped its Asia vision and balance of power vis-à-vis US-led liberal international order.[8] China is regarded as a potent threat to US interests in Asia by the conservatives and liberals alike. Least to say, liberals uphold a peaceful engagement and cooperation with China through trade, investment, and interdependence.[9] On the other hand, neo-realists believe in restricting the Chinese rise through pre-emptive maneuvering

characterized by diplomatic moves, alliances, and ultimately leading towards military confrontation.[10]

Theoretically, there has been a prevalence of different views vis-a-vis China's economic growth during the past two decades; first, the threat perception argues that China must have been modernizing its military, thereby, potentially challenge US predominance in the Asia-Pacific region.[11] The proponents of this view include Samuel Huntington,[12] Richard Bernstein, Ross H. Munro,[13] and John Mearsheimer,[14] who opine that the rate at which China is growing has all the potential to destabilize the present status quo not only in the Asian continent but the world. Hence, these scholars propose a strategy of containing China at the earliest and by employing all means at disposal. Second, the liberal view, which is upheld by Professor Aaron Friedberg,[15] Prof. G. John Ikenberry,[16] Baogang Guo and Sujian Guo.[17] They emphasize that incorporating China into the world system is the right course. They argue that the growth potential of China should not be perceived as a threat to global order rather an economically ascendant China would provide huge market opportunities to the world for consumption of its goods and unbound economic growth. They base their views on the notion that China is inherently and culturally non-expansionist; the present world of mutual interdependence will eventually increase China's prosperity and as a result, it will not undertake any move to disturb the present global status quo in military and economic domains; and since China's participation in international organizations has increased manifold that would also prevent it from disturbing the status quo in the international order. Hence, China's association and involvement in the international structures are likely to influence the country pursue and observe international mechanism and practices out if its own choice and own benefit.

An ascendant China may be a leading consideration for US foreign policy circles and their continuous efforts at devising ways and means to keep prolonging its 'Unipolar Moment'[18] in the world. However, they need to understand that China would never like to be the way the US had been in its past. Nonetheless, being skeptical of ascendant China, the US has resorted to a number of strategies pointing at containing the country, and the Pivot to Asia is yet another manifestation of its geopolitical ambitions. How far will the US be able to achieve its goals must be left to time but the consequences of a potential conflict between the two are bound to be huge. Within these changing geostrategic environs characterized by competition and cooperation assumptions of liberals and conservatives hold equal footing. Liberals under the influence of complex interdependence philosophy emphasize on a peaceful evolution by means of trade, interdependence, connectivity, and investment among countries who choose to be a part of BRI and the neorealists bloc (the US and allies) directs at retarding Chinese growth through pre-emptive measures of forming alliances in the Indo-pacific region especially with India and by building up the momentum for probable military confrontation. Having discussed the background to geopolitics in the Asia-Pacific region, the paper now attempts to highlight US Rebalancing or Pivot to Asia Strategy and China's BRI, being two competing and converging visions at play.

Pivot to Asia

The US rebalancing strategy in Asia is an amalgamation of gradually emerging different paradigms of US foreign policy taking lead from the country's defense perspective.[19] Mr. Andy Marshall being one of the prominent strategic thinkers in the US military propounded this strategy.[20] The post-Cold War era underlined the fast-paced changing economic dimensions of the world and its strategic repercussions on geopolitical scenario made the US policy circles' extremely conscious regarding the US' future supremacy vis-a-vis a question that what would be rising China mean for the world in general and the US in particular.

The Obama administration announced its 'Pivot to Asia' strategy in 2012 that marked a great tilt in US foreign policy's focus from the Middle East and European theatre to Asian countries, some of which are located in proximity to China. This strategy was regarded as a haughty one with the overt military, economic, cultural, and diplomatic dimensions focusing on consolidating US position in Asia. It is being materialized by means of new US defense deployments and rigorous diplomatic activities marking at leveraging US position through its maritime deployments in the Asia-Pacific region. This follow-up is actually based on establishing military balance in the region that will ultimately lead to US economic preponderance. In this regard, establishing a US base in Australia is, nonetheless, a symbolic move that is accompanied by an increase in US military deployments in the region as shown in Figure-1.

Figure-1: US Policy for Asia-Pacific Rebalancing


Source: http://www.koreaherald.com
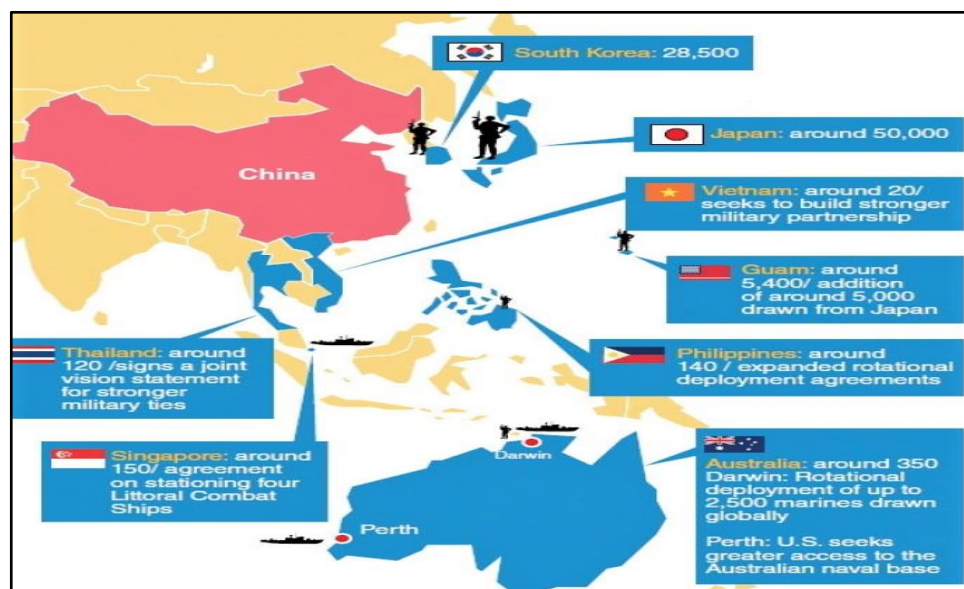
This increase in military footprint in combination with diplomatic outreach to almost all neighbors of China is seen in warming up of US-Vietnam relations.[21] In

addition, the US with its military, strategic, and economic tilt toward the Asia-Pacific region has increasingly become attentive to India that has far-reaching impacts on the strategic dynamics of South Asia. The US resurgence to Asia is perceived as the country's 'Containment policy of China'.[22] The US strategic thinkers believe that weak and divided China will not be a problem for US hegemony in Asia and this goal could be achieved by establishing close diplomatic, economic, and military ties with China's neighboring countries. However, several other political analysts view that US renewed interest in Asia is not a unique phenomenon. The reality of ascendant China with unbelievable pace as a global economic power is definitely a new turning in the world's strategic domain. Nevertheless, US-China economic dependence deserves due attention as economic indicators of the year-2019 amply display the US as the world's largest economy while China as the second-largest. China's economy is, in fact, bigger than the US in terms of its Gross Domestic Production (GDP) when it is measured in Purchasing Power Parity (PPP) – with the former at $19.617 trillion and the latter at $19.519 trillion as revealed by the statistics of World Bank's International Comparison Program.[23] Furthermore, China has been recorded as the second-largest foreign creditor nation to the US after Japan.[24] With economic dependence on each other for the past two decades, one may think that the US Pivot to Asia policy is not a new but an old one.

Figure-2: US-China Trade Relationship
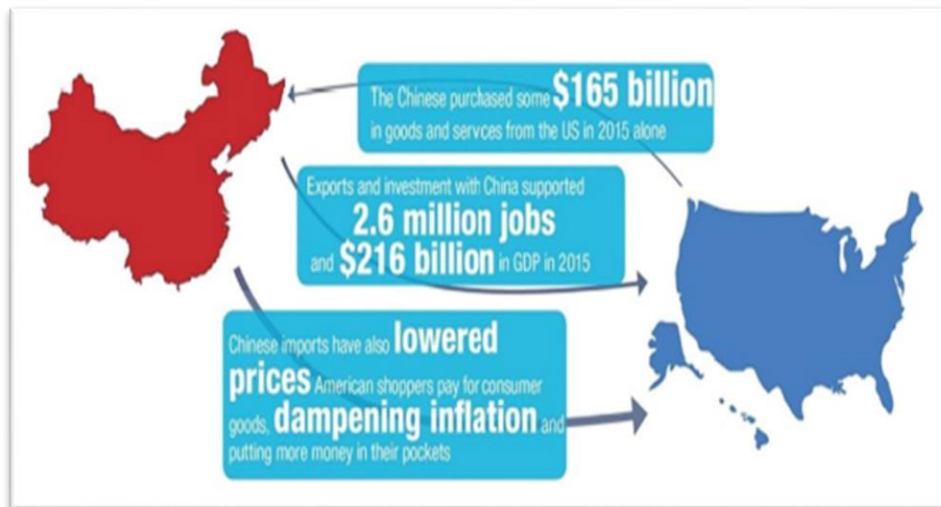
Source: The US-China Buiness Council[25]

Explaining the US Pivot to Asia strategy, former National Security Advisor, Tom Donilon, delineated, in 2013, what the US was actually trying to achieve in Asia through this strategy.[26] US foreign policy outlines the course of action by means of creating a steady security milieu characterized by a regional hierarchy steeped in economic freedom, peaceful conflict resolution mechanisms, and honoring universal rights and liberty. These goals are to be realized via taking action in consolidating alliances, strengthening partnerships with rising powers, restructuring a constructive, productive, and stable connection with China, firming up of regional organizations, and

constructing a regional economic structure.[27] Also, the former US Deputy Assistant of Secretary of East Asian and Pacific Affairs of the State Department, Joseph Y. Yun, reasserted these objectives once again in 2013 when he mentioned that US commitment to the Asia-Pacific region was enacted through multiple ways including extensive engagement of the country at every level deemed appropriate.

Meanwhile, stationing 2500 US marines at Australian base Darwin in 2011 as part of the Obama Administration's Pivot to Asia strategy has further solidified under Trump administration. Australia will continue hosting US troops until 2040.[28] Figure-3 shows the architecture of the US and China naval bases in the Pacific Ocean.

Figure-3: Naval Bases of the US and China in Pacific Ocean

Source: http://www.economist.com[29]

This development raised alarm bells in China[30] despite the fact that US-China economic reality is a matter of broad integration and interdependence. However, the former's resurgence to Asia has raised a number of questions at its inherent spirit. This kind of competition and cooperation simultaneously is very much unlike the Cold War where the two opposing sides were separated along the 'Iron Curtain' as Communist and anti-Communist blocs. The present geopolitical realities colored by geoeconomics render any policy impotence where military and political strategy is devised in isolation from the economic policy.[31] The question arises that what has compelled the US to rebalance Asia. The answer lies in the future prospects of Asia that are all about its burgeoning economy, demographic trends, natural resources, and sea lines of communication that are set to make Asian economies larger than the rest of the world collectively in 2020. Hence, the strategic power shift is visible from the West to the East and the US aims to get the lion's share from the abundant resources and wealth of Asia.

For that end, the US off-shore balancing is at play and is being strengthened via multiple hedging policies in military, economic, and strategic domains.

Practicing two contradictory policy directions is not abnormal in international relations wherein states' national interests reign supreme over all other considerations. The US pursuance of balancing and engagement strategies through forums, such as the Quadrilateral Security Dialogue (Quad) – the US, Japan, Australia, and India – for keeping a check on China's increased military and economic power beside considerable trade activities are important to note. It is said that the US is not containing China rather it is hedging its bets.[32] Notwithstanding all these patterns of containment, alignment, and readjustment, US–China economic datasheet represents a reality of integration. It would be difficult to imagine both economies existing without each other. This interconnectivity between the two is evident from Chinese debt assets in manufacturing and trade and many such similar areas. The US-China economic relationship is colored more with cooperation rather than competition. Then, how could a geopolitical military strategy be detached from economic considerations? In this context, the US' resurgence to Asia is nothing new rather a policy to get the lion's share from the continent's colossal economic dividends.

Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

China's prospective-economic might was predicted by David Shambaugh in 1993 when he predicted that China possessed the capability of surpassing the US and EU in economic growth in the 21st century.[33] The same sentiment was expressed by Fareed Zakaria in the cover story of his Newsweek article titled "The Rise of a Fierce Yet Fragile Superpower." He postulated that China as a global power has not remained a mere prediction rather a reality.[34] Hence, China, a global economic giant, has shown its outreach to the world in a massive way through its BRI projects that President Xi Jinping unveiled in 2013.[35] China's BRI is an aspiring strategy purpose to connect Asia, Africa, and Europe through land and maritime networks comprising six corridors with the sole purpose of augmenting regional integration with an increased trade and businesses resulting in rising economic growth. Its six corridors involve over 100 countries and global organizations, encompassing 116 projects worth about $1 trillion. It will benefit two-third of the world's population, one-third of world's GDP, and one-fourth goods and services of the world.[36]

BRI's two main components include the overland Silk Road Economic Belt and the Sea-based 21st century Maritime Silk Road (MSR). Together, they make up the belt and road connected with one another. This project promises unprecedented geographical and financial opportunity by imaging a $1.3 trillion through Chinese-led investment plans that would create a strongly interwoven web of infrastructure of roads, highways, railways, energy pipelines, and telecommunications. The Silk Road Economic Belt will include high speed rail along with hydrocarbon pipeline systems.[37] This initiative is about improving physical land infrastructure with its six land corridors that are equivalent to the old Silk Road. These infrastructure corridors are encompassing almost 100 countries altogether with nearly 60 countries in Asia and

Europe including Oceania and Africa as well.[38] All the BRI projects receive financial support from the Chinese Silk Road Fund and the Asian Infrastructure Investment Bank (AIIB).[39]

Figure-4: Belt and Road Initiative (BRI)

Source: https://www.mekongeye.com[40]

The immense importance of the Eurasian region in this schema of connectivity may be gauged by the geopolitical theories of political philosophers, Mackinder, Spykman, and Mahan. "The Heartland Theory" given by Mackinder propounds that the core of global influence lies in the heartland of the world, i.e., Eurasia, due to its size, affluence of resources, and population, whichever nation is in control of the heartland has the potential to command the world.[41]

'The Rimland Theory' given by Nicholas John Spykman views that whoever controls the thickly populated western, southern, and eastern parts of the Eurasian continent will be the ruler of the world.[42] Similarly, US naval strategist, Alfred Thayer Mahan believes that national greatness owes inextricably to sea power particularly to its commercial use in peace and control in war. A nation possessing control over seas is bound to rule the world.[43] Hence, BRI is a skillful move that seeks dominance in the heartland and sea that is likely to wean Europe away from the US and transforming and connecting regions via BRI with the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) as its lynchpin.[44] CPEC is to grant China direct access to the Indian Ocean. Through Gwadar seaport, China will accrue greater dividends via connectivity with the Suez Canal. Thus, there is rivalry in IOR by means of 'String of Pearls Policy' by China in competition with 'Necklace of Diamonds Policy' by India; hence, a battle for seaports are ensuing in IOR with India having 9 ports and China with 13.[45]

Figure-5: Chinese Ports in the Indian Ocean Region

The change of magnitude in geopolitics, according to Kurt Lewin Model, will invite competition between enabling forces and constraining ones. While enabling forces to let the change take place, on the other hand, constraining forces try to retard it.[47] Hence, such a change is not uncontested as both constraining and enabling forces are at play. The US resurgence to Asia is the realization that "the future of politics will be decided in Asia, not Afghanistan or Iraq, and the US will be right there at the center of the action."[48] Ascendant China is very much in the view of US policymakers, therefore, criticism on BRI is branded as 'Debt–Trap Policy'[49] and China being a 'Revisionist Power'[50] is challenging current geoeconomics strategies of the US.

Marshall Plan vs. Belt and Road Initiative

Several political analysts are labeling BRI as China's 'Marshall Plan'. This comparison draws on geopolitical similarities existing in both initiatives having a significant bearing on the international order. The way the Soviet Union and Communism were targeted by the Marshall Plan given Communist philosophy's rise in Europe and undermining Soviet Union's moral superiority for its sophisticated armaments and machines that had led to the Allies' success in WW- II, in the same way, BRI envisions strategic ends via making inroads into US area of influence by offering infrastructural aids to Asia-Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) countries to draw their support for proposed Regional Comprehensive Economic Partnership (RCEP). The way Marshall Plan offered aid to Soviet-controlled satellite states to wean them away from the rival's camp; BRI does the same though with greater difficulty since the contemporary world order has entrenched most countries into the global capitalist system. That's why BRI got its early diplomatic success in the Central Asian region as those countries were less involved in the US-led economic structure. No doubt BRI does offer a systematic alternative of economic and financial vision against the US economic

superstructure and seeks greater strategic goals and influence across the globe.[51] Table-1 sums up a comparison between the two.

Table-1: Comparison between Marshall Plan and BRI

US-led Marshall Plan	China-led BRI
Increased exports by exporting excessive industrial produce after WW-II in the face of lowering military demands	Industrial excessive produce post-2008-09 world financial crisis and devised its economic stimulus program in the face of declining western consumption of products
Replaced British Pound Sterling by exporting its currency (US Dollar)	Undertaking internationalization of Chinese currency Renminbi (RMB) as yet inconvertible, and closed currency
Countered the rival Soviet Union by hedging to hinder its growing influence in Europe	Hedging US control over essential trade routes used for energy supplies in the region
Fostered strategic divide; ensured geopolitically important countries such as Germany not to be under Soviet influence	Dividing existing organizations, such as Asia Pacific Economic Cooperation (APEC) by providing member states with infrastructure investments
Drew off diplomatic support from Soviet satellite states but offered them aid (Yugoslavia case in point)	AIIB involves EU members and central European countries

Source: Author's Compilation based on Comparative Study of BRI and Marshall Plan[52]

Convergence and Competition: An Analysis

President Trump's National Defence Strategy announced in 2018, termed the interstate competition and not terrorism as the primary concern for the US, henceforth, a clear escalation of the Asia Pivot Policy.[53] The manifestation of a new Cold War is already progress including high trade tariffs against imports from China, restrictions on investments to and from China, sanctions on China's military entities, US renewed arms sale to Taiwan, sanctions on Russia, and US expansion of freedom of navigation operations in the South China Sea.[54] President Trump on July 11, 2019, used the term Indo-Pacific instead of Asia–Pacific saying the coinage underlined the significance of India as being a close partner to the US and with which the US has strong and rising ties. The US bestowing India with the 'Net Security Provider' status is evident in envisioning for her the role of an extra-regional anchor. That is by means of investing in the country through its capacity building, logistics exchanges, technology, and defense and thus, making her a major defense partner to the US in the region.[55]

The US and China are committed to the path of constructive engagement in Asia as both are matured given the history lessons that seriously underline that disruptive confrontation would not be serving anyone's interest. Thus, areas of

convergence between the two include supporting stability and nuclear security of Pakistan, preventing the conflict of Kashmir, securing Sea Lines of Communication (SLOCS) in IOR, cooperating against terrorism, and supporting the Afghan peace process. Nevertheless, anti-terrorism efforts in Afghanistan remain a serious business for both nations. Thus, both support all initiatives directing at curbing this menace particularly support for the ongoing peace negotiations with the Taliban in Doha for a peaceful settlement to Afghan conundrum.[56]

The Connector of Regions and Implications for Pakistan

Pakistan by virtue of its pivotal geographic and geostrategic position has opted for being part of BRI's lynchpin, CPEC, to further capitalize on its position as the Zipper of Eurasia, Asia, and South Asia, therefore, a geoeconomics pivot and an important stakeholder in the present geopolitical environment. CPEC promises Pakistan around $72 billion worth projects of connectivity and infrastructure. This road infrastructure starts from Kashgar in the Chinese province of Xinjiang passing through Pakistan's Khunjrab Pass and all the way down to the Gwadar port in Balochistan; cutting short a distance of 13000 kilometers to 2500 kilometers for China to the Persian Gulf via Gwadar.[57] The present strategic competition, the US Indo-Pacific vision and strategic cooperation through BRI, wherein, India and Pakistan are positioned respectively, has led to a two-bloc scenario in the region: the US-India bloc and the China-Pakistan bloc are suggestive of yet another great game ensuing in the region.

Map-1.4: Pakistan - The Zipper of Regions

Source: https://ndu.edu.pk/issra/issra_pub/articles/margalla-paper

For Pakistan, this scenario is a matter of concern; its history is suggestive of the fact that each time it became part of a cold war on behalf of any superpower, it emerged greatly bruised. Alongside, South Asia has emerged as a theatre, once again, for great power rivalry. Pakistan being a strategic partner of China through CPEC and India as a US strategic partner in the region envisioned in the US Indo-Pacific strategy have serious repercussions for Pakistan's security. The US has chosen India as its strategic partner in the Indo-Pacific with increasing cooperation in the field of defense, such as the Logistics Exchange Memorandum of Agreement (LEMOA)[58] and Communications, Compatibility and Security Agreement (COMCASA).[59] This emboldening of India militarily by the US to counter China has posed a security dilemma for Pakistan. The country has fallen into the rival's faction because of intensified tensions with India specifically and with the US generally. There are implications for Pakistan's security ranging from arms race in the region, Indo-Pak rivalry vis-à-vis Kashmir dispute to security dilemma for Pakistan and other regional countries in the wake of US-India cooperation, US-China rising tension, China-Pakistan cooperation and Pakistan–India tension.[60] At the same time, the US-China competition may add to Pakistan's internal security problems via political instability or affecting its socio-economic development projects. Amid such an environment, Pakistan may diversify its foreign policy options by working constructively and progressively while ensuring its internal security strong. The US recent shift toward Pakistan is an acknowledgment of the country's principled position vis-à-vis peace talks with the Taliban. In addition, Pakistan's standing is firm and unwavering given its accommodation with multiple partners for economic development as apparent in the case of CPEC.

Policy Options and Recommendations for Pakistan

This complex geopolitical scenario demands prudence, sagacity, and a meticulously balanced approach in Pakistan's foreign policy choices. Being a developing country, Pakistan cannot pick and choose at will. Nevertheless, given its pivotal geostrategic importance and the opportunities arising, thereof, demand greater wisdom in deliberating the future policy choices by its leadership. There is no denying the fact that the US and China have become major rivals in Asia as China consistently expands and consolidates its soft power. On the other hand, the US is determined to begin a cold war to maintain its full power spectrum and status quo as being the sole superpower of the world. That is by using India as an anchor for its strategy. However, this is equally understandable that both states will avoid the "Thucydides Trap" as both have learned lessons in the past. Pakistan's policymakers may need to take the following policy choices under consideration while deciding the country's foreign policy directions:

- Pakistan ought to be cautious and learn from its history.
- Considering a possibly imminent financial crisis as a result of the US-China trade war, Pakistan's leadership needs to take carefully calculated decisions for accruing short-term and long-term benefits.
- Pakistan needs to readjust its policies that new alignments and readjustments in the region are not entirely anti-China

- Pakistan can diversify its policy options by striving for common grounds with the Quad alliance on issues of climate emergency, water scarcity, and agriculture
- Pakistan can utilize the present scenario of the Indo-Pacific region in Afghanistan as an opportunity to further bolster its bilateral ties with the US by extending its complete support and facilitation for Afghan peace dialogue and especially bringing the Taliban to a negotiated settlement with all stakeholders in the country including the Afghan political government.
- If Pakistan becomes economically stable with augmented democratic practices and political traditions leading to a favorable environment in the country, international recognition, credibility, and cooperation in the international system can be harnessed.[61]

Conclusion

The Sino-US strategic convergence and competition via the Pivot to Asia and BRI respectively in the Indo-Pacific region have heightened tensions by paving the ground for yet another cold-war scenario embedded in containment mentality. The US-China economic inter-dependence renders unlikely war between them. However, volatility and intensification in world politics and complexities and instabilities are to impact the overall security of the Indo-Pacific and South Asian regions. Pakistan may safeguard its interests and ensure security by diversifying its policy options vis-a-vis new alignments in the region considering them as not entirely against any specific country. The country may strive to achieve enhanced cooperation with Russia, the Quad alliance on issues of mutual benefit besides strategic partnership with China. Alongside, the US-Pakistan bilateral relations may be ratified by extending cooperation in Afghanistan in reaching a deal with the Taliban. Such foreign policy directions underline taking a prudent and balanced course for accruing dividends in the wake of the renewed strategic significance of the country. Pakistan is likely to harness a conducive international environment for its due recognition and cooperation in the international system if it becomes strong internally with its institutions working in a politically viable and constructive way.

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CLIMATE SECURITY OF PAKISTAN: DISSECTING THE CARBON DILEMMA

Tahir-ul-Mulk Kahlon and Syed Ahmad Talal[*]

Abstract

Carbon accretion in the atmosphere is having widespread climatic impacts on Pakistan like reduced agricultural productivity, water shortage, and coastal erosion, etc. Tormented with a poor economy, any abrupt scarcity of livelihood resources can breed violence, crime, communal tensions, and a threat to national security. Encumbered by the financial and technical deficit, Pakistan is facing considerable challenges for crafting a pragmatic climate security regime. Significant divergence in the public and academic opinion on the nature of this threat have attributed to a sluggish policy response so far. This paper, therefore, focuses on Pakistan's Carbon dilemma and critically examines its treatment in national climate policies. It calls for an integrated approach across multiple sectors and mainstreaming of a national security policy with climate-smart infrastructure that assimilates core national security resources. It further calls for political discourses that encompass food, energy, agriculture, health, and even diplomacy to overcome this national threat. Towards the end, this paper proffers some recommendations to mitigate threats to our climate security.

Keywords: Public Policy, Climate Change, Environmental Governance, Climate Security, Carbon Sequestration.

Introduction

Climate is the main ingredient of our national ecological system and immensely influences national food, energy, and water security. Climate disasters, their incidence, and potency can have severe implications for the survival of these sectors and consequently, the population livelihood. Absence of public policies to build resilience mean vulnerable people becoming destitute. It exacerbates resource accessibility with profound implications for national security. [1] The UN through its subsidiary, Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), has warned of a rise in the global temperatures. Such a rise is driven by the population growth and global economic development agendas, which increase emissions of Green House Gases (GHG) of which Carbon is a fundamental element. Interacting with atmospheric Oxygen, Carbon creates the quandary of GHG emissions triggering climate change.

Pakistan is a voluntary signatory to the international protocols on climate change and has, hence, made commitments for reducing GHG emissions. However, like governments, Pakistan is facing considerable challenges for crafting a climate security

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regime. Pakistan's development plans, which now rely a great deal on the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC), consist of several projects based on fossil fuels. Such fuels are a major source of GHG emissions. The incumbent Prime Minister of Pakistan warned the world of "catastrophic consequences" of climate change while addressing UN Generally Assembly's annual meeting in 2019. He was unequivocal in recognizing the climate threat in declaring that "our glaciers are retreating faster than in any other part of the world. As an agrarian country of 210 million people, Pakistan faces a clear and present danger from the changing climate especially in terms of water stress and food security."[2]

In Pakistan, significant differences in public and academic opinions in cognizance of a threat to our climate security had led to a sluggish or virtually a lack of response until 2010. It was disaster and destruction by massive floods in 2010 and 2011 that brought this threat to national focus and built pressure on the government for a policy response to mitigate climate disasters. Consequently, in 2012, Pakistan came up with its first exclusive public policy response and also created the Ministry of Climate Change.[3] The policy unveiled Carbon sequestration as its prominent solution to the climate threat. It encompasses capture, removal, and storage of Carbon in a manner to prevent its escape back into the atmosphere. However, the national policy visualizes sequestration exclusively in the forest sector. It requires an integrated approach across multiple levels and sectors for planning, identifying, responding, and making the most appropriate policies that incorporate interlinkages between core national security resources.

This paper examines such voids and strengths of the National Climate Change Policy-2012 (NCCP). It principally focuses on Pakistan's Carbon dilemma and diverse sequestration strategies and options to proffer recommendations to mitigate climate security hazards. Carbon emissions need to be contained to strengthen the development and sustainability of national recourses that are crucial for our national security. The paper theoretically assumes that climate change is a reality and not a "hoax" as asserted by contesting narratives, prominently led by President Donald Trump.[4] It proceeds with a broad assessment of the climate dilemma and policy of Carbon sequestration to sketch linkages among global and national policies. NCCP-2012 is dilated only with a focus on its Carbon sequestration strategy. It tabulates and analyzes data on Pakistan's GHG inventory and forests. Finally, it comes up with some conclusions and the policy recommendations for improvement in national climate security.

This paper adopts an exploratory methodology to evaluate the Carbon sequestration strategy of NCCP-2012. Very limited climate data is available for Pakistan. The authors have gathered data from climate statistical reports, multiple research studies and expert opinions and discussions with key policy actors from the Ministry of Climate Change, Pakistan Agricultural Research Commission, SUPARCO, Punjab Forest Department, Institute of Space Technology, Planning Commission of Pakistan and NGOs working on climate. Several climate change-related conferences were attended for information and data gathering. These included Reduce Emissions from

Deforestation and Forest Degradation (REDD+) Project, Ideas Conclave-2018 of Jinnah Institute, and discussion with climatologists. A series of climate consultative sessions (Pre COP-23) were also attended to understand the views of stakeholders from across the board.

The Narrative of Climate Change

The roots of climate change narrative lie in the invention of the steam engine by Thomas Newcomen (1664-1729) and the ensuing Industrial Revolution which led to the massive rise in the use of fossil fuels.[5] In 1824, John Fourier conceptualized Earth's Greenhouse Effect (Figure 1), a container around earth preventing it to get as hot as the sun.[6] Svante Arrhenius, in 1895, claimed that if Carbon emissions get doubled, earth temperature would rise by 5-6°C, albeit in millennia if not centuries.[7]

Figure-1: The Greenhouse Effect
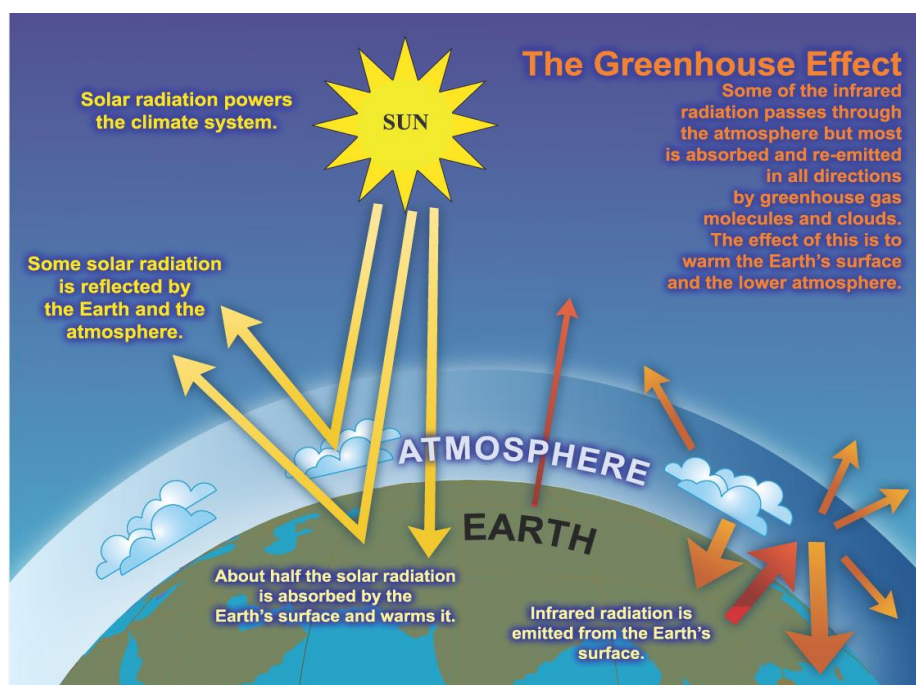
Source: IPCC Fourth Assessment Report-2007

The scientific debate from here onwards was taken to the arena of politics and public policy. The climate community cultivated linkages with charismatic political leaders and international institutions, like the UN Environment Program (UNEP) and the World Meteorological Organization (WMO). President Lyndon Johnson was the first to be confronted with a climate report titled "Restoring the Quality of Our Environment" in 1965 that set the ball rolling on contemporary climate change narrative.[8] In 1968, Sweden suggested a UN conference on Human Environment. This led to the holding of the first Earth Summit in Stockholm in 1972.[9] A World Commission

on Environment and Development was created in 1983-84, which delivered its most influential climate change document called "Brundtland Report" in 1987.[10] Progressively, climate debate got an intertwined environment with sustainable development. International public opinion was captured by The TIME magazine with its cover title "Planet of the Year: Endangered Earth" in 1989, prompting the UN to declare climate change as a collective problem for humanity.[11] The Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro in 1992 instituted the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change (UNFCCC) and created an organizational structure called "Conference of Parties" (COP) under it. COP has, thus, by now become the supreme governance body for global climate change.

While joining the global climate agenda voluntarily, Pakistan was among the first few countries to join and ratify UNFCCC on June 13, 1992. The Ministry of Environment was created within a month after the Rio Summit which enacted the Environmental Protection Agency Act in 1997. Pakistan is currently listed as the 7th most vulnerable country to climate change by UNFCC. In the past two decades, it has suffered 150 disasters and a loss of $2 billion in the shape of flash floods, smog, forest fires, melting glaciers, freaky heat waves, landslides, and displaced population, etc.[12] These catastrophes led to the formulation of NCCP and re-designation of the Ministry of Environment into the Ministry of Climate Change.

Combating the Climate Change

There are two approaches to battle the climate change; Adaptation and Mitigation. Adaptation is to reduce the vulnerability to climate impacts. It focuses on creating an environment that builds capacity through a sustainable funding because reactive funding is costly. It hinges on stabilization of GHG in the atmosphere through:

- Greater awareness and education on climate change with focus on both individual and institutional capabilities;
- Enhancement of scientific capabilities for assessing and strengthening adaptation methods and tools;
- Technology developments; and
- Specialized local strategies (national or provincial, etc.).

Mitigation focuses on the reduction of adverse economic and social impacts of climate change. It encompasses energy, transport, agriculture, waste management, forestry, and industrial sectors. COP has mandated countries to maintain inventories of their GHG emissions taking attenuation measures and developing climate-friendly technologies. The aim is to achieve Carbon negativity despite national developmental aspirations and anthropogenic GHG emissions. NCCP's Carbon sequestration strategy is the main option that provides such a solution for Pakistan.

Carbon Sequestration

Carbon Dioxide (CO_2) is one of the most commonly emitted GHG. Nature has created its control mechanism in the atmosphere. However, when anthropogenic

emissions rise beyond a threshold of Nature, Carbon sequestration remains the only human solution. As the atmosphere is globally shared, COP has mandated a global Carbon sequestration approach to battle climate change. The Kyoto Protocol-1997 (COP-3) has set up a limit upon national GHG emissions.[13] Most nations have committed to emission reductions while some nations including the US (a major emitter) have not. Interestingly, Pakistan, being a low emitter, was not required to reduce emissions but intriguingly, she voluntarily committed to doing so. This is an exclusive topic for public policy research. Carbon sequestration is a natural process but can be artificially emulated with suitable methods and technologies. The process has the following general elements:

- **Capture:** It is the liquification of CO_2 to allow its economical and efficient handling. There are three methods to capture Carbon. Post-Combustion Capture (absorption from exhaust), Oxyfuel Combustion (use of pure oxygen gas), and the Re-Combustion which separates CO_2 by a 'Scrubbing' process using Integrated Gasification Combined Cycles (IGCC) plants.

- **Transport**: Captured carbon can be transported by pipelines, tankers, trains, and ships.

- **Storage**: It has three broad groups; Oceanic, Geological, and Biological. Oceanic: The largest carbon sinks are in the form of underwater lakes of gas existing deep within the oceans. As opposed to 750 Gigatons capacity of the atmosphere, the oceans have approximately 40,000 Gigatons capacity of CO_2 storage.[14] There are two methods for this sequestration. Direct injection of captured CO_2 under the ocean or bolstering the ocean sequestration through an iron fertilization process.[15] The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) has, however, warned that it carries the risks of oceanic acidification.[16] Geological: It is embedding Carbon within the earth's subsurface. There are three types of geological sites, i.e., Saline Aquifers, Exhausted Oil and Gas Fields, and Deep Coal Beds.[17] This method has been criticized for its effects on the groundwater and leakage risks. In Lake Nyos, 1800 people lost their lives when 1.6 million tons of CO_2 escaped back into the atmosphere.[18] However, globally over 25 million tons of CO_2 is injected annually using this method.[19] Biological: Also known as terrestrial, it relies on natural processes in the soil and forests, which biologically decompose Carbon, making the land highly fertile. Several agricultural practices, like conservative tilling, cover cropping, and crop rotation, have this sequestration potential.

- Other methods are Biochar and Forests. Biochar: It is the most attractive option for Pakistan since it carries economic potential and gives better land production. Critics, however, dismiss its effectiveness and benefits.[20] Forests: The trees account for the most rapid and natural exchange of CO_2. Their potential is linked to the forest type

and its biomass. Over 4 Giga hectares of forests cover 30% of the global landmass.[21] IPCC, therefore, recommends afforestation limiting consumption of timber and terrestrial land management. This is the option that NCCP-2012 has visualized as a sequestration strategy for the climate security of Pakistan.

National Climate Change Policy: The Carbon Dimension

National Climate Change Policy-2102 aims "to ensure that climate change is mainstreamed in the economically and socially vulnerable sectors of the economy and to steer Pakistan towards climate-resilient development."[22] It identifies "threats which are the cause of major survival concerns for Pakistan, particularly, in terms of country's Water Security, Food Security, and Energy Security considerations."[23] These include the increase of extreme weather events, erratic monsoon rains causing intense floods and droughts; global warming from trans-boundary pollution sources threatening water inflows into Indus River System; water dams siltation caused by floods; increased temperature leading to reduced agriculture productivity; scanty forest cover adversely affected plant species; the intrusion of saline water in the Indus delta adversely affecting coastal ecology; threat to coastal areas due to projected sea-level rise and increased cyclonic activity; increased stress between upper riparian and lower riparian regions on sharing the water resources; and increased health risks and climate change-induced migration.

The Carbon Dilemma

Carbon emissions of Pakistan have been compiled and projected till 2050 in Table-1. The data was taken from the Asian Development Bank's climate change profile of Pakistan and the Government of Pakistan's Intended Nationally Determined Contributions (INDC).[24] The data is in million tons.

Table-1: Carbon Emissions of Pakistan (1994-2050)

Sector	1994	2008	2012	2020	2030	2050
Energy	86	157	169	358	898	2685
Agriculture	72	120	165	245	457	1395
Industrial	13	18	14	26	130	200*
Land Use from Forestry	7	9	10	13	29	38
Waste	4	6	10	7	89	110*
Total:	182	310	368	649	1603	4333

Source: Authors' Compilation - Unofficially adapted data points to reflect the trend set by novel data in Pakistan's INDC

Table-1 reflects that the energy sector is the largest emitter producing approximately 46% of total emissions followed by the agriculture sector at 43%, industrial sector 5%, and waste sector just a minor proportion. Rapid urbanization trends will cause a rise in waste emissions and if not controlled, this sector will exceed

industrial emissions. CPEC impacts are also expected to raise emissions. These have not been mapped so far but can cause proportional increases in GHG emissions.[25] The deforestation phenomenon in Pakistan is double jeopardy. It increases land emissions and simultaneously reduces natural sequestration potential. Forestation and Reforestation projects, like Billion Tree and Green Earth Program, target an increase in forests to 6% till 2020 and further to 10% by 2030 at the cost of $ 3.74 billion.[26] NCCP-2012 claims to mitigate national emissions by 20% at the cost of $ 40 billion.[27] Thereafter, it will require $7 to 14 billion annually for the maintenance of such levels.

Pakistan's Forests

Pakistan has a low forest cover of 0.3 hectares per capita compared to that of the global cover of one hectare.[28] The Forest data of Pakistan are given in Table-2. There is a high degree of variance between data of government and that of international agencies. However, each reflects the consistent trend of decline except the Pakistan Bureau of Statistics (PBS).

Table-2: Forest Data of Pakistan

Forest Cover Data

FAO — World Bank — Office of I.G Forests — PBS - statistical yearbooks
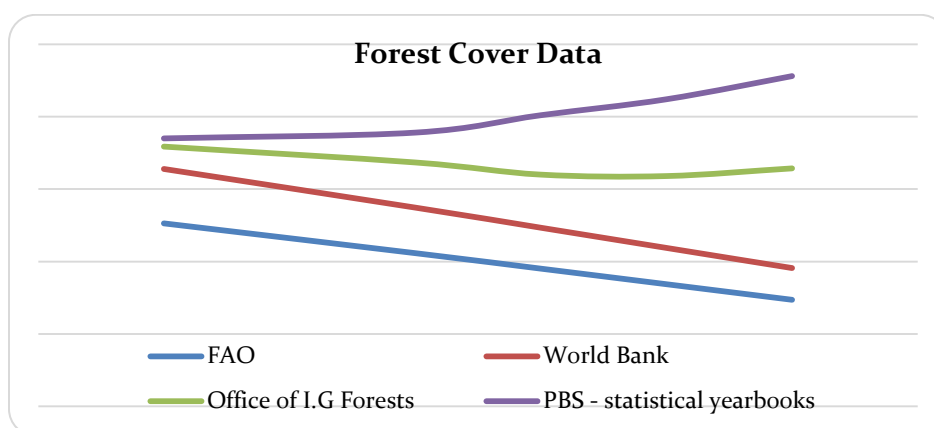
Source: Authors' Compilation

A reliable estimate for forest cover has been prepared through the readings from Atlases of SUPARCO.[29] Table-3 provides the compilations of the land cover share of each province of Pakistan. It is concluded that approximately 10 million tons of carbon can be sequestered in 2030 by the forests in Pakistan.

Table-3: Land-cover Share (Province-wise) – Pakistan

Province	Forested (Age%)	Forested (KM2)
Punjab	3.3%	6774
KP	14.10%	10512.7
Sindh	3%	4232.57
Baluchistan	5.40%	18,751.58

Source: Authors' Compilation

The Carbon Solution

The national policy solution to the Carbon dilemma of Pakistan is narrated in the following enactments. All policies generally dilate on the contextual dimension of Pakistan's climate problem, relying on the data retrieved from international studies. There is a prominent absence and insufficiency of indigenous perspectives and knowledge. It is essentially public policy-making with ignorance.

- The principle policy umbrella is provided by the National Climate Change Policy-2012. It aims to promote a climate-resilient approach to ensure that the measures to combat climate change are mainstreamed in the economic and social development plans.
- The Framework for Economic Growth-2011 provides strategic guidelines for development. This policy has a subtitle related to climate as "Ensuring Economic Growth is Sustainable and Climate Resilient," which underlines various strategies related to climate disaster, climate proofing the economic growth in crucial sectors like agriculture, water, and energy. It also covers some mitigation strategies like 'green growth' and the use of low carbon technologies.
- Other important policy documents are National Environmental Policy-2005, National Energy Conservation Policy-2005, and a number of similar provincial legislation. NCCP-2012 includes important ideas from all these legislations.

Carbon Sequestration Policy of Pakistan

National Climate Change Policy-2012 in its Articles 5.7 describes the climate mitigation strategy with the sole mention of Forest Sequestration. The measures under this article are: Increasing forest cover through afforestation and reforestation activities; increasing degree of control over deforestation activities; using the international fora to secure aid; and using farm forestry and incentivizing carbon forestry project development.[30] Its framework for the implementation is as follows:

- Objective 7.1.1 identifies and hopes to address the existing significant gap in awareness and implementation at the local level. The Policy commits to increase understanding of the relationship of forests with the climate and of preservation of the species.
- Objective 7.1.2 commits to the improvements in governance and development of the response to catastrophic situations. This is to be achieved through the prevention of encroachments in forests.
- There are some actions stipulated under Section 8 of the Policy which focus on the development of carbon sink potential through REDD+ projects, Clean Development Mechanism (CDM), and effective monitoring systems for implementation.

- Agroforestry, reforestation, and afforestation projects are to be established in tandem with the introduction of techniques within the lumber industry to minimize damage to forests.
- For the industrial sector, there will be technology and knowledge transfers to Pakistan from foreign projects. Adaptation of the technical capabilities will be through training of personnel in foreign institutions.
- The Energy sector will focus on developing alternative energy, prioritization of hydropower, and shifting to clean coal technologies. Interestingly, these are the medium term (targeting 10 years) strategies. There is no immediate priority. Similarly, the objective 11.0.2 plans to install new power plants which have the potential to be retrofitted with carbon capture technology but does not contemplate installing plants that are already fitted with this technology. It is not a singular contradiction. The policy is replete with many such incongruities.

As for as the implementation of this policy in the past seven years is concerned, there is not much to document regarding the national response except holding of some conferences or giving media advertisements on climate-related events. The governance focus of NCCPs has been on conferences and visits to various countries, attending international climate events, and seeking foreign loans and grants to implement the self-assigned targets of NCCPs. Beginning with being the first few 'volunteers' to ratify UNFCCC, Pakistan was also the first few to submit its INDCs to UNFCCC at the COP-21. Being prepared without much public deliberation input, these INDCs were returned by UNFCCC for revision due to their inadequacy. These INDCs have given commitments to follow a path that remains well under its emission quota. Going a step further, it has been committed to reducing emissions by 20% at the cost of $40 billion, a totally unworkable and hence, unrealistic self-imposed target. INDCs give special consideration to forests and claim 5% forests cover of Pakistan. Even this exaggerated data is insufficient for its self-adopted mitigation goals.[31] To acquire foreign funds, Pakistan has submitted eight Nationally Appropriate Mitigation Actions (NAMAs) to the UNFCCC since 2013. Many countries, who submitted NAMAs after Pakistan, have been provided funding while Pakistan's NAMAs have not seen any progress despite being its flagship projects under UNFCCC.

The Policy Analysis

A Tunneled Approach: NCCP-2012 fails to visualize Carbon sequestration from diverse worldwide practices and mentions only the option of Forestry. This presents a very constricted focus of this policy. Such omissions in national policy are mind-boggling. Some examples are as follows:

- For our agricultural society, friendly Biochar sequestration has not been mentioned and farmers continue to burn their fields after

harvest. Smog in Punjab is a testament to the air pollution caused by these methods.

- Agroforestry has been omitted because of its financial burden, which has been assumed without statistical studies and evaluations. A similar omission is that of the soil sequestration. Restoration of wastelands has a dual advantage of increasing national productivity and providing livelihood to the jobless and resourceless. Similarly, Sprinkler and Drip irrigation systems have been ignored.

- Pakistan does not have any record of its geological sequestration sites. Academic research has an estimated storage capacity of 1.7 Giga Tons of CO_2. Northern Areas of Pakistan have mineral sequestration potential of 1410 million tons.[32] A geological survey will play a vital role in identifying ideal sites for sequestration.

- Experience of underground Industrial Pumping of Carbon extends well over 40 years. The global capacity has been estimated to be around two trillion tons, with projections of being much larger.[33] This sequestration potential is sufficient to control Pakistan's GHG emissions.

- Enhanced Oil Recovery (EOR) has also been explored by some researchers in Pakistan but with economic and not sequestration focus. In the US, more than 50% of EOR activities use natural CO_2.[34]

- The Ministry of Climate Change remained dormant and complacent on the creation of coal-based energy plants in Pakistan. Pakistan is committing further into coal at a time when the world is abandoning it.

- Oceanic sequestration also finds no mention in the policy despite a long coastline. Presently, it is the costliest technology but NCCPs should have not ignored this option. Technologies can improve and become cheaper in the future.

- Climate policy has also neglected a discriminate and predominantly commercial approach towards land use in Pakistan. There are no serious efforts to plan or restrict urban expansion and forest depletion.

Policy Muddle

There is generally a poor national understanding of international climate change politics and policies and their implications for Pakistan. Climate problem has only been addressed by legislation and bureaucratizing of structures without any significant implementation thrust or plans. Practically, it has been addressed through international conferences, documents, and occasional rhetoric. The lack of public understanding of the issue is a major cause of popular alienation. Virtually, it remains a top-down policy to resolve a problem that is poorly comprehended even by its framers. The policy adopts lofty targets, intends to resolve some imaginary problems by importing international solutions and at the same time ignoring national ones. The muddle is compounded by information deficit and lack of political patronage. A

succinct example was Pakistan's one-page response in the climate conference in Paris which shocked the nation. This response was the contribution of an official delegation comprising dozens of officials headed by the Prime Minister of Pakistan.[35] Authors faced constraints in soliciting general public views as people did not understand that climate was even an issue. The following are a few observations on the sequestration aspect of NCCPs:

- The climate challenges that NCCPs aim to address, need an integration of climate knowledge with our vulnerabilities and response. The current policy remains exclusively in the domain of federal bureaucracy. To build a local and regional context of climate problems and solutions, public participation and consultation are essential. The policy must identify people's constraints to overcome their climate vulnerabilities. The agriculture sector is the one but crucial example where there has been no effort to internalize the climate vulnerabilities by NCCPs or any of the agricultural policies of the country.

- There is an utter lack of consensus on the forest data and, thus, in its future projections and plans. While the government sources show a rosy picture, the international agencies reflect the reverse. This is a serious shortfall in the policy, especially, when it principally relies on the forest sequestration.

- Pakistan is an arid country and, hence, has a limited capacity of forests. The policy envisages increasing forested area from 5.24% to almost 7.1% by 2030, which is an ambitious but still a minuscule target. It, then, ruthlessly assumes that forested areas will have lush vegetation.

- Agroforestry only features as a project in REDD+. The Climate Ministry itself is incredulous about the efficacy of this project.

- Baluchistan has a potential for agroforestry but this province is planning to create power plants under CPEC. Such contradictions may not bring any significant effect on the Carbon situation. The climate dimension of CPEC, hence, must consider a greater number of green power projects.

- Whatever mitigation activities have been recognized within agriculture and industrial sectors, lack active policy initiative despite several viable avenues of sequestration.

- Sequestration word is only mentioned three times within the entire NCCP-2012. It reflects an approach towards national potential and options.

- There is absolute neglect of plans to develop or rely on indigenous knowledge. Similarly, the options of reverse engineering of foreign technologies have not been considered. The Policy focuses on the transfer of technology from developed economies by seeking loans and training opportunities abroad for public savants. The foreign outlook

is strangely based on the logic of easing the national financial burden and improving local technological prowess.

Future Options

Pakistan's selection as the Vice President of the COPs at COP-24 (Katowice, Poland) provides it with an opportunity to capitalize on its status at this important international forum. However, for that, a solid policy approach is paramount to streamline the science and politics of the climate for this nation. A revision of NCCPs to overcome the Carbon dilemma is essential and the foremost. Other parts equally deserve this treatment but are beyond the scope of this paper. Even if our national priorities do not warrant pursuing other avenues of sequestration, the same must still be given appropriate treatment in NCCPs. Omission is absolutely not a prudent option. For any revision, it is critical that climate specialists are embedded with the policymakers to minimize oversights and omissions like those enumerated above. This means creating an integrated national policy response by involving scientific, political, and social stakeholders. The government currently relies only on the input of local and foreign-funded NGOs, whose agendas may be shady given the experience of terrorism. Other recommendations are:

- It must be remembered that in any democratic dispensation, public sensitization and participation are vital without which no public policy can sustain. That entails crafting a narrative response to this national security issue. Participation experience in pre-COP-23 meetings was dismal where, from over 50 delegates from all across the country, only a few could provide any useful insight. There was a deep and distinct lack of Pakistan's climate threat perception and the same was reflected across the board in federal and provincial departments and delegates. Delegates were held hostage to the data of money=seeking NGOs. The Carbon problem can only be solved if it is entrenched in the public consciousness. Interestingly, even preparation of COP national response was contracted out to a cherry-picked NGO by the Ministry of Climate.
- There is a need to push capacity-building strategies of the federal and provincial bureaucracies connected with the climate issue. That entails stronger connections and coordination especially between federal and provincial climate governance structures as well as other laterally relevant government departments. Inter-governmental harmony becomes crucial to overcome conflicts when different political parties rule provinces and federation. Intradepartmental coordination was, in many cases, absent. For example, in one federal organization, its soil management department and the Agroforestry department operated in isolation and sometimes in tandem on similar projects. It has a risk of running redundant ventures and wastage of public funds and foreign loans. Managing the evident devolution complexities in climate governance should become part of the revised national policy.

- Carbon sequestration is solely covered in its Article 5.7, titled "Forestry and Carbon Sequestration". It symbolizes that sequestration exists in the realm of Forestry and detracts from the versatility of Carbon sequestration. It should be embarked upon as a separate aspect covering all options of sequestration.

- Aspects of mitigation are littered across various parts of NCCPs under sections like industrial and agricultural, etc. Some of their subsectors also have the potential for Carbon sequestration, which should also have been described therein.

- NCCPs suffer from the lack and even superfluous confidentiality of climate data. Despite that, it does not plan to overcome this handicap. Engaging the academia to create such data is the least expensive measure. It would also help to create public awareness and interest. Weak economies can exploit subject experts to come up with approaches that are viable in national settings. Pakistan must generate indigenous knowledge of Carbon threat and sequestration potential to uncover innovative domestic techniques. The reliance on foreign technologies aim to secure loans can be counterproductive and can undermine national interest and sovereignty.

- The single greatest consideration in managing risks associated with Carbon storage using sequestration technologies comes down to the correct assessment and selection of the reservoir sites. This risk assessment is a core aspect of ensuring preparedness toward remedying any issues. Risk assessment criteria require the elaborate establishment and developmental efforts for monitoring, research, and improvisation approaches to Carbon storage. Pakistan's unknown potential for carbon sequestration may be significant enough to account for the expected rise in emissions.

- Education czars should comprehend climate challenges and promote research in this sector. Educational institutions should encourage and streamline data mining and its sharing liberally. Climate ministry and climate research centers should have a focused and collaborative approach to handle this problem. Only the local solutions would effectively address socio-economic and cultural vulnerabilities and consequently, lay roots for sustainable national development.

Conclusion

Climate change is a global phenomenon. Actions and inactions of any nation will have both positive and negative externalities for the mother earth. While major emitters are rich nations, poor nations can comparatively suffer a higher degree of climate devastation. Pakistan fits this case where it is not a polluter but has been suffering the impacts of higher global GHG emissions. The Carbon glut is having wide-ranging impacts on Pakistan like reduced agricultural productivity, water shortage, coastal erosion, and extreme climatic events. All this puts pressure on its economic

conditions which then exacerbated tensions in ethnicity, gender, and religion, etc. Struggling already with its weak economy, any abrupt scarcity of resources will breed violence threatening its national security. Addressing climate risks, thus, requires the mainstreaming of a national security policy with climate-smart plans in infrastructure, businesses, and skills. This paper has taken up the core ingredient of the climate problem, i.e., Carbon and its sequestration strategy. While Pakistan may continue to seek support through its NAMA, the paper exhorts to look inwards to remain prepared for the worst. It must also be careful in making voluntary commitments to the international community, which cannot be upheld. There is a need to promote political discourses encompassing energy, agriculture, health, transport, urban development, industries, crime, and even diplomacy to overcome the climate threat. Complacence and business as usual will be catastrophic.

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STRATEGIC AUTONOMY OR ISOLATION: AN ANALYSIS OF MAJOR DYNAMICS OF PAKISTAN'S FOREIGN POLICY

*Milad Elharathi, Sadia Mahmood Falki and Aisha Shahzad**

Abstract

The foreign policy of Pakistan as a part of South Asian milieu and one of the significant Muslim states always remained characterized by the various regional and global restrains which not only made it vulnerable to the external pressures but also substantially affected its strategic choices. Currently, Pakistan is facing multiple internal and external constraints ranging from its domestic economic problems to continuing with CPEC as a real game-changer strategy at the operational level while not upsetting the US. The prime focus of this study is to have an insight into diplomatic coercion faced by Pakistan and its consequences on her foreign policy decisions. As Indian-centric approach throughout history left limited options for policy-makers. This research examines why Pakistan is being challenged about strategic choices in response to vigorous Indian attempts to isolating her in the international arena. This analytical and descriptive research would possibly recommend the recent foreign policy measures by Pakistan regarding its external dynamics of politics.

Keywords: Pakistan, Foreign Policy, Strategic, Isolation, Autonomy.

Introduction

In the recent past, there were mainly four foreign policy objectives of Pakistan with respect to strategic vision in regional and global scenarios. First, to safeguard the security of the country while ensuring the protection of national interests of Pakistan. The political and military strategy would be incorporated to eliminate violence, extremism and intolerance from Pakistani society and a policy of non-interference in the matters of other states would be followed. Second, important objectives were outlined as the economic and sustainable development of Pakistan. Third, stemming from the previous two core objectives, it was to strive for a peaceful external environment in the neighborhood to proceed vigorously for core national interests. Forth, to focus on a balancing approach through the incorporation of geostrategic, geoeconomics, and geopolitics approaches to transform Pakistan's geographical position from a liability to an asset while becoming an active part of transport, trade and energy corridors towards China, Central Asia, and West Asia.

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The strategic vision of policymakers since 2014 onwards provides Pakistan's intentions to strengthen the ways to advance a strategic partnership with China by focusing on measures to operationalize the China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC). Furthermore, it was pronounced that Pakistan was no more interested to apply the flawed ideas like 'Strategic Depth' in Afghanistan while replacing it by 'Reaching out Afghanistan', which was primarily comprised of the policy of 'mutual respect of sovereignty and territorial integrity' and with no particular favorite picks. Pakistan also acknowledged that desirable peace cannot be achieved without improving bilateral ties between both states through cooperation. Pakistan, while recognizing the US as a key source of trade, investment, counterterrorism measures and regional stability stressed on the reorientation of Pakistan-US mutual interests. The strategic vision also focused to revive the approach of global and regional cooperation by improving its connections with Muslim countries especially Saudi Arab, Turkey and Iran including regional organizations, such as SAARC, OIC, and ECO while on global perspective potential ties with the EU are focused.[1]

With the advent of the PTI government in August 2018, Prime Minister (PM) Imran Khan indicated no major changes in foreign policy considerations. In his inaugural speech, making peace with the neighbors was the highlight as it remained the laudable goal of Pakistan's foreign policy throughout the years. He provided foreign policy priorities by enlisting balanced and strengthened relationships with China focusing on CPEC, Afghanistan, the US, Saudi Arab, Iran, and India[2]. Keeping in view the foreign policy since August 2018, it seems that there is much continuity in foreign affairs as compared to the previous government. Pakistan's foreign policy remained in disarray under the previous PML(N) government as, during its first four years in power, no Foreign Minister was appointed and PM Sharif retained the respective portfolio while managing foreign affairs through his Adviser, Sartaj Aziz. Later in 2017, Khawaja Asif was appointed as Foreign Minister under PM Shahid Khaqan Abbasi.

Pakistan's geographic locale in South Asia primarily characterized by its traditional animosity with India, while dealing with several other shadow enemies. Its ideological connections based on religion with the Muslim world and its foreign policy compulsions largely stemming from its unsteady relationship with the US and economic shortcomings are making her foreign policy choices quiet complex and contrasting. Moreover, PM Imran Khan's decision of not visiting Malaysia and staying out of the Kuala Lumpur Summit held from 18-21 December 2019, not only indicated diplomatic constraints on foreign policy of Pakistan but also provided insights of the emerging divide in the Muslim world. Although Pakistan made an effort to maintain neutrality between Saudi Arab and an emerging Muslim bloc comprising Turkey, Malaysia, Iran and Qatar, there is another perspective of identifying this as 'Diplomatic Subservience' which limits Pakistan's ability to freely join alliances and blocs as per its strategic interests.[3]

This study, therefore, aims to proceed with research objectives, i.e., to evaluate external and internal factors of Pakistan's foreign policies leading towards diplomatic constraints on her strategic choices; to assess the Indian exertions of isolating Pakistan

regionally and globally; and to analyze the strategy of Pakistan in response to the emerging strategic challenges. This research intends to answer certain questions: Why the foreign policy choices of Pakistan are being affected by strategic isolation and diplomatic coercion in the region? Why an effective strategy from Pakistan's side is conditioned to countervail the attempts of strategic isolation by India? How Pakistan is dealing with diplomatic constraints especially by external actors? This study is primarily based on qualitative research. The historical, descriptive and analytical approaches have also been used to accomplish this study. Secondary sources are used to elucidate the underlying assumption of this research.

Major Dynamics of Pakistan's Foreign Policy

Indian Factor

India unlike Pakistan followed a nonalignment approach to establish its foreign policy paradigm; however, it enjoyed its treaty of friendship with the Soviet Union and got diplomatic and economic support without officially joining any alliance or communist bloc for years. This provided India enough opportunities to stay free of diplomatic constraints to formulate its foreign policy largely based on its changing needs and to enlarge its strategic choices. Since independence, Pakistan and India both viewed each other as traditional rivals and most often their policies remained hostage to the notion of relative power and position in the South Asian region. In wake of changing world order as a result of the disintegration of the Soviet Union, India calculated its policy options for advocating a multi-polar world and striving for a strategic partnership with powerful states like the US. Indian foreign policy vision was extended to its desirable global role from its previous assertion of regional ascendency where another direct war with Pakistan was not at all an option due to two reasons. Firstly, Indian policymakers discarded the notion of viewing Pakistan as a competitor and a direct threat as its inability to match Indian economic growth and strategic relevance in the multi-polar world order. Secondly, due to Pakistan's defensive power through the second-strike capability since 1998, any direct war or military conflict is not in favor of Indian global hegemonic designs. This led Indian policymakers to incorporate a major shift in their policy orientation towards Pakistan where isolating Pakistan, regionally and globally, became an apparent theme to restrain Pakistan's choices to be a key part of any potential strategic planning contrasting to Indian interests.

In the post-Kargil scenario (1999), India extensively propagated against Pakistan for exporting terrorism to other countries. In the backdrop of Indian efforts to strategically isolating Pakistan, growing US support to Indian stance also became one of the key factors of the successful execution of this policy. Various studies explicated that after the end of the Cold War, there was a significant shift in US strategic thought with a special focus on Asia while starting to view India as a natural partner. However, due to the irresistible strategic relevance of Pakistan in South Asia, US President Bill Clinton after paying a five-day visit to India while formally putting an end to its 'Even Handed Policy' was bound to make a five-hour stopover in Pakistan[4]. Despite the significant shift in Indian foreign policy strategy and measures towards Pakistan, its intent and

perceptive view of Pakistan's strategic planning are not changed yet. Indian foreign policy observers believe that Pakistan's foreign policy measures are inherently antipathy of India due to the influence of Islamist factors irrespective of civilian government or military regimes in power and primarily revolve around her attempts of securing strategic parity with India. The Indian-centric policy of Pakistan led to sustaining its interests to establish a pro-Pakistan regime in Afghanistan and entering into alliances with external powers, such as the US and China.[5] India views its relationship with Pakistan as a negative relationship where the likely consequences of reduced security and economic aid from the US to Pakistan are also characterized by the fallout for India as it is gradually enhancing Pakistan's strategic and economic dependence on China, which is not inclined to advance its relations with Pakistan on US model of 'Marriage of Convenience.'

Indian strategic experts were stressing the 'Cold Start Doctrine'[6] since 2001 to search options to secure a response from Pakistan regarding Indian reservations for cross-border terrorism, however, this strategy was discontinued due to the high risk involved.[7] Furthermore, in response to terrorist attacks especially in Mumbai (2008), India largely pursued deterrence by denial strategy.[8] Shivshankar Menon, who served as Foreign Secretary of India from 2006-2009, expounded that choice of restrain in response to Mumbai attacks was based on strategic calculations that more was to be gained by not attacking Pakistan rather than attacking it. The decision of not going for any overt and covert action by India was due to the likely response of Pakistan and a potential escalation that had not been viewed in favor of India due to a lack of supportive response from the international community by merely looking it as traditional India-Pakistan blame game. According to Shivshankar Menon, India primarily focused on gradually isolating Pakistan by getting exceptional support from the international community especially from Saudi Arab, Gulf Countries, and China for her restrained reaction and obtained counterterrorism cooperation against *Lashkar-e-Tayyaba* (LeT).[9] Since 2004, India strategists while learning from their shortcomings of Operation Parakram, ranging from lack of definite objectives, absence of coordination for a quick mobilization to delay in decision-making which paved grounds for counter mobilization of Pakistani forces and international (specifically the US) mediation, worked on improving their options of Cold Start Doctrine.[10]

Pakistan-India bilateral relations are in deadlock since January 2, 2016, due to a terrorist attack in Pathankot by suspected militant group *Jaish-e-Mohammad* (JeM). In the same year, on September 18, another attack was reported on India military headquarters, Uri in Indian occupied Kashmir. Subsequently, while blaming Pakistan, Indian claimed to carry out surgical strikes inside Pakistani part of Kashmir, however, Pakistan described it as an incident of cross-border firing.[11] The animosity between the two traditional rivals was much intensified after the deadliest suicide attack on Indian paramilitary convoy moving on Srinagar-Jammu national highway in Pulwama district on February 14, 2019, which further escalated the tension. Indian PM Narendra Modi and Home Minister Rajnath Singh immediately responded to the Pulwama attack by warning Pakistan to pay a heavy price without probing any investigation of the incident. Arun Jaitly, the Indian Federal Minister, while claiming about inconvertible evidence

against Pakistan for its alleged involvement in terrorist attacks, announced to revoke the 'Most Favored Nation' status which was granted to Pakistan in 1996. He also provided that "all diplomatic measures would be taken to isolate Pakistan".[12] Indian claims regarding Pakistan's alleged connections with Pulwama attack, subsequently, translated into so-called Indian airstrikes in Balakot on February 26, 2019. Indian response to Pulwama attack especially the public proclamation of alleged surgical strikes reflected a key shift in her strategic orientations and response towards Pakistan.

- First, it incorporated diplomatic maneuvering which was a time-consuming stratagem and difficult to get hold for the pressing outcomes due to Pakistan's extensive efforts to eliminate terrorism as a non-NATO ally of the US. In line with its diplomatic strategy, another Indian tactic was also devised for immediate upshot by setting up a precedent of exhibiting a military response to the assumed cross-border terrorism. The comparative advantage of India over Pakistan was to build and sustain international pressure on Pakistan.
- Second, this is also viewed as Indian strategic planning to appraise the nature of deterrence between the two countries and also a way to escalate Indian dominance over Pakistan. Indian strategists are more in favor of conventional escalation with a certain level of their confidence about Pakistan for not using the nuclear option as a counter-response.
- Third is the enhanced influence of the Indian strategic community where many are largely suspicious regarding Pakistan's probability of retaliation through nuclear option by calling it a nuclear bluff. The rationale behind the respective strategy is that most Indian security analysts believe that Pakistan's vulnerabilities are far more than India which will make it unaffordable for her to beat the Indian approach of defensive offense.[13]

Although, for the time being, Pakistan deescalated the military crisis which erupted in February 2019 between the two countries by returning captured Indian pilot in March 2019 as a peace gesture while putting pressure on India for the reciprocal measures for restoring peace in the region. The Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) greatly contributed to counter Indian narrative based on aggression and war hysteria. But Pakistan remained less successful to secure diplomatic support despite its vigorous efforts to contain militancy and terrorism on its soil. The political elite and its diplomatic officials needed to develop a network of international support through active diplomacy. Pakistani decisionmakers largely remained focused on the peripheral and conventional threats while overlooking the soft power of India as its economic and cultural influences became key dynamics of her foreign policy approach of isolating Pakistan. There is dire need to understand by the foreign policymakers in Pakistan that diplomatic, economic and cultural expansion of India cannot be dealt with by only enhancing geostrategic and geopolitical domains as a measurement of state power involves various intangible factors. The 2008-terrorist attacks in Mumbai commenced the process of diplomatic isolation of Pakistan as except China other four permanent

members of the United Nations Security Council (UNSC) agreed to vote to ban *Jamaat-ud-Dawa* (JuD). Although, in March 2019, China has come forward to rescue Pakistan by blocking such kind of move in the UNSC, however, due to economic distress caused by the international reactions along with the global recession led to a decline in the Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) to Pakistan. It significantly dropped from $5.3 billion in 2008 to $ 851 million in 2015. This also led to depreciate the value of Pakistani currency from 62 rupees against 1 US dollar in 2008 to 156 rupees in 2019.[14]

Role of the US and Saudi Arabia

Pakistan's bilateral relations or strategic convergence with the US always remained uncertain and subjected to diplomatic constraints largely stemming from US strategic thought where long-term mutual interests had never been a policy priority. President Donald Trump in his address on August 2, 2017, with a strong tone for Pakistan, continued with 'Do More' while demanding measures to eliminate networks of terrorist groups if interested to sustain her partnership with the US. However, President Trump is keenly interested in the Afghan peace process for complete pull out of US troops from the region ahead of his electoral campaign for the second tenure. Despite his various aggressive proclamations of 'Do More', Pakistan's relevance as a facilitator for the peace process in Afghanistan especially negotiations with the Taliban is apparent. It is noted that Trump's claims of being tough on Pakistan would not be incorporated until US troops sustain in Afghanistan.[15] The US like India views its relationship with Pakistan as negative as abandoning Pakistan which will bring severe consequences for its strategic goals in the Asian region. It can further tense regarding Chinese influence on Pakistan which is not acceptable for both the US and India.

In the backdrop of negotiations for the potential peace agreement between the US and the Taliban, Pakistan was in a position to take leverage to mitigate diplomatic constraints. For instance, Pakistan's name in the grey list of Financial Action Task Force (FATF) was more a political matter rather than its structural deficiency to diminish terror financing.[16] It is not unwarranted to view Pakistan's name in the FATF grey list within the context of ups and downs of Pakistan-US relations and its traditional rivalry with India. Furthermore, India as Co-Chair of the joint group of FATF and Asia Pacific Group (APG) tabled a resolution against Pakistan in June 2019 to put her in the blacklist of FATF, however, China, Turkey, and Malaysia opposed the move.[17] This is evident from the fact that thinking of a strategic partnership or convergence-based relationship with the US would be a mere illusion. Pakistan needs to calculate its strategic options on ground realities. To avoid potential blacklisting from FATF or to evade more strict measures by the IMF, which can lead towards further isolation of Pakistan, policymakers need a cautionary but a bargain-based policy with the US. However, for long-term sustainability, Pakistan needs to work on other options as well.

Saudi Arabia has always remained very close to Pakistan due to the two factors. First is the religious association between the two countries which significantly enhanced from the Zia regime in Pakistan. Secondly, Saudi Arabia is also a close associate of the US. Apart from Saudi Arabia as a job market for almost 1.9 million Pakistanis, it always

rescued Pakistan in the time of economic crisis. However, the relations between the two countries were little affected when Pakistan did not send its troops in the war in Yemen (2015). Although the later developments, such as Pakistan's participation in the North Thunder exercises conducted in the northern part of Saudi Arabia (2016) and appointment of former Pakistan's Military Chief, General Raheel Sharif, as Commander of Islamic Military Alliance indicated the normalization between the two states. PM Imran Khan followed the policy of Saudi Arabia First.[18] This privilege to Saudi Arabia is causing little diplomatic constraints on Pakistan as its decisions for not attending the Kuala Lumpur conference due to Saudi Arabia's reservations can drift away Pakistan from Turkey and Malaysia which seem credible support in the region as well as on international forums like FATF. Pakistan's policymakers needed to assess their policies on rational grounds to maintain relations with the US and Saudi Arabia are crucial for Pakistan's economic stability. However, to counter the international isolation, maintaining strategic autonomy and long-term economic sustainability, there is a need to diminish diplomatic constraints as potential strategic, economic, and regional partners for Pakistan are China, Russia, Turkey, and Malaysia.

Policy Option towards Afghanistan

The notion of strategic depth was evolved in the late 1980s in the backdrop of withdrawal of Soviet forces, however, declining US interests in the region paved way for a proxy war in Afghanistan. The Indian-centric policy of Pakistan led to institutionalizing its ideological guardianship by viewing strategic space in Afghanistan vital to its regional strategy by making its western front as a second defense line against India. It has been noted that this policy though remained effective for maintaining strategic balance with India but in the long run, the fallouts emerged extensively for Pakistan making it a costly strategy. Pakistan's support for a friendly regime in Afghanistan and indigenous movement in Indian occupied Kashmir brought several challenges including militancy, terrorist attacks, the proliferation of drug networks, and an unchecked influx of refugees to Pakistan.[19] It brought sever domestic consequences ranging from terrorist attacks, worsened law and order situation and deteriorating socio-economic conditions.

The 'Reaching Out' policy of Pakistan should be exclusively focused on economic and trade-based measures between the two countries as this economic strategy can effectively counter the increasing Indian influence on Afghanistan. However, this policy requires enhanced interaction between civilian stakeholders of both countries to expand cultural and educational cooperation rather than confining Afghan policy as a matter of security. The strategic persuasion by Pakistan towards Afghanistan unnecessarily involves other regional and global actors into this relationship which primarily restrain the policies of both states to nurture their bilateral relations through trust-building and mutual consensus. To curtail the diplomatic constraints on its policy towards Afghanistan, Pakistan needs to initiate joint economic ventures with Afghanistan to connect South Asia with the Central Asian region and preferential trade and transit agreements. Pakistan also needs to furnish its economic

ties with Afghanistan to deal with its potential energy security rivalry in Central Asia with India.

It is evident from the fact that whosoever comes into power in Afghanistan will maintain relations with neighboring countries. However, Pakistani decision-makers should work on the confirmation of assured steps from the Afghan government for not letting her land used against Pakistan. An effective implementation of the peace agreement between the Taliban and the US will strengthen Pakistan's longstanding relevance with peace and stability in the South Asian region. Pakistan needs vigorous efforts through diplomacy to realize Afghan leadership about the unparalleled possibilities and opportunities of trade and transit for Afghanistan which Pakistan can foster. India's influence can only be countered by developing close economic interdependence of Afghanistan on Pakistan. In this regard, there is a need to carefully observe the polices and statements of Afghan leadership. Pakistan needs to promote confidence-building measures for developing cordial relations with Afghanistan while taking Afghan leadership in confidence and enhancing its stakes in a definite peace agreement to diminish the impression that Pakistan is still interested to carry out its previous strategic policies in Afghanistan.

Recommendations and Conclusion

It is epitomized that CPEC and leading development projects between Pakistan and China are potentially able to stun the Indian strategic planning for naval hegemony in the Indian Ocean. This scenario is ranging from making Pakistan a potential labour market by generating opportunities for jobs and industrial development to building infrastructure and trade routes for the transportation of goods and energy resources. However, Pakistan needs to straighten up things at home because CPEC could lose its momentum domestically as there is no extensive debate at legislative forums to lead the project to the operational level. The completion of CPEC projects will take approximately 15-20 years which makes it imperative for Pakistan to extend the plans uninterrupted because delay and occasional hampering for multiple reasons are paving grounds for uncertainties.

Furthermore, delay in the operationalization of CPEC projects is limiting Pakistan's economic and strategic options whereas Indian efforts of internationally isolating Pakistan are in full swing. The outcomes of Indian efforts are quite conspicuous and Pakistani policymakers need to rationally review their 'Pro-American' and 'Saudi First' policies. In the wake of emergent tension between the US and Iran due to the assassination of Iranian General, Qasem Soleimani, Pakistan should adopt a cautionary approach by avoiding any possibility of siding with any party to the conflict. Pakistan's decision making must be on rational grounds by evaluating each of its options with reference to its potential cost in the long run while keeping in mind the unintended consequences of the 1979-Aghan war and the war on terrorism in post-9/11. The strategic partnership with China is also significant to counter Indian attempts of isolating Pakistan. The rationale behind is that CPEC is not just about Pakistan and China as in the case of development of Gwadar Port, it will include various regions, such

as the Persian Gulf, Central Asia, UAE, and East Africa, etc., while stretching almost 70 states which can provide potentially more international partners to Pakistan by enhancing economic interdependence.

Keeping in view the history of Indo-Soviet relations and Pakistan's association with capitalist bloc during the cold war period, Russia largely remained on the Indian side in regional conflicts. However, in recent years, some of the prospects of cooperation emerged between Moscow and Islamabad with regard to the new defense market and strategic interests in Afghanistan. These potential areas of mutual collaboration between the two states are not yet enough strong to outshine Russian diplomatic support to India. However, it is a matter of fact that India-Russia bilateral relations are lacking the warmth which was previously the core of their association. In the backdrop of growing US-India strategic partnership and US sanctions on Russia over its policy in Ukraine, search for new energy markets are important for Russia like Pakistan as a potential South Asian partner. In February 2019, Russians announced a potential investment of 14 billion in the energy sector of Pakistan.

The prospects of cooperation between Pakistan and Russia were elaborated by their negotiations in March 2019 for the potential involvement of Russia in CPEC and increasing trade as part of the Shanghai Cooperation Organization (SCO).[20] It has also been noted that the next potential rivalry between Pakistan and India apart from their traditional animosity in South Asia will be developed on energy security within the context of their geopolitics in the Central Asian Region.[21] However, due to the geographical immediacy to the respective region and sharing similarity of cultural patterns, Russia, China, Turkey and Iran seem comparatively influential players and Pakistan needs to strengthen its ties with these states.

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PAKISTAN'S TRADE WITH AFRICA: PECULIARITIES AND ROAD AHEAD

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Abstract

Pakistan's Look Africa Policy Initiative is required to take benefit from the African region in these times when African states want to establish good economic and diplomatic relations and create for themselves a comfortable niche in the African trade and development. Pakistan should not overlook the pre-eminence of action courses (functionalism and federalism) to adequately proceed with economic prospects and opportunities. The buck must stop here so that concrete and palpable genuine initiatives can be clutched. While expediting ahead on this economic nexus, it is necessary to shed light on the role of Morocco in CPEC and the possibility of investment in Pakistan. The paper explores the history of Pak-Africa relations positively in the search for a better future together. This is a research of the kind and nature of relations that can be potentially developed between Pakistan and Africa to reveal the natural potential of both.

Keywords: Africa, Pakistan, Look Africa Policy, Trade, CPEC.

Introduction

A recently held conference on January 30-31, 2020, in Kenya (East Africa), commonly known as the Horn of Africa, allowed bringing more than 200 delegates from all over the African region under one roof for the first time to find ways of connectivity and cooperation with Pakistan.[1] In this high profile conference, Pakistan's Foreign Minister Shah Mahmood Qureshi told the media that Somaliland asked Pakistan to extend its "Look Africa Policy Initiative" with the states of Horn of Africa generally and with Somaliland particularly.[2] The case understudy analyses prospects for Pakistan to be actively involved in the region. It did not happen all of a sudden that the African state asked for help. Pakistan has a long history of relations with several African states that are discussed in detail. The economic framework is yet quite evasive between Pakistan and Africa. To proceed smoothly, Pakistan must assume formlessness to avoid fall between two cracks. Constant adaptability to the market trends is significant in the way forward. This paper, therefore, assesses challenges and opportunities for Pakistan in the region. It also suggests some policy measures to Pakistani policymakers to get the most out of the opportunity.

Political stability and economic development are correlated phenomena. Pakistan and Africa have several things in common but unfortunately, one of them is

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frequent-change in governments. All the economic growth indicators, such as production, sales, employment, GDP, stable inflation, etc., can be achieved through persistent economic policies that can only be possible through stability in the political institutions. This paper examines the possibilities of a conducive sociopolitical environment in Africa for achieving promising results from joint economic ventures in the region. This paper also highlights the importance of looking towards Africa and shapes up brief responses to the quires regarding the strategic importance of the Look Africa Policy initiative. It focuses on the action discourse for Pakistan to take hold of African markets with its slender resources vis-à-vis the role of Morocco in CPEC.

The nation-state has been the unit of analysis in research on subjects of International Relations particularly when it comes to foreign policy analysis. This study takes Pakistan and African States as a unit of analysis to analyze systematically improving networking patterns among themselves. The underlying study is a combination of qualitative and quantitative research techniques. News items, official documents and agreements, reports, and analytical work of different scholars are used to build the argument with some policy recommendations at the end.

Strategic Importance and Potential of African Region

The African region is strategically important for the East and the West for several reasons. Traditionally, the world is divided into seven continents irrespective of any specific criteria. Among these, Africa is the second-largest in terms of area and population. It covers almost 20% of the total land of earth and 16% of the world population. Scholars and experts usually divide the African continent into five regions to understand its diversity. First is North Africa which comprises Egypt, Tunisia, Algeria, Morocco, Western Sahara, Libya, and Sudan. These countries bordering the Mediterranean Sea, the Red Sea, and the Atlantic Ocean. Despite prevailing political upheavals in this region, the authoritarian governments have been successfully controlling the democratic norms through economic as well as coercive measures. In some cases, these governments have been fulfilling the interests of the West, thus, becoming more dependent on the West for their vested interests. Comparatively, the northern part is more developed and prosperous than other parts of Africa. Despite political instability, which has been the constant feature of these countries, this area being a natural neighbor of Europe has a contrast in terms of economic development than other regions. This feature makes it naturally dependent on the EU countries.

Second is East Africa or the Horn of Africa; it is one of the key regions facing the Red Sea which is an important region for maritime trade between East and West.[3] It is also one of the most conflict-prone regions in the world, comprising Somalia, Djibouti, Eritrea, Kenya, Ethiopia, Burundi, Malawi, Rwanda, Uganda, Tanzania, and South Sudan. This region has two-dimensional strategic importance; the first dimension is political in nature. Political upheavals are a common phenomenon since the post-colonial period in East Africa creating threat perception in the region.[4] The second dimension of its strategic importance is trade. This trade-passage is used for large transportation of oil from East to West. Taking the first dimension into consideration, it

is important to mention prevailing political upheavals and external efforts to mitigate them. After the imposition of dictator rule in Somalia (1991), a power vacuum was created and ended up in chaos and anarchy. Moreover, US intervention made the situation worst but from 1995 to 2005, it remained unattended internationally.[5] There was a surge of piracy of ships on the sea route of the horn of Africa due to unrest, chaos, anarchy, poverty, and lack of resources. The international military presence is not just for the provision of solutions to the regional issues but to provide security to their ships. Neighboring countries of Somalia have been in conflict with each other. Ethiopia enjoys cordial relations with Djibouti because, during its war with Eritrea (1998-2000), it had been trading via Djibouti seaport, being a landlocked country.[6] Djibouti's relations which got strained with Eritrea in 1998 restored in 2000 at the end of the war. Both neighboring states located at the horn of Africa are now enjoying good relations with each other. Sudan has been involved in border disputes with South Sudan as well as Egypt.

The third is Central Africa, which consists of Angola, Cameron, Chad, Congo, Central African Republic, Gabon, and Equatorial Guinea. These states are part of the Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS). Six Central African states are also the members of the Economic and Monetary Community of Central Africa (CEMAC) and share a single currency. When countries of this region gained independence during the 20th century from European colonial powers, militant groups gained momentum and tried to control the region. This region is comparatively poor and the main professions of the people are farming, herding, and fishing. The Congo River is the deepest river system in the World. Lake Chad is located at the borders of four countries causing distress because of the access-to-water issue. Deepwater lakes, Tanganyika and Albert, are also the main sources of living of millions of people in the region. Cameroon and Gabon are comparatively politically stable countries of the region. The political history of most countries of Africa is full of short-lived democratic governments, corruption, and mismanagement which affected their economic stability. Ethnic conflicts and resulted in genocides in Rwanda and wars in Congo caused massive migration from one country to another.

The fourth region is West Africa comprising Ghana, Benin, Guinea, Ivory Coast, Liberia, Mali, Niger, Nigeria, Mauritania, Togo, Senegal, Sierra Leone, and Gambia. The region borders with the Atlantic Ocean on the West and the Sahara Desert on the North. Due to the geographic proximity, Portuguese were the first who colonized these countries during the 15th century and started black slavery that was followed by British French, Spanish, and Dutch. West African kingdoms resisted colonial powers against their occupation particularly British and French but could not sustain. Until 1974, all West African states became independent but got involved in internal political strife. The majority of the states in this region are coastal states and few are landlocked. The Economic Community of West African States was founded in 1975 to improve the economic conditions with mutual cooperation.

The fifth region is Southern Africa comprises Botswana, Eswatini, Lesotho, Namibia, Zambia, Zimbabwe, and South Africa. The Island of Madagascar is not

considered part of it due to its cultural diversity and language. Droughts are common in most parts of the region. The population of this region overwhelmingly consists of black people. People having European links settled here, particularly, in South Africa and Zimbabwe. Portuguese were the first who annexed the western part of Africa and reached till the southernmost tip of the continent. They tried to control the indigenous trade market but failed. Like Portuguese, Dutch also had their settlements in this part.

African continent from East to West and North to South has plenty in quantity and valuable natural resources, such as minerals, oil, gold, animals, plants, vegetation, and forests. The presence of natural resources in abundance cannot indicate development. Niger is one of such examples that is the most conflict-prone country despite having gold, iron, uranium, coal, and oil reserves. It is equally important to manage these valuable resources to achieve development and economic prosperity. In this regard, political stability matters a lot. African countries have been experiencing political instability, interstate conflicts, and frequent change of governments. The US, China, the UK, France, Germany, and other countries have trade relations with Africa but persistent underdevelopment and slow trade growth tendencies are visible. This continent having abundant resources remains insecure and dependent on the US, Europe, China, and others for trade and development.

In modern times, African governments and the business community took some measures to minimize the region's dependence on western countries. These measures included bilateral efforts with countries, like Pakistan and others, to enhance trade and development. Multilateral platforms were formed to serve the purpose. For this approach, the African region is divided into Regional Economic Communities (RECs) to better facilitate economic activities in African states. First, in 1980, the Lagos Plan was initiated for the development of Africa.[7] It was an attempt to lessen their dependence on western countries while increasing self-sufficiency. They were convinced that western countries exploited them for development and economic integration. However, a need was felt to adopt a far-reaching strategy for cooperation to get out of the situation. Their commitments at national and regional levels improving economic growth will eventually be transformed into an African Economic Community and a Common Market, like the European Union. Secondly, in 1991, the Abuja Treaty proposed RECs to be established for better regional integration.[8] These RECs are Arab Maghreb Union (AMU), Community of Sahel-Saharan States (SEN-SAD), Common Market for Eastern and Southern Africa (COMESA), East African Community (EAC), Economic Community of Central African States (ECCAS), Intergovernmental Authority on Development (IGAD) and South African Countries Union (SACU).[9]

Role of Pakistan in Africa

Pakistan has been enjoying friendly relations with some of the African countries bilaterally, like relations with Somalia. Both countries are members of the Organization of Islamic Cooperation (OIC). During the civil war in Somalia, Pakistan contributed to UN peacekeeping operations in the southern part of Somalia in 2010, which resultantly paved the way for the formation of a government in Somalia. Pakistan

has never been very active in the region regarding trade and investment; however, it remains active in Somalia. The Afro-Pak trade has been constant at the level of $ 2 billion from 2012-2013 to 2016-2017. This trade volume has increased in 2018-2019 up to $ 3 billion, which is still less as Africa's trade in total is $1 trillion annually.[10]

Algeria with 41.66 million population is an oil-based economy. Most of the trade and revenue generation is linked with the oil industry that never let other industries developed.[11] Pakistan was the first in recognizing the independence of Algeria back in 1954 and immediately established relations with the newly independent state. Later, in 1958, a Joint Ministerial Commission (JMC) was established but no further cooperation in terms of trade or any other remained one of the main concerns for a long period.[12] The very first session of this JMC was held in 2005 in Islamabad. Pakistan's relations with Egypt are cordial, however, imports and exports have decreased with time.[13] Pakistan has also been supporting Sudan in its war. Pakistan enjoys friendly diplomatic relations with Ethiopia.

Pakistan's Look Africa Initiative

The Afro-Pak trade volume remains insufficient to enhance the years old diplomatic relationship. Recently, Pakistan has launched its "Look Africa Initiative" to increase the trade volume and better ties. Pakistan has indicated to enhance bilateral as well as multilateral cooperation in the region.[14] The trade conference held in Kenya recently brought stakeholders on a platform to maximize benefits for both sides. Measures in this regard are planned to be taken in several phases. In the first phase, new commercial channels are opened to enhance engagement in Egypt, Tanzania, Ethiopia, Sudan, and Algeria. These commercial sections are relocated from Europe to Africa. The joint working group will be formed with the establishment of the Africa cell for the facilitation of Pakistani entrepreneurs. Research on the possibility of Pakistan's trade with other African countries is also part of the plan. Pakistan is also involved in negotiations with multilateral political and economic establishments within the region, such as South African Custom Union (SACU), East African Community (EAC), and Economic Community of West African States (ECOWAS) for Preferential Trade Agreements.[15] The overall plan of Pakistan so far focuses on countries from every region of Africa. Tanzania, Ethiopia, and Sudan are the eastern countries and Sudan also shares its border with Egypt that is a part of the North of Africa connecting it with the Middle East and North Africa region (MENA).[16] Algeria is also in the plan from North Africa.

A peaceful political environment is important for economic gains for the country itself and the foreign partner as well. Pakistan not only supported Algeria in its struggle of independence from France in the 1950s but also maintained cordial political and economic relations throughout. Pakistan's primary energy consumption is mostly based on natural gas that is imported from Qatar, Iran, and Indonesia.[17] Pakistan is planning to import LNG from Algeria, it will minimize its dependence on Middle Eastern countries.[18] On the other hand, Algeria will have a new market for its LNG export. Another country Pakistan chose to work with is Tanzania. Pakistan has opened an economic channel in Tanzania which is one of the politically stable and economically

sound African countries.[19] Tanzania also has a large number of people of Pakistani descent. There is a receptive environment in the country for strengthening cultural, economic, and diplomatic ties with Pakistan. To strengthen diplomatic relations with Africa, Pakistan naval ships, recently, visited the ports of Casablanca (Morocco), Nouakchott (Mauritania), Takoradi (Ghana), Lagos (Nigeria), Cape Town (South Africa) and Dar-e-Salam (Tanzania).[20] Pakistan navy set up medical camps in port cities for free medical services as a goodwill gesture. Security issues, such as piracy, armed robbery, maritime pollution, and drug trafficking also remained part of discussions during these visits.

Prospects for Pakistan

It is the right time for Pakistan to make a comprehensive policy for the African region when Pakistan's all-weather friend, China, has geared up its investment for development in almost all the underdeveloped countries of Africa. Algeria, the largest country of Africa and an oil-based economy, has significant potential for trade. Algerian economy is mainly government-controlled especially the energy sector. Economic reforms are being done to reduce the unemployment in the country and to attract foreign investment to explore the diversified opportunities of the economy and trade. Algeria and Egypt are much dependent on European and Middle Eastern countries for food items and agricultural products. Sudan has never been conservative in terms of export policies but new export policies are more conducive to attract Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) and expanding its scope from oil products to non-oil products. Unlike Sudan and Algeria, the Ethiopian economy is mainly based on agriculture but they are enthusiastic to grab any opportunity to diversify their export growth. Foreign investment is attracted to textile, leather, agriculture, and manufacturing industries. Ethiopia and Pakistan are having good trade relations for a long time, however, business communities from both sides are keen to open new channels of trade and investment.[21] Somaliland is the huge exporter of livestock, largely dependent on Saudi Arabia, UAE, Yemen, and Oman.[22] Pakistan can fulfill its demand for livestock. Somaliland and Somalia have devastated, poor but open economies as compared to others. They are quite open to foreign investment. In the recent conference held in Kenya, Somaliland showed its interest and invited Pakistan to invest.

The Look Africa Policy initiative is the first step towards the right direction but the implementation of this idea or the action plan towards African markets is very elusive. Certain internal and external factors are playing an obvious role (quandary), making it a hard nut to break. Trade expansion since ancient times requires certain prerequisites, for instance, developing friendly ties and preparing business environment by cultural exchanges. Though Pakistan has already made certain procurement in this context, it has not decided whether to opt for a functional (bottom-up-approach) or federal approach (top-down-approach). For instance, the trade model of the EU is based on functionalism yet the driving force is portraying federalism as they were constantly threatened with the fragile balance of power phenomena.[23] The benefit of functionalism is evident by its success so Pakistan can replicate it with few modifications. This approach requires to get the ball moving steadily. Pakistan has to be very specific and

open to address the prevailing issues or barriers in trade with Africa instead of buck-passing. Contemporarily, both states are working to strengthen their bilateral trade but the Pakistan government is facing a cladding of economic downturn and is trying to bring in investment for the sustainability of the national markets so it is off the wall to invest a fortune in Africa. Consequently, Africa after the seven years of Congo wars, colonization, political turmoil, and social stratification requires time to come up with affluent business investment. There is already growing dissatisfaction in Africa over China's influx and hegemony in their markets. The two narratives are in full swing, one is African romance with China and the second one is depicting China as a new colonial master.[24] So narrowing it down, Pakistan can safely conclude that instead of opting for Chinese influence in Africa, it is in a dire need to use neutralizing and narcissus effect (Look deep into the soul of the people, fathom their inmost desires, their values, their tastes, and their spirits and reflect it to them making yourself in a kind of mirror).[25]

To form a strong base for the future, Pakistan must address and appeal the mind of the individual as "our kingdom lies in each man's mind."[26] Firstly, as there is an everlasting memory of Pakistan peacekeeping missions to bring tranquility in Africa so that must be the first front to strike. Amplify maritime and defense cooperation by engaging in mutual defense deals. Combine security is a perfect ground to deepen strategic and trade relations. Secondly, Pakistan can invest in cultural proximity by joint ventures between Pakistan and Africa. The African fashion industry is having a worth of $15 billion, textile, thereof, can be next immediate raison d'etre.[27] Thirdly, Soccer and cricket are popular games in Africa. Pakistan can work on broadcasting and come up with joint cricket leagues. Cricket craze will further strengthen the ties between both sides as well as it will be another source to increase investment and trade opportunities.[28] Fourthly, tourism has par excellence to surpass the bilateral trade magnitudes to a new horizon. South Africa, Morocco, Egypt, Tunisia could be the unparalleled and preeminent partners in this set-out. Fifthly, China established the CCTV Africa television network in 2016 and made it a part of the voice of the China media group in 2018.[29] This channel is broadcasting China's dramas in English and directly investing in content for African dramas. This is the next field to work and invest to further enhance bilateral trade. Sixthly, about 90 percent of malaria cases are reported in Africa and annually 3000 children have died. Therefore, Pakistan can invest in pharmaceutical industries aiming at 1.2 billion people and it can assist in sanitation projects to harmonize collaboration on major fronts. Lastly, Pakistan must assume formlessness to take a hold of African markets with limited resources, thereof, it must adapt constantly and be fluid as nothing is certain and no law is fixed in the prevailing business trends in the world.

On February 20, 2020, the Ambassador of Morocco to Pakistan, Muhammad Karmoune, announced a potential agreement between Tangier and Gwadar ports to enhance bilateral cooperation at different levels. The port of Tangier is located on the strategically important crossroad (Atlantic and the Mediterranean Sea) of the world.[30] This port can handle 9 million containers simultaneously and 750 companies operate in its platform. This can be adjudged as Morocco's direct inclusion in CPEC.[31] Morocco is interested in promoting trade and business ties between both countries; recently, the

Morocco-Pakistan Joint Business Council has been established to exchange trade delegations that can imperatively identify bilateral trade potential [32] The joint coordination of Pakistan Stock Exchange and Casablanca Stock Exchange of Morocco is also under discussion and high-level meetings were conducted in August 2019 to finalize the framework for future discourse.[33] Pakistan is a significant investor in Morocco's fertilizer production field in Al-Jadida while Morocco is conspicuously interested in Pakistan's Tourism.

Recommendations

There are following policy recommendations for policymakers and practitioners to make the measures most advantageous for Pakistan:

- China and Europe are the competitors in the region for Pakistan. Pakistan may help Algeria through investment to established small industries that may help in revenue generation which decreased in the last few years due to the overall lower prices of oil. Algeria needs support to enhance its potential of exports, hence, Pakistan should avail this opportunity.
- Rice and textile products can be exported to Algeria for which it is highly dependent on European countries. Pakistan should not leave it alone and should use good friendly relations, which it already has with Algeria, to use the potential of its market for Pakistani rice and textile.
- Pakistan may work to lessen Algeria's Libya and Egypt's dependence on Europe that is due to its proximity. They are dependent on Europe for the import of agriculture products and food items. Pakistan can be the major exporter of rice cotton, and textile in the region.
- In all the countries where Pakistan has opened new trade channels, i.e., two from North (Algeria and Egypt) three from East (Sudan, Ethiopia, and Somalia), China is the largest trading partner and this partnership is turning to be the bigger investment.[34] Taking advantage of the opportunity, Pakistan may also offer its services and joint businesses to promote traditional industries as well as establish new sectors. Training programs can be conducted and Pakistan can also send its trained people to provide them training, like China.
- Pakistan should work on peace and stability with the help of the local authorities and stakeholders.
- Pakistan has successfully created a positive image with its diplomatic and economic engagement respectively. Now, there is a need to strengthen it and take it to the next height through the successful implementation of Look Africa Policy. Student exchange programs have already been done.
- Pakistan must take serious steps to cultivate its stature in African markets by predisposing the merger of its media and fashion industry with Africa. Several initiatives can be taken in offing to successfully foster a new image of Pakistan worldwide.

- Military and maritime cooperation can be amplified which in turn can reflect in persuading strategic fronts bilaterally. This can lead to the share of expertise as well as defense deals and investment.
- Tourism offers unexcelled possibilities for future discourse. It could be a nonpareil track to explore and enhance unequaled opportunities for trade and investment between Pakistan and Africa.
- Pakistan's pharmaceutical companies can set sight of Africa aiming a population of 1.2 billion people. Especially, Pakistan can share its experiences of combating with malaria and dengue.
- Pakistan and Africa can work on making collaboration more harmonious by taking initiatives for promoting cricket by engrossing joint cricket leagues and clubs. It all together will further enhance the cultural exchange and investment aperture.
- The Morocco inclusion in CPEC and the investment possibilities in Tourism can open a new window of opportunities for Pakistan in the African continent. Authorities must lend an ear to business communities in both countries to maximize bilateral investment and future cooperation.

Conclusion

Pakistan has cordial relations with African countries from the time of their independence. Since then, Pakistan has its resident mission almost in 13 countries of the region and accreditation for other countries is given to them. Pakistan and Africa have several commonalities and points of common interest. Both have been ex-colonies but there is another similarity particularly with the countries that are under discussion, they share the same religion – Islam. Hence, background, history, and common religion make them sympathetic to each other naturally. Pakistan though does not have a big share in African trade but has always been enjoying cordial relations. Pakistan and Africa have the potential to create a trade-friendly environment in the region together and can fulfill their respective needs. It will take their partnership to the new heights. The new surge of enhancing economic cooperation may bring them more closer and Pakistan can get benefit from Africa's growing importance and changing environment due to political stability. Since 2008, Pakistan is experiencing a smooth transferring of democratic governments that is important for the successful implementation of the Look Africa Policy.

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PAK-US ALLIANCE CURSE: SOME HYPOTHESES

Shafei Moiz Hali, Sumera Iqbal and Adnan Jamil[*]

Abstract

History is replete with examples where the US has influenced various countries to promote its interests and later discarded them to face the ignomity of squalor, poverty, and underdevelopment, etc. It has also been observed that various autocratic leaders and political parties were the recipients of US munificence for their undivided support which resulted in short-term benefits and long-term complications. Such autocratic leaders tend to form coalitions with other elites to legitimize their incumbency as well as to ensure the longevity of power. These coalitions come at a great cost of bad governance. This study, therefore, postulates that US interventionist policies epitomize bad governance in Pakistan. It suggests that a progressive future for Pakistan lies in moving towards alliances with those countries which do not follow interventionist policies. An alliance with common goals can result in a win-win situation, however, strategic alliance with China can serve Pakistan's interests befittingly and successful realization of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor can provide salvation to Pakistan's fledging economy.

Keywords: Alliance Curse, Autocratic Regime, Democracy, Interventionist Policies, CPEC.

Introduction

Democratic Pakistan faces numerous impediments in its drive towards economic prosperity. To highlight, some of the problems, Pakistan is facing, are poverty, extremism, foreign debt, bad governance, inflation, corruption, injustice, energy crisis, unemployment, and food and water shortage. Such issues are decaying the economy of Pakistan. Most of these problems have one underlying cause, i.e., dysfunctional governance apparatus, which is owed to Pakistan's 'alliance curse'. Time and again, the alliance curse has hindered the growth of the institutional capacity of the country's institutions to govern properly. This study explores the concept of the "alliance curse" and attempts to map the concept's application on Pakistan's case graphically and provide recommendations for the country's way forward.

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Alliance Curse Literature Underpinnings

The concept of the "alliance curse", presented by Hilton L. Root in 2008,[1] explains that once asymmetric alliances between first and third world countries are agreed upon based on improving the well-being of both countries. This provides gains for both countries at first. The superpower country benefits in lieu of its political and military influence, and gains policy concessions, such as cheap oil, UN votes[2], military bases or access to strategic routes from the third world country; these gains are highly lauded within the superpower country. The third world partner with an autocratic regime gains a sponsor and a strong supporter which provides protection, the much-needed economic aid, military aid, and abundant credit. This scenario, though, seems like a fair alliance of mutual benefit but as time progresses it becomes a curse for the population residing within the third world partner-country.[3] Within the asymmetric alliance, the leadership in the third world partner-country tends to be autocratic in nature, as autocratic leaders tend to provide quick services when it comes to the provision of benefits to the superpower partner-country.

To understand this curse, the origins of the concept of alliance curse need to be described. The concept is derived from the notion of "resource curse", also known as the 'paradox of plenty'. The concept discusses the irony that natural resource rich countries having large deposits of fossil fuels and precious minerals, have a tendency to exhibit lower levels of economic growth, develop lower democratic traditions, and have poorer mechanisms for development in comparison with countries having fewer natural resources.[4] Many reasons have been cited for the lack of democratization, lower levels of economic growth, and development. The reason which has gained most traction is that natural resource wealth within a developing country breeds corruption and corrupt leaders within these countries tend to collude with the natural resource extraction companies to supersede the country's laws while discounting and suppressing the objections made by the public and opponents.[5] The wealth accumulated from the extracted natural resources which ought to be spent for developing the economy, tends to end up in the coffers of the corrupt leaders, or it is frivolously spent on the construction of grand palaces and colossal showcase projects rather than investing in those sectors which are in dire need of investments, like health, education, job creation, etc.[6]

In the concept of Alliance Curse, the outcome is the same as that of the "resource curse" but the wealth gained from the extraction of natural resources have been substituted by the sponsorship of political legitimacy, economic aid, military aid, protection, and abundant credit from a super power partner. These benefits received by the autocratic leadership within the third world country pave the way for the country to enter into a "development trap", as the legitimacy and support from a superpower partner markedly reduces the incentives for the autocratic leadership to govern the third world country for prosperity and invest in local institutions, which promote accountability and transparency. This is why the assistance received by the third world partner has also been termed as a "hypocrisy trap".[7] Usually, the aid money received by these autocratic leaders plays an important role in providing concessions to a small

coalition of elites within the third world country who in return promise loyalty and provide local legitimacy to the autocratic regime in the face of opposition.[8] The literature mostly attributes the concept of Alliance Curse with the US and its partner developing nations.

US Foreign Policies and Alliances

The case for the existence of Alliance Curse gains much credence from alliances formed by the US after gaining superpower status. Many third world recipients of alliance-rents from the US resultantly felt the ache of governance failures. The outcome of such failures has been exacerbated by the US interventionist policies and forming alliances with autocratic regimes. Figure-1 and Figure-2 below highlight that the US tends forming alliances with and extending aid to corrupt autocratic regimes within the developing world while touting itself as a bastion of democracy.

Figure-1: US Aid to Autocratic Regimes and Democracies
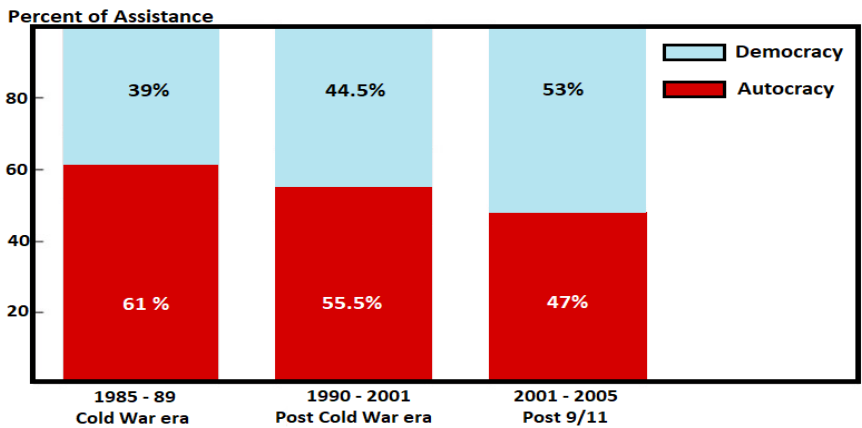
Source: Green Book and PRS Group International Country Risk Indicators

**Figure-2:** US Aid to Autocratic Regimes and Democracies
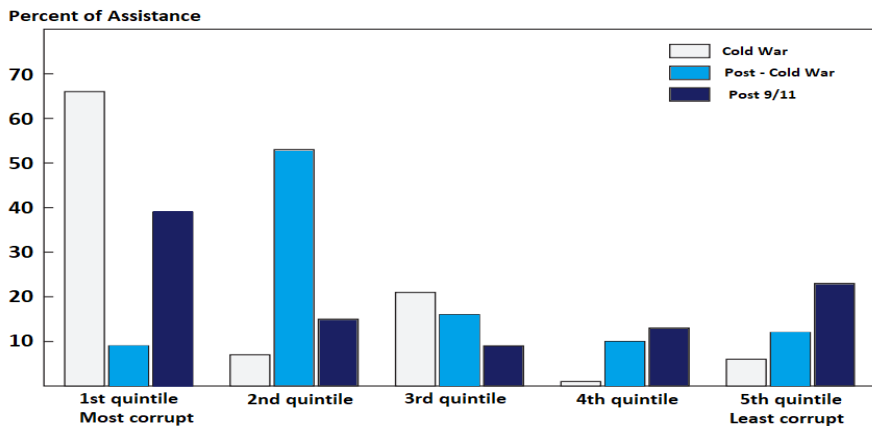
Source: Green Book and the PRS Group International Country Risk Indicators

The US has meddled in the internal affairs of its partner countries as well. History is testimony of US tendency of meddling in affairs of other countries through orchestrating regime changes in its favor. Some examples from contemporary history comprise: March-1949 Syrian coup d'état and 2012 to present attempts at regime change; 1953-Iranian coup d'état and 2005 to present; 1954-Guatemalan coup d'état; CIA's Tibetan Program (although it failed but Dalai Lama and Tibetan insurgents in Nepal continue to receive subsidies); 1956-58 US meddling in Indonesia; 1959-Bay of Pigs invasion of Cuba; 1960-1963 interference in Iraq, later in 1992-96 and the 2003 invasion; 1960-65 Congo Crisis engineered by the US; 1961-Regime change in Dominican Republic; 1963-CIA backed coup in South Vietnam; 1964-Brazilian coup d'état; 1966-military coup in Ghana; 1973-Chilean coup d'état; 1976-Argentine coup d'état; 1979-89 interference in Afghanistan; 1980-Turkish coup d'état; Poland 1980-89; Nicaragua 1981-90; Venezuela 2002 coup d'état attempt; Somalia 2006-7.[9]

Graphical Explanation of the Alliance Curse

It has been explained above that once a superpower and an autocratic underdeveloped country forms an alliance of mutual benefit, this alliance eventually transforms into a curse for the latter. This phenomenon can be explained in Figure-3 below. The graph shows that on the horizontal x-axis the variables "Institution Building" and "Time" are mapped. On the vertical y-axis "wealth" is shown. The graph is U-shaped with its starting point A and ending point C. The curve formed between point A and C showcases the path of transition from Autocracy to Democracy. The slope of the line from point A to point B marks the Alliance with the US. At point B the slope of the line reaches a value where it is no longer feasible for the US to continue its Alliance, which is why the Alliance either ends or significantly weakens. Point B is labeled as the threshold point where a country transitions into a weak and nascent democracy. The concept of Alliance Curse suggests, once an underdeveloped autocratic country enters into an alliance with a superpower it is at point A, where most of the country's wealth is under the control of autocratic leadership.

Figure-3: Alliance Curse Curve
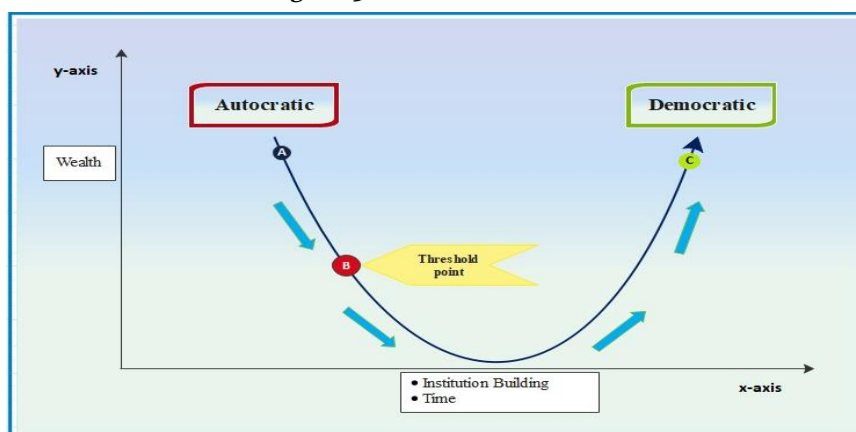
Source: Authors' Compilation based on Hilton Root's Book "Alliance Curse"

The asymmetric alliance tends to last until the country remains autocratic. Once the underdeveloped country crosses the threshold point on the curve, the alliance tends to end or severely weaken. The bulk of the damage done to the developing country and concessions gained by both partners usually lie on the journey from point A to B. As time progresses on the x-axis, the country travels across the curved path, this occurs due to the nature of autocratic regimes in underdeveloped countries where resources are scarce and autocratic leaders face the challenges of remaining in power. The alliance with a superpower translates in to legitimacy, aid money, and protection for the autocratic leaders. However, once these leaders begin reciprocating favors to the superpower partner, most of the times these favors go against indigenous public opinions resulting in widespread opposition. To calm the public, the autocratic leaders seek refuge by giving concessions to the elite within the country. This is usually where the aid money from the superpower comes into use. These power sharing arrangements with the elite, momentarily curb public outcry as the elites in lieu of concessions and gaining their share of power pacify masses under their control.

The power sharing arrangements propagate the country on the path of the curve towards the threshold point as sharing power is constituted as democratic.[10] The superpower country in its bid to gain more concessions; UN votes or military support usually grants debt to the underdeveloped partner. The liquidity achieved from these debts is invested in some much-needed infrastructure projects along with many nonessential projects which are carried out directly or indirectly by the elites breeding corruption. The development of the essential infrastructure projects tends to win the autocratic regime momentary respite from indigenous opposition.[11] The cycle of granting debts and foreign aid by the superpower partner in lieu of concessions keeps indigenous outcry alive, destroys transparency, and breeds corruption[12] in the wake of which foreign investors demand democratic institutions and practices to minimize risk. This forces the autocratic leaders to further the power sharing arrangements with elites to create a facade of a sham democracy.[13] Which brings the country closer to the threshold point with rampant corruption devouring most of the country's wealth including the economic aid and liquidity achieved through foreign debts. Very little efforts are usually made for tax collection owing to the reliance on foreign debt and economic aid packages.

As the underdeveloped partner nears the threshold point, it is more difficult for it to provide concessions to the superpower partner. This occurs because now decisions on granting concessions to the partner-country have to pass through a legislature of elites. This weakens the alliance resulting in curtailing aid packages and mounting foreign debts for the underdeveloped country. With depleting tools to appease the masses as well as means to uphold its ends of bargain within the alliance, the alliance ends and paves the way for extreme public outcry leading to the ouster of the autocratic leaders. The country tends to experience democratic elections and crosses the threshold point. With weak institutions, compounding foreign debt, little or no social programs, rampant corruption, extremely low tax revenues, a small tax base and a handful of assets, and infrastructure developments. This can be seen in the curve that beyond point B it is a sharp decline despite democratic transition and dismal wealth or foreign

reserves. Usually, after this point, numerous developing nations face many years of stringent economic and political reforms before they reach the upward trend in the curve or they propagate in the reverse direction towards autocracy.

Hypothetical Assumptions

This study hypotheses that:

- H_1: An alliance with the US in the long-run weakens democratic transition in Pakistan.
- H_2: An Alliance with the US leads to weakened government institutions in Pakistan.
- H_3: An Alliance with the US curbs sustainable economic growth in Pakistan.

Pakistan and Its Alliance with the US

Pakistan is among the top-ten highest recipients of US aid.[14] Pakistan has factored into US regional plans many times; at first, as an ally to protect US interests in the Middle East and later, as a provider of a spy base to keep a close check on the Soviet Union which triggered the infamous 1962-U2 crisis. Pakistan's inclusion into the SEATO and CENTO military pacts was on the pretext of blocking Communism. Later, as an ally to fight a proxy war against Soviets in Afghanistan and recently as a frontline ally in the war on terror. Most of Pakistan's notable infrastructure projects were undertaken during these times, trade quotas were granted and gained adequate assets during these times. However, the situation for social programs and other important sectors, like education and health sectors, remained bleak.

Pakistan's Asymmetric Alliances

Pak-US asymmetric relations have been formed based on short-term mutual gain, where Pakistan being a weaker partner has to endure the brunt of the problems; "what may at first seem a fair and cooperative mutuality of interests invariably turns out to be unfair to the marginalized population within Pakistan."[15] This is the reason why roughly three-in-four Pakistanis (74%) consider the US an enemy.[16] At one hand, Pakistan is among the top-ten recipients of US aid, contiguously, there is a disdain towards the US from Pakistani public. This study attempts at answering this confounding anomaly by framing the pictures of Pak-US alliances in the frame of "Alliance Curse," explained above.

If we observe the curve in Figure-3 and apply it to the case of Pakistan, we see that whenever Pakistan has been in the ambit of US interests, it lies on the left-hand side of the curve at point A, with an autocratic form of government receiving such support. There have been three major long-reigning autocratic regimes in the history of Pakistan: Ayub's regime, Zia's regime, and Musharraf's regime. The current study

discusses the case of Ayub's and Zia's regimes generally. However, the study discusses the case of Musharraf's regime and post-Musharraf era in detail.

During the time of autocratic regimes, US interests in Pakistan have spiked and rightly so from the perspective of the US, as autocratic regimes can provide the US with which ever assistance they need through "one-window-operation", whether it may be in the form of UN votes, policy support, trade or military support. Each autocratic ruler started at point A and in their bid to remain in power, Pakistan started its downward slide from point A to B and democracy was allowed to sprout. To survive in office, each of the autocratic leaders in Pakistan started as purely autocratic but later established power-sharing arrangements with the ruling coalitions and cultivated political protégé who themselves may have been corrupt to the core and lacked credibility.[17] These coalitions unfolded in the country due to various reasons; international pressures, to appease the public, and to appease the elites who in return promised legitimacy, etc. In the case of each leader these coalitions sparked the journey down the curve from point A towards point C. Each time, Figure-3 shows that due to power-sharing, the wealth was shared and misspent because of the lack of credibility of the coalition and its constituents, massive corruption set in leading to the country's wealth or foreign reserves to deplete when crossing point B; leaving very little room, the climate and sometimes the political will to govern for Pakistan's prosperity. Thus, they succumbed to failures resulting in Pakistan moving back to point A. This reversal highlights an important point; each time, an autocratic regime governed Pakistan, Pakistan was at point A on the graph. The US had a significant interest in Pakistan and aid flow to Pakistan was substantial. This is the reason why the Alliance Curse curve is 'U' shaped; at the lowest point the slope of the line turns to zero. Beyond point B the slope of the line lessens that is when the alliance also tends to end and Pakistan's history presents evidences of this recurring phenomenon. Hence, it can be inferred that H_1 holds.

Alliance Curse during Musharraf Era

General Musharraf assumed power as the Chief Executive of Pakistan in 1999 after Nawaz Sharif's corruption and self-serving undemocratic measures to weaken state institutions crossed the limits.[18] Before the Musharraf era was a time of severe political instability. Four general elections had taken place in a span of 11 years with no politically elected government completing its full term in office. The Musharraf era began with endeavors to rally support with the announcement of his ambitious agenda of political and constitutional reforms which, in his words, would propagate Pakistan away from "an era of sham democracy" and towards effective democratic governance.[19] The economic conditions of Pakistan did not fare any better during the start of the Musharraf era; he was only able to consolidate control and curb corruption. Because of his upsetting the applecart of democracy, Musharraf was treated as a social pariah and economic sanctions were imposed upon Pakistan by the US. However, fortunes changed due to global events. Post-September 11, 2001 terror attacks resulted in Pakistan joining the Global War on Terror as a non-NATO ally translating into economic and military aid packages along with rescheduling of state debts and trade deals which propelled Pakistan's economic growth from 1.9% in the FY 2000-01 to 7.6% in the FY 2004-05.[20]

Pakistan was back at point A on the left-hand side of the Alliance Curse curve which is highlighted in Figure-4 below. General Musharraf started to move the country towards point B in his bid to achieve longevity and legitimacy. Usually, this downward slide is quick and this is evident in the curve, if we observe the x-axis where we have "time" as a variable. Every step he took to appease the public and the elites was democratic in nature and each step got the country closer and closer to the threshold point. He first came to power in 1999, and in 2002, he stated "elections will take place and 100% true democracy will set in Pakistan."[21] In 2002, the government-backed Pakistan Muslim League PML (Quaid-i-Azam) or PML-(Q) formed the government. This road to victory was possible because it benefited from the curbs imposed on its political opponents.[22] This act of creating and backing new political parties out of thin air; based upon loyal elites is what has, time and again, tarnished the fabric of democratic and governance institutions in Pakistan. President Ayub created the Convention Muslim League (CML) which won the 1965-elections by massive rigging.[23] While President Zia decided to hold general elections without the participation of political parties, because he was well-aware of the fact that nonpolitical people are easier to bridle as compared to politically allied people. This sparked major political parties boycotted the elections of 1985.[24] These acts are echoes of the same tune of dismantling democratic institutions in the country and provide the historical evidences for the acceptance of H_2.

Figure-4: Alliance Curse Curve of Musharraf Era
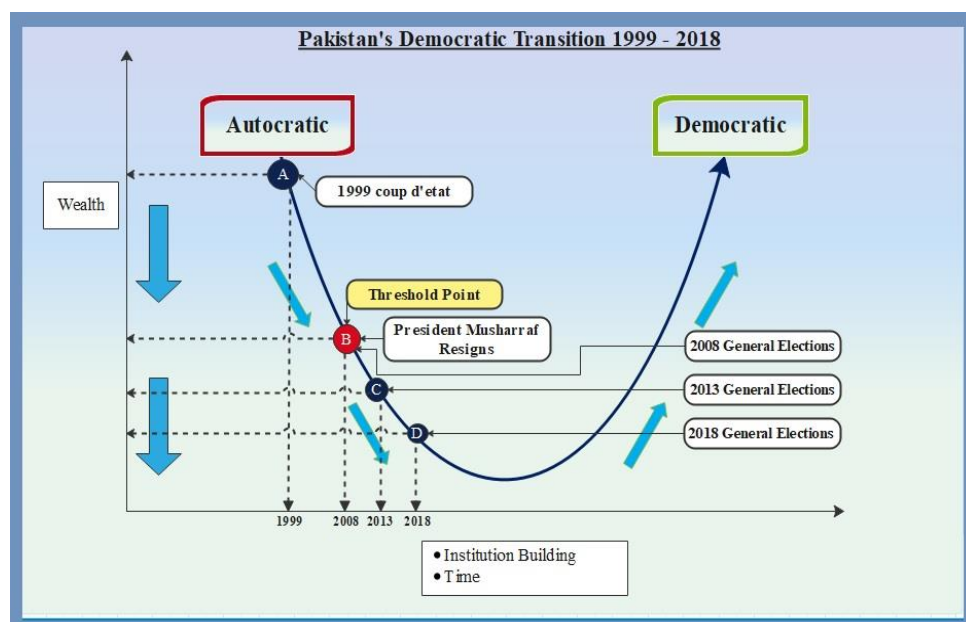
Source: Authors' Compilation based on Hilton Root's Book "Alliance Curse"

Figure-4 highlights that during the Musharraf era, the country kept propagating on the path towards democracy and various steps were taken to appease not only the public but also foreign skeptics of the regime. One of the most drastic steps

was to free the media of Pakistan. Musharraf stated: "I am for total freedom of media, which is the fourth pillar of the state and is the first line of defence in today's democratic world."[25] During his era, Pakistan received many benefits from its alliance with the US and tried to use these funds and concessions for many developmental projects and the list of achievements is quite long as all sectors of the economy experienced tremendous growth. The health spending doubled; 81 new universities and degree awarding institutions were created; 102 mega infrastructure projects were initiated including highways, motorways, power plants, and development of water canals, etc.[26] All these efforts garnered public support at that time. However, despite such massive endeavors, economists in Pakistan remained skeptical, highlighting that without deep economic structural reforms, economic growth is like a house of cards.[27]

The achievements were a result of foreign inflows either as a result of Pakistan's alliance or in the form of foreign direct investments, like acquisition of domestic cigarette manufacturing by America's Altria Group, or through an expansion by existing food and beverage companies, like Pepsi Co, and McDonalds. Major contributions came from the Middle East and China in the telecom sector. These investments did not help in alleviating poverty as none of these sectors employ the poor. It is a known macroeconomic fact that investment in consumer goods and services industry alone cannot lay the foundations for long-term sustainable growth. This is exactly why due to post-2008 global financial crisis, heightened terrorism, and the drastic cuts in foreign aid, Pakistan's economic growth plummeted from 4.8% in 2007 to 1.7% in 2008.[28] The removal of the artificial props brought the unstable house of cards tumbling down. These unsustainable economic policies were not only the hallmark of Musharraf's regime alone. During Ayub's and Zia's regime, Pakistan experienced high economic growth. During the Ayub era, the average annual economic growth was an unprecedented 5.8%, while during Zia's regime, it was 6.5%.[29] However, the economy crumbled each time the regime ended, which is owed to cutoff of US aid packages and unsustainable economic policies. These repeat performances provide clear historical evidences for the acceptance of H_3.

The seeds of the economic decline during the Musharraf era were hydrated early into Pakistan's alliance with the US. In 2003, Pakistan started to bear the cost of its contributions in alliance with the US. Terrorist attacks became rampant in the country between the years 2000 and 2008. A total of 13,706 fatalities occurred owing to terror attacks in Pakistan.[30] These terrorist attacks started to dry up foreign investment in Pakistan and negative sentiments in the public picked up steam. At the same time, Musharraf's each step towards democracy brought the country closer to the threshold point B in Figure-4, which meant lessening US support. When President Musharraf decided to make a deal with the exiled political leaders to return, it led to free and fair elections to be held in Pakistan. This "was the point of departure … there were conflicts, of values and interests, electing rulers appears nothing short of miraculous."[31] This is when Pakistan reached the threshold point on the Alliance Curse curve while fulfilling the "minimalist concept of democracy"[32] and soon after President Musharraf resigned from office at the threat of impeachment, which is highlighted in Figure-4.

Post-Musharraf Era

It can be observed in Figure-4 that after crossing the threshold point B, the Pakistan's People's Party (PPP) had gained majority seats in the 2008-elections. The conditions to govern became miserable with a crippling economy, rampant terrorist attacks, fleeing foreign investments, corruption and the alliance with the US was treading on shaky ground. The average GDP growth for a developing country hovers around the 3% mark globally owing to population rises.[33] During the PPP government, Pakistan's economy grew at an average of merely 2.46% which was far below the requirements to cater for unemployment in a developing country.[34] Despite such conditions, PPP was able to complete its 5-year term and for this miraculous success much is owed to two main factors which differed from that of previous regimes in Pakistan. First, credit goes to Musharraf era's political reforms as Pakistan cultivated various essentials of democracy, like freedom of press, local elections at the grass root level and women empowerment, which provided a better political climate. Secondly, alliance with the US did not completely end beyond point B in Figure-4. The US was still actively involved in its Global War on Terror and needed Pakistan's assistance. Though aid packages had witnessed significant cuts but were still being received by the country.

In 2013, general elections were held in Pakistan after the successful completion of the PPP government's 5-year term in power. This is highlighted in Figure-4 at point C. Yet, it can be observed in Figure-4 that the wealth and economic conditions have worsened between points B and C. Later, we see at point D that another 5-year term of a politically elected government completed with a peaceful transition of power. However, the economic conditions remained worsened as the decline is evident between points C and D on the curve. Despite this decline, these successful transitions between politically elected governments is a major democratic achievement as it can be viewed in Figure-4 that Pakistan is inching towards the rise as time is progressing and institutions are gaining strength.

The continued decline beyond point B carrying forward through points C and D in Figure-4 is owed to lower levels of wealth and weak government institutions, which hinder the politically elected governments to operate at full capacity. The capacity of democracies to take difficult and pressing decisions in critical times is limited due to the complexities of reaching a consensus. The politically elected governments in Pakistan being weak tend to put off hard decisions and resort to fractional solutions instead of long-term solutions. Such temporary and half-hearted measures further escalate the problems and pile on additional problems resulting in a rapid depletion of wealth. This case of draining of wealth and bad governance spreads social unrest and loss of confidence in the government. Once the situation gets worse, people also lose faith in democracy, which is why, in the past, Pakistan underwent elections before their stipulated time or the situation had worsened to a point where the military had to take over and salvage the situation. Pakistan has experienced four periods of military rule which have consumed 35 out of its 73 years of independence. Since independence, the

country has been playing hide-and-seek with democracy,[35] thus, suffering from a development trap.

What is the Development Trap?

The development trap is explained within the concept of the Alliance Curse as the predicament, which the underdeveloped partner-country enters into at the cost of its alliance with a superpower.[36] In Pakistan, it has been observed that democracy has failed repeatedly, thus, paving the way for rekindling an alliance with the US. This phenomenon is evident in Figure-5 below. During autocratic regimes, Pakistan has a strong alliance with the US because of which aid money sparks a short-term economic revival and these economic appreciations are highlighted in the red shaded areas of the graph. Soon after such regimes end, the aid money disappears and economic downturns are experienced which are labeled in Figure-5.

Figure-5: Pakistan's GDP Growth in Different Regimes
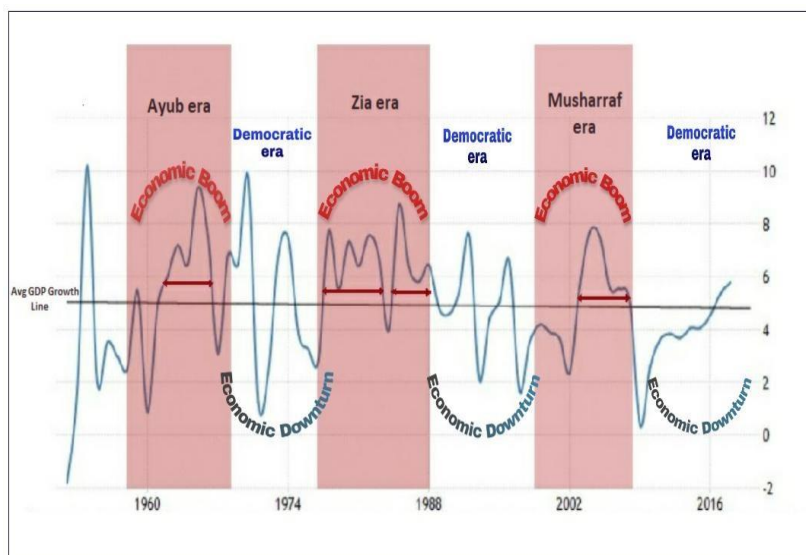
Source: Authors' Compilation

This cycle of the development trap can be explained by its four characteristics: firstly, the aid money weakens incentives for Pakistan to lay the foundations for serious policy reforms; secondly, the aid money is substituted for domestic resources, which is why no real efforts have been made to widen the tax net (currently only 0.3% of Pakistanis pay direct tax[37]); thirdly, the leaders of Pakistan spend their time firefighting rather than governing for prosperity; and fourth, characteristic is that, once a new government is formed and attempts to bring positive change, these efforts are halted by frail institutional capacity resulting in compelling the leaders to resort to saving face and buying time to complete their terms at the cost of foreign debts.

Political scientists believe that democracy's survival and endurance depend upon affluence, growth with moderate inflation, declining inequality, favorable

international climate, and parliamentary institutions.[38] However, each time, Pakistan crossed the threshold point B before the Musharraf era; none of the above conditions were met. It is believed that "the more well-to-do a country, the greater the chance for it to sustain democracy."[39] In 2008, the per capita income in Pakistan was $1010[40] and has been on a rise every year, thus, keeping alive the hope of sustaining democracy. "Newly formed democracies with per capita income at $1,000 have a 0.22 probability of falling apart within a year after their income falls (giving them a life expectancy of less than five years) and 0.08 probability (or expected life of 12.5 years), if their income rises."[41] If we look at the past, Zulfiqar Ali Bhutto became the head of state in 1973, the per capita income in Pakistan was well below $1000 and same was the case after General Zia's death, thus, rendering the situation unconducive for sustainable democracy.

Figures 3 and 4 not only highlight the forward downward trajectory but also indicate a way forward leading to prosperity as every bust paves the way for a boom. The graph explains that, with every passing year, on the x-axis, institutions are postulated to get stronger and in the event of enduring these hard times beyond point B in Figure-4. Many political scientists like Scott Mainwaring argue that parliamentary democracies that meet the 25-year minimum of consecutive peaceful transitions tend to become stable democracies.[42] In Pakistan, two consecutive terms of politically elected governments have already completed and is getting closer towards achieving sustainable democracy. This is also evident in Figure-4 where the completion of consecutive 5th term would lie; that is where the curve is moving towards a sharp incline. In the recent past, Pakistan witnessed that though the 7-8% annual economic growth of President Musharraf's era has dwindled, democratic norms have started to take root.

Pakistan-China Relations

The people of Pakistan view their salvation in stronger ties with China, as 78% of the people of Pakistan think this to be true.[43] Since Pakistan is weary of foreign interventions, especially from the US, the masses see in their neighborhood a country, China, which commenced its journey at the same time when Pakistan did and has transformed itself in the second-largest economy of the world without any intervention. Building stronger relations with China appeals Pakistan concerning Chinese foreign policy based on five guiding principles:[44] equality, mutual benefit, mutual respect, respect for territorial integrity, and respect of sovereignty. It is only in the past three decades that China has been able to exert its foreign policy options on other countries owing to its massive economic growth and expansion of trade across the world.

CPEC is a part of the larger Chinese plan to build a network over land and sea with a string of projects connecting the Baltic Sea with the Pacific Ocean via roads, rails and sea lines for free trade. This transnational vision of free trade of the Chinese is supported by their policy framework of the One Belt One Road (OBOR) or Belt and Road Initiative (BRI). CPEC promises brighter future relationship between Pakistan and China along with sustainable economic prosperity as it emphasizes greater measures across the board in all sectors of inter-government relations ranging from security,

foreign policy, energy, industry and infrastructure[45]. China's resolve to uphold its promises was made real by President Xi-Jinping's visit to Islamabad on April 20-21, 2015, which set the tone of the Pakistan-China relations for the future. Pakistan and China signed 51 Memorandums of Understanding (MOU) during President Xi-Jinping's visit to Islamabad.[46] These MOU will yield new roads and movement of goods and services between the two countries. They assure projects regarding public service, infrastructure development, linking Pakistan with other countries like the central Asian states and the development of Gwadar port which can transform Pakistan into a trade hub. CPEC is the answer for sustaining democracy in Pakistan past the threshold point illustrated in Figures 3 and 4.

Conclusion

Pakistan's democracy is still evolving and faces tremendous threats and challenges. In this ever-changing world where new economic and military powers are emerging in the world, Pakistan needs to set its priorities straight and choose its allies with care. It has been amply argued in the study that US aid is a "hypocrisy trap" which brought more harm than prosperity in Pakistan. The study provides evidence for the acceptance of all three hypotheses. The US despite its strategic failure in Afghanistan puts the onus of the withdrawal of US forces from Afghanistan on Pakistan, which is a serious concern for Pakistan, thus, resulting into a clear shift of Pakistan foreign policy towards China, who has taken a keen interest in investing in the region for promoting peace, trade, and prosperity. Pakistan is now a budding democracy; the only thing lacking is economic growth, which is hindering its capacity to reach its true potential. Various governments in Pakistan have indulged in the rhetoric to break the begging bowl and seek trade, not aid. Such claims proved hollow since Pakistan lacks the requisite infrastructure to seek its industrial goals and establishment of energy projects including those tapping the nature for alternate sources of power. China is the natural partner for the way forward.

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NARRATIVE CONSTRUCTION AND ITS SOCIAL VITALITY

Qasim Ali Shah, Bahadar Nawab and Arifullah Khan[*]

Abstract

Resilient narrative construction confines to the prevalence and function of Ideolog-based conflicts. While robust coordination and substantial enforcement strategies enhance the social vitality of narrative to bring about the desired social change. This article seeks to explore the narrative construction and its social vitality in the context of conflict and societal development. New narrative theoretical discourse reveals that deliberate narrative construction concentrates on individuals and society to redirect them in accordance with the wishes of narrative mentors. The conflict engendering elements like containment, self-identification of the individuals, and social positioning are, thus, subordinated to the narrative. This paper while using the narratological framework is looking at the phenomenon of socio-anthropological change from the perspective of narratology. The study could be of importance to students of low-intensity conflicts and militancy, especially corresponding to terrorism. The paper concludes that this new outlook of narrative has enlarged its scope beyond the corridors of literature into the renewed field of social narratology with an immense bearing on human behavior and attitudes.

Keywords: Narrative Construction, Identity, Social Change, Narrative Binalization, Hermeneutic.

Introduction

Human interactions within the social framework remained a subject of prime importance for social scientists. How do humans interact with each other? Why do they act in a specific way in a situation? Can human behavior be predicted? Furthermore, how human behavior might be channeled in a specific direction, both individually and communally. These and many other questions have baffled the human mind for long. In the recent past, the study of narrative further expanded the list of such questions, incorporating a variety of social science disciplines. The present-day interest in the narrative study is mostly due to the belief that narrative identifies an overwhelming way of human understandings of self and society that can be helpful in finding answers to many such queries.[1] This has increased the level of attention towards narratives in past decades, not only in the field of literature studies but also in many other branches of social studies encompassing sociology, legal studies, rhetoric and

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anthropology.[2] The importance given to narrative can be judged from the fact that even the scholars of human discourse seem inspired by Kenneth Burke's (1897-1993) concept of "dramatism"[3] as a foundation when looking at the narrative dimensions of social life.[4] This new beginning ended the old concept of narrative as a mere representational form and narratology became a conceptual part of social epistemology and ontology.[5] This conceptualization has realized that people perceive their surroundings through narratives and it is narrativity through which people form, direct, and redirect their identities in social environments.[6] Hayden White further elaborates on the idea by using an umbrella term "Metacode" for a narrative that results in the transcultural permeability of "messages about a shared reality."[7]

Precisely, narratives are compelling storylines that can explain events convincingly and from which inferences can be drawn."[8] Labov and Waletzky (1967) define narrative as a particular way of reporting past events with intended interpretations excluding the actual sequence of the happenings. Narratives are not dependent on the placement of a particular event to attain certain meanings or ascertain the meaning of a single specific occurrence rather narratives follow the path of historical outlook and make events related to each other for deriving a logical meaning.[9] Narratives are important as they give a conceptualized form to human society.[10] However, this does not restrict narrative just to the ontological level as no social change can be attributed solely to this level or even to a popular narrative. By incorporating all the essential social forces, factors and realities, narratives attain the shape of an overwhelming entity that encompasses all aspects of society.[11] Keeping in view this new stature of narrative, Corinne Squire in his study considers narrative central to the process of social change in the modern world.[12]

The 9/11 incident, besides others, changed the outlook of narrative approach and made it an important field of socio-cultural study that can mobilize people and decide issues concerning peace and conflict simultaneously. This triggered a vigorous scholarly pursuit to understand the inherent mechanism of narrative in the context of its social applicability. In 2005, a clergy named Fazlullah appeared in Swat with an outwardly religious agenda. By 2007, he had the support of an overwhelming majority of people in the area. For almost two years, until the success of military operations against him, he had turned the area into a conflict zone. This conflict might seemingly be a minor incident if looked at from a global perspective but contextually, this phenomenon raised many important questions for sociologists and anthropologists.[13] The people in Swat were guided in a specific direction through a narrative so powerful and appealing that they not only accepted it but also considered it as their only way to achieve a better life. [14] The Swat conflict, thus, raised many theoretical questions about the understanding of social narratives that could lead to more conflicts on one hand and social change and redirection of mass and individual thinking on the other.

This paper stems from the research study conducted in the Swat area, where the narrative of militancy played its role in originating a violent conflict. Similarly, peace was restored by floating a counternarrative along with the use of force.[15] In the context of recent global urge for narratological explanations, this paper is an effort to

understand the construction mechanism of social narratives in correlation to human identification ranging from self to society and equate its standing with the socio-cultural basis of conflict situations and peace.

Theory of Narrative

The narrative paradigm suggests that all human activities ranging from family to social interactions are at least in part the result of many related stories in which individuals as social beings place or locate themselves.[16] A few decades ago, many historians were skeptical about the narrative explanations of such activities.[17] But at the same time, unintentionally, the concept of narrative permeated into the epistemological frameworks of many disciplines.[18] After introducing the term 'narratologie' (narratology) in the late 1960s by Tzvetan Todorov, many scholars have ventured into the field to understand its role in social understanding, social behavior, and social interactions, both at theoretical and practical levels.[19] Many social scientists like Todorov (1969) reflected that ultimately narratology would move a step ahead from a GUFTON (Grand Unified Field Theory of Narrative) to a GUFTOL (Grand Unified Field Theory of Literature). But post-classical narratologists did not stop there and boldly ventured beyond literature toward an interdisciplinary GUNTOC (Grand Unified Narrative Theory of Culture).[20] The inherent shortcoming of the sociological theories has always been its tilt towards the study of observable behavior of the society.[21] It precludes the debates of social beings, self or social identity and the ontological foundlings from its sphere of research. This has taken a rather simplistic turn by categorizing the society based on interests, logical or practical preferences that captivate people, who are then driven in the society through societal norms and values.[22] Narratology, on the other hand, concentrates on the development of human personality embedded in a socio-cultural environment with a significant impact on the behavior of an individual and society as a whole. These developments may not necessarily be observable in an individual but may come out in the form of mass observable behavior stretched over time.[23]

Narrative Construction and Its Application

The production of narrative and counternarrative (in the shape of propaganda, strategic communication, and public diplomacy) has been a process used by different people and states to achieve their political objectives. The Europeans constructed narratives to justify their empirical designs and colonial rule that existed for more than 500 years. The main justifications were given in the form of religious duty to "take up the white man's burden."[24] Similarly, at the beginning of the communist revolution in the USSR, Stalin's narrative was to free the world from imperialism.[25]

The recent framework that provides guidelines to understand the narrative construction mechanism was developed by Labov and Waletzky (1967). In this framework, Robert Scholes and Robert Kellogg (1966) consider four basic elements essential for narrative in the context of social sciences. These elements include relationality of parts, causal emplotment, selective appropriation, and temporality

(sequence and place)."[26] Combining these parts gives narrative a shape, making it a combination of related parts, set in a specific time period as a logical result of the causal emplotment.[27] In narrative world, the meaning of a single event only intensifies itself when it is seen in connection with the other parts of the sequence. Therefore, the connectivity of parts gets importance in a narrative that gives complete circumstantial and spatial relevance with the audiences.[28] The Cold War narrative of the US which was popularized by connecting the events like Cuban Missile Crises with otherwise different events like the USSR's policy at home to make the USSR guilty of totalitarian and anti-democratic behavior.[29] It must be kept in mind that narratives are intentional and not unsponsored texts, which are coined to direct the audiences towards the desired aim.[30] Narratives are derived from a range of conditions prevailing in a society. The existing deprivation is manipulated to make narrative relevant and attractive in a, somehow, deprived society.[31] Narratives are more effective socially because contrary to other scientific claims, narratives cannot be falsified through verifications as they never claim to be true or false rather it only attains verisimilitude.[32] This verisimilitude gives narratives the sanctions of audiences without its verifiability. In this connotation, the difference between narrative fiction and narrative truth gets blurred.[33] This trait of narratives played a vital role in Al Qaeda's anti-American narrative, which branded the US as an anti-Muslim state and West as an arch-enemy of the Islamic world as a whole.

Coining a narrative is beyond a simple selection of happenings from people's lives, histories, or fictional fantasies and giving them suitable order. Rather the events themselves are to be constructed keeping in view the particular narrative. The events go hand in hand with the narratives, as Propp (2010) would call them functions of the story. Similarly, it also has to come up with a difference between good and bad according to the taste of its audiences.[34] However, narrative must be planned to have uncanniness and not to give solutions. It is seldom supposed to be on right or wrong side, rather it is the prerogative of the people who assimilate it according to their perception.[35]

The popularization of a narrative is the main focus after its construction. Narratives are fundamentally constructed to direct masses towards a specific direction and achieve the targeted goals. Many social scientists argue that the desired interpretation of narrative is achieved amidst the confusions of human minds, which narratives clarify.[36] Some scholars consider that narrative banalization mostly functions in the success and popularity of a narrative.[37] In this case, a narrative is socially so obvious, so familiar, and so normative that it can be given some popular and well-known interpretation. [38] This kind of narrative construction and automatic interpretation are always obvious in religion-based indoctrinations. The initial popularization of anti-Army and anti-state narrative of the Tehrik-e-Taliban Pakistan (TTP) used the same to gain grounds in Swat and tribal-belt of Pakistan.

The narrative construction and popularization mechanism at some stage concentrate on the hermeneutic theory, where the hermeneutics of the audience plays a vital role. According to Burner (1996), hermeneutics is communication or textual imagery, where one party is conveying a meaning and the other party is deducting a

meaning from a discourse. It is important to note that the expression of words might be different from the meaning deducted by the reader or listener.[39] Another important prerequisite for a successful narrative is the background knowledge of both the narrator and the listener and how each interprets the past knowledge of the other party.[40] The background knowledge of the teller differs from the knowledge of the person who is receiving and perceiving it.[41] Again, this aspect of narrative worked well for the religious based terrorist organizations across the world, where seemingly simple peaceful religious narrations urged many to become violent militants. A successful narrative does not rely only on the value system, interests or hatreds of its targets[42] rather it holds a firm historical and cultural ground, where it is not threatened from any falsification or any future reliability test.[43]

In the narrative domain, both script and normative breaches provide rich grounds for innovation within the contents of narrative. This room for innovation makes storyteller a powerful figure in a culture with power to divert and direct the populace according to his/her whims.[44] The tellability of a narrative is dependent upon the breach in social norms and traditions which rallies people around it, ready to accept it, therefore, the very construct of narrative is normative in nature.[45] The importance of narrative in a society ranges from self-identity to social conflict (both violent and non-violent) and conflict transformation that lead to intended social change. Narrative in such role manifests itself in ideology-based conflicts enormously. Historically, narrative has been used by different entities in the same context. The theoretical explanation for social vitality of narrative is discussed in succeeding paragraphs.

Narrative and Self-identity

The modern-day need for attainment of identity has become an issue of rights related to expression and legitimacy that brought in new theoretical explanations.[46] Majority of the theories related to identity-politics has transformed social activities into a new frame of identities and solidarities rather than interests and norms and from the idea of globalized social activism to particular group of real individuals.[47] Social life for every individual emanates from his/her understanding of the social environment where he/ she lives. The important questions are: How does an individual develop his or her perception about the social happenings? What is the role of this perception in the process of interpreting and understanding an unfamiliar situation? To determine these social realities, first an individual must locate and identify himself mentally and physically in his social environment. Interestingly, the understanding about identity and the aim of identity are not stagnant rather they are built and rebuilt in the perspective of interior and exterior relationship of time, place and social power structure, which are also continuously changing.[48] In narratology, at ontological level, individuals use stories to perceive and incorporate their surroundings to play their part in social life. It is this perception that ontological narratives help in self-identification which proves decisive in undertaking any social responsibility. The narrative and ontology, thus, supplement each other as ontological standings produce new narratives, triggering new actions and producing further new narratives. Thus, the mutual reinforcing relationship between ontology and narrative goes on uninterrupted.[49] It

gives an urge towards conflict, choosing sides in conflict, its resolution and social change in human society.

Narrative maintains a main position in attaining cohesiveness and continuity among different dimensions of the inner being. In the context of identity formation, narrative performs two functions, i.e., descriptive and constructive. The descriptive functioning of narrative removes the incoherencies in social experiences and provides a causal coherency to the individual life as a whole. The constructive function of narrative provides a direction in hapless or unusual situations through an external intervention.[50] Narratives act as a route to find identities and after the consolidation of these identities, narrative points out social problems along with an advisable way to deal with them (Figure-1).

Figure-1: Construction of Narrative Identity

Individual — Narrative — Sense of Identity and Goal

Source: Autor's own Compilation

Sociocultural Basis of Narratives

As mentioned, the post-classical narratologists consider narratives as the basic sociological phenomenon, which initiates social conflicts, resolves social conflicts, and plays a deep-rooted role in social change and yet beyond. Vygotsky is considered as the pioneer of the idea that in any social and cultural environment, the cultural symbols and language along with other specific values reflect themselves in the representations of reality. Brown and Collins (1989) categorized it as distributed intelligence that refers to the same identity formulation process.[51] No human can think in solo when it comes to his or her interaction with society. Resultantly, no individual can then be understood without knowing his social and cultural past, his interactions, environments, and companions.

Human society develops stories that originally represent the life records of people in the form of narration, composed of subjective versions, myths, and causal explanations of their realities for their actions.[52] Narratologists see culture as local strength for accumulating the record of past events in the form of stories into some kind of diachronic configuration. While everybody from Aristotle to the recent narratologists agrees that a story always bases itself on a violation of the value system, however, breaches are conceived differently in different cultures, denoting the variations in cultures.[53] After the 1950s, the absoluteness of social reality was challenged through skepticism and even the ways and means of reaching or constructing realities in social life were questioned that changed the outlook towards the normative program of narrative (both literary and popular). The view is based on the assumption that narrativity and relationship of events contribute more than anything else towards social

identities, social awareness, social activism, institution building, social structural blueprints, and even society in totality.[54]

Narratologists believe that social realities ranging from individual identity, group identities, social networking, social interactions, and social way of perceiving and acting all emanates from narrativity. This idea gives a room for accepting the constant existence of particular social identities, which are heterogeneous.[55] In the narrative identity view, individuals or groups are parts of relationships and stories that go beyond the limits of time and space and are never static. In this context, the narrative-based identity theory seems similar to White's relational epistemologies.[56] The narrative approach stresses that social activity can only be understood if it is accepted that people do not act in isolation, but they are directed by social structures and cultural-based identity. Thus, identity construction occurs in the relational settings of complicated but intelligible dealing between narratives, individuals, and social structures.[57] There is always a defined and small stock of symbols and stories available in each society to be utilized for the construction of a narrative. All narratives which a society accepts in any form are specific in nature and scope, both historically and culturally, but a certain situation that utilizes these narratives is abrupt and cannot be predicted in advance.[58]

Conflict and Narratives

The study of narratives in the context of conflict is not new. Scholars have mentioned the presence of master-narratives in the communicative strategies both at theoretical and practical levels, for example, the narrative of Capitalism and Communism.[59] They are also known as meta-narratives, which are dominant and in line with an ontological position of a group. Down the ladder, social theories and ideas are developed keeping these master-narratives at the center, dominating all spheres of life. These narratives can be the major conflicts of the era like Capitalism vs. Communism, the Individual vs. Society, and Barbarism vs. Civility.[60] The narratives of this nature also proved historically teleological, as Marxism explained itself in the form of a victorious working class, Liberalism unfolded itself in the form of social liberty, western culture in the shape of democracy and the rise of nationalism in the form of state system. In these narratives, people are embedded as contemporary actors in history and as social scientists at the same time.[61] The American narrative of the war against despotic rulers in the Middle East arrayed the world opinion in its favor by using the historical happenings of World Wars, where dictators were given unchecked space.

Narratives and counternarratives are being used for centuries as conflict-promoting and conflict-resolving tools. Retrospectively, Hitler used the narrative of Nazism by incorporating the concept of racism and religion. Italian fascism evolved its narrative by giving a pivotal role to the state. Seemingly, the Soviet anti-colonial stance, Hitler's anti-Darwinist, and Mussolini's mixed approach of socialism and capitalism were counternarrative strategies to the narrative floated by colonial West.[62]

The new outlook of narratology has given it an outreach from self to society and then to conflict, peace, and social change. The narratives or stories, which are told

in times of conflict and war, are very important both for the conflict intensification and its resolution. The narratives of conflict instigate, direct, and redirect the parties involved; according to Thornton, this is a special sociocultural job that narratives perform in such situations.[63] Narratives provide a structural framework for brutal actions during the conflict by connecting different happenings chronologically or by keeping in view the mental trends of the people. This helps narrators to portray the most violent events in an acceptable way on one hand and make them logical and eminent on the other. According to Ben Okri, "when we have made experience or chaos into a story, we have transformed it, made sense of it, transmuted experience, domesticated the chaos."[64] Feldman sums up the conflict's relationship with the narrative. According to him, it is the narrative that decides during a conflict situation that which happening can be categorized as an event and that will certainly decide the fate of people linked with conflict.[65]

Social conflicts whether violent or non-violent are fundamentally driven by narratives. The pace of conflict, the vigor of the parties, and changing positions are all handled by a narrative. Peter Bruck says: "Crises are specific forms of discourse which build on specific codes of significance that allow the exercise of authority, the establishment of failures and the attribution of guilt and responsibility with ensuing sanctions."[66] In conflict situations, groups predominantly close their understandings to the opposing methodological or factual historical explanation. This results in adamant attitudes that can hardly be changed through normal contradictions. One of the main reasons in this regard is the inflexible narrative position leading to a strictly predetermined set of attitudes, perceptions and opinions on the narration of conflict, entertained by the opposing parties.[67] Interestingly, the more we contradict the narrative, the more opposition we get which could be quite opposite to what is expected.[68]

Conflict Transformation and Narratives

Narratives perform a vital role in conflict transformation by introducing counter or new narratives. They are essential to transform or divert the conflict or achieve new goals. Appropriate narratives for befitting situations can achieve the complex goals of political and social consciousness.[69] In a conflict situation, the ideological base of a conflicting group directly predicts the construction of new narratives, which take a practical shape only after the depicted stages with certain external variables. For example, after World War-II, an agenda of intense narrative intrusion was introduced in Western Europe and this program was enormously important in the upbringing of new generations of Germans, French, and other Westerners, who were liberated from the oppressive prejudices and traumas of World War-II.[70] The Europeans instead of digging for deep-rooted explanations developed a catchy and understandable basic narrative – blaming Germans – for World War-II destruction. At the later stage, they developed a particular kind of narrative in which all were portrayed as victims, "never again can we do this to ourselves."[71] To re-enforce the narrative and make it more attractive, the common-victims narrative was connected with a common-future narrative of the European Union.[72] It was the strength of these

narratives that convinced the Europeans to forget about the destructions of World War-II and directed them towards the achievement of a unified goal of prosperity and development.

Thinking of narratives without conflicts, of conflicts and their resolutions without narratives seems odd. However, the absence of an agreeable narrative for conflict resolution may lead to complications. The study of Azerbaijan's narratives on the Karabakh conflict shows the difficulty in finding an appropriate narrative, which could have paved the way towards a compromise between opposing parties. [73] Sonenshein (2010) derives a new kind of narrative approach from the Karabakh conflict, termed as the method of progressive narrative transformations.[74] As conflicts breed many competing narratives, this method finds the ways to converge different narratives themselves into a new common narrative to attain the satisfaction of competing parties. This common narrative can be used to attain a common ground for shared interests at present and in the future avoiding violent conflict.[75]

Conclusion

The concept of narrative is not new in literature but the new orientation of narratology has taken impetus on the pretext that they are well-defined storylines which are deliberately floated to direct or prevent a specific social action. The recent standing of narratology is that narratives conceptualize society. Narratives are developed and constructed with certain goals and attain social acceptability only when they propose an alternative to the existing situation that has historical and normative sanctions of an existing cultural entity. Narratives play important role in matters ranging from self-identity to social identity, conflict and conflict transformation which increases its social vitality in the context of social change. In light of this and other similar studies, it can safely be said that narrative has gained impetus to attain the desired level of social change in comparison to the grand theory of Sociology. However, further research is needed to ascertain the hidden factors that might accompany the narratives in the process of social change and identity politics.

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