

KASHMIR AFTER THE 9/11: IMPLICATIONS AND OPTIONS FOR PAKISTAN

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General

'Kashmir', is described by Mughal Emperor Jehangir in The 17th century A.D, "as a garden of eternal spring or an iron fort to a palace of kings". The saga of Kashmir is sad and mournful. It is a piece of heaven on earth¹. It is the most beautiful landscape with snow clad mountains, high plateaus, gushing streams, rippling founts, lush green valleys, grassy pastures, juicy fruits, rich minerals and bewitching human beauty having no parallel. During its recorded civilized history, Kashmir's political borders varied from time to time i.e its borders have expanded and shrunk. At times it formed part of great neighbouring empires where as, most of the time, it remained independent having its own kingdom. As per Dr. Radha Krishan Parmu, under strong and magnificent Kings, the Himalayan mountain ranges secured the valley from foreign intrusions and under weak kings, owing to their complacency and laxity of control over the passes, Kashmir fell an easy prey to the adventurers, missionaries and conquerors. However, even when the state was part of any other empire or kingdom, it has always maintained its distinct identity. Kashmir assimilated foreign influences, like the sea receiving waters of different rivers from distant lands².

Kashmir got the status of princely state after 1846. British East India Company, which had taken control of the most of present Indo-Pak Subcontinent by then, sold the state to Maharaja Gulab Singh, (Dogra Ruler) for a sum of seventy-five lacs (Nanak Shai) on 16 March 1846. Dogras ruled the state till 1947, when colonial rule ended over the subcontinent and Pakistan and India came in to being as independent states. As per partition plan, being a Muslim majority state, Kashmir was to form part of Pakistan³. However, non-muslim Maharaja of Kashmir was forced by India to sign a so called instrument of accession with India, once the Indian forces had

already landed at Srinagar airport and resultantly war broken out between Kashmiris and Indian forces. India took the matter to United Nations Organization, where it was decided that future of the state will be decided through a plebiscite under UN auspices. Successive Indian governments, however under one or other pretext, dilly-dallied the process of plebiscite until it declared the state as its integral part. Pakistan however, did not accept Indian stance/claim on Kashmir and regarded the state as a disputed territory. Indian non-compromising attitude had caused three wars over the state in last fifty-six years without any decision⁴.

Kashmiris renewed their struggle for freedom from Indian yoke in 1989/90. The struggle was purely political. However, Indian state forces unleashed their brutalities on unarmed / innocent Kashmiri protestors. Resultantly Kashmiris also took arms for their protection. During this phase of struggle more than eighty thousands Kashmiris have been martyred beside events of torture, rape and illegal detention. In spite of her all out efforts, Indian forces failed to suppress the just struggle of Kashmiris in last fourteen years.

This paper examines the Kashmir dispute post 9/11 – implications and options for Pakistan, vis-à-vis Indian Strategic planning to involve Pakistan as a state sponsoring terrorism, while being a US partner in its war against terrorism. A brief history of Kashmiris struggle for their right of self-determination will also be examined.

Indian and Pakistani Staud on Kashmir

Pakistan's view point. Since partition of sub continent, Pakistan has a very clear view point on Kashmir, that, it is a disputed territory, whose decision has to be made in accordance with the resolution of United Nations Security Council. UNSC resolutions calls for a plebiscite under UN auspices by Kashmiris for determination of their right of self determination. Pakistan further reiterates that Kashmir is the core issue and the root cause of current tension with India. Nevertheless over a past few years, Pakistan has shown a flexibility in the stance on Kashmir. However this flexibility is just for a move forward to any favourable progress on

the issue. There is no change on principle stand of Pakistan on Kashmir. More recently President of Pakistan General Pervez Musharraf, has even said that we can show more flexibility on our stated position on Kashmir, acceptable to all the three parties.

Indian Stand on Kashmir. Official stand of India is that Kashmir as a whole is integral part of Indian Union. India officially claim that this dispute can be resolved if territories of the State presently under Pakistan are given to India. Till 1957, Indian leadership was accepting the disputed nature of the state. In 1955/56, Indian government got a resolution passed from IJK State assembly in favour of state accession with Indian Union. Since then Indian authorities started officially claiming it as her integral part. At time India showed little flexibility for the solution of issue but probably this flexibility was restricted to Indian acceptance of status quo i.e. LOC as permanent border. Since Simla agreement of 1972, while discussing Kashmir dispute, India emphasized on bilateralism and rejects the UNSC resolutions declaring them as out-dated having no credibility. India also declare the present uprisings in Kashmir, as the terrorism, sponsored from across the border by Pakistan⁵.

Pakistan being the ambassador of Kashmiris provides diplomatic, political and moral support to Kashmir cause. Kashmir has great effect on the foreign/ diplomatic policy of Pakistan. Pakistan cannot be separated from this dispute. With the passage of time both countries have hardened their claims on Kashmir and the issue has turned as a point of ego for both India and Pakistan. As a matter of fact it is the fault line of their ideological divide. Although a process of serious dialogue on the issue commenced in 1998-99 through track – II diplomacy, but Indian hawks did not let the process to go a head. In 12th SAARC Summit, both the states were able to melt the ice. It is expected that if there is sincerity, then there will be an improvement in the relations of both states in the days to come.

9/11 and Pakistan

The unfortunate incident of 9/11 which shook the whole world, badly affected Pakistan internally as well on external front. Al – Qaeda and Taliban administration of Afghanistan were directly made responsible of these terrorist attacks on Washington and New York. Geo strategic location of Pakistan and her deep-rooted links with then Taliban administration could not absolve Pakistan to remain unaffected immediately after the attacks. Moreover, Pakistan was among the one of the three states, which had recognized the Taliban Government in Afghanistan. Any effort of United States and world coalition against Taliban government in Afghanistan could not have been succeeded without active cooperation of Pakistan.

After a very critical weighing between its long term national interests and association with Taliban administration, Pakistan decided to side with the United States in its campaign against terrorism. Since the initiation of this campaign against terrorism was from Afghanistan, so Pakistan had to provide certain facilities like logistic support and exchange of intelligence information to United States and coalition. Owing to its common border with Afghanistan, this cooperation and support to US and coalition was only possible by Pakistan. Indian government also offered a similar cooperation including air bases to US in its war against Afghanistan, but, US rejected that.

India felt greatly upset and frustrated over Pakistan's close collaboration with the United States and world coalition. Pakistan also became a member of coalition partner in the war against terrorism. World community at large started appreciating Pakistan's role against terrorism and many leaders including heads of State visited Pakistan to loud her cooperation. Seeing the importance of Pakistan, India started her efforts to undermine Pakistan's relations with US led world community.

Through her leadership and media, India launched a massive campaign against Pakistan's role in war against terrorism. India tried to convince world community, that Pakistan itself was involved in "cross-border terrorism" in Kashmir against her (India). By sending

her diplomatic missions/political representatives to various world countries/foras, India challenged Pakistan's partnership with US led coalition in war against terrorism. While launching its propaganda campaign against Pakistan, India forgot the facts that Kashmiris had started their struggle against Dogra Rule in 1930s once Pakistan was non existent and Indian rule in 1947, when India and Pakistan became independent. The case of Kashmiris right of self-determination was approved by United Nations in 1949-50s, is still pending before world community for the want of Indian compliance. It is not new case. It has no relevancy with terrorism of 9/11. It is a just struggle of Kashmiris for their right of self-determination.

Kashmir's present intifida of 1989/90, was just a renewal of their continued struggle of past one century. Since 1989/90 India has employed its more than seven hundred thousand troops to curb the Kashmiris right of self-determination. In the process more than 80,000 Kashmiris have been martyred. According to both international and Indian human right groups, Indian occupation forces have been engaged in gruesome human-rights violations.

International community and United States, being supporter of Kashmir case in UNO in 1948/49, were not convinced with Indian logics of declaring Kashmiri movement as a terrorism and Pakistan as a country sponsoring/supporting this act. Indians were going all out trying to establish links between Kashmir movement and terrorism. Through collaboration with new Afghan government consisting (mainly of Northern Alliance having close historical ties with India), Indian government was able to shift a sizeable portion of captured Mujahideen from Afghanistan to India. Later these Mujahideen were portrayed as Al-Qaeda men, operating in Indian held Kashmir against Indian forces. They were even exposed to the world media⁶.

In their subsequent steps to represent Pakistan as a state, sponsoring terrorism, suicide attack near Kashmir Assembly at Srinagor on October 1, 2001 was presented by Indian government as an act committed by Pakistani backed militants or intelligence agencies of Pakistan. The incident was given a huge media coverage. Pakistan and Kashmiris also condemned the attack.

Empty

Kargil conflict of 1999, that India can go to a limited conventional battle with Pakistan without getting into a full fledged war. Washington's initiation of war against terrorism and Islamic militancy proved a catalyst that exasperated tension between India and Pakistan. United Nations Security Council's resolution 1373 of September 2001, on terrorism has made no distinction between terrorists and freedom fighters. Indian leadership planned to exploit the situation in their favour. Indian were going all out to launch a coercive diplomacy with a view to compelling Pakistan to settle the Kashmir dispute on its terms and condition.

Like US did in Afghanistan in October-November 2001, India also planned surgical strikes across LOC in to the Pakistani controlled part of Kashmir on the justification of combating terrorism and to destroy/dismantle the alleged terrorist camps. While evolving this strategy, Indian strategists perhaps miscalculated the response from Pakistan. Such type of action could have triggered an all out war with disastrous ramifications not only for India-Pakistan but for the security of entire world. Indian pursuit of this dangerous policy in the region was crafted by BJP leadership over the years. India has been sweating to become a regional (South Asian) super power, therefore it was a golden chance for its policy makers to get the Kashmir dispute settled for ever, and establish its hegemony in subcontinent. Since Kargil conflict, Indian strategists were making efforts to portray Pakistan as a Rouge State on account of terrorism. On domestic front BJP leadership wanted to secure stability for its party to win forth coming states election including IHK. These were the factors forcing Indian leaders to go for brinkmanship against peace loving Pakistan, but they badly failed.

For a year or so forces of India and Pakistan remained eyeball to eyeball contact on the Line of Control (LOC) as well as on international border. During this escalatory period in May 2001, unknown assailants once again attacked a military camp near Jammu, killing more than 27 persons. It was another effort to trigger a gradually cooling escalation. However, timely intervention of US, UK and other countries saved the confrontation between two nuclear powers. After more than a year, Indian forces started de-escalation from international border. However India did not reduce its forces

deployed in IJK. India failed to achieve its perceived goals, it had set for itself while carrying out mobilization of its armed forces.

Implications of 9/11 on Pakistan

On September 20, 2001, US President Mr. George W. Bush, while addressing to a joint session of Congress and the American people categorically stated, "Every nation, in every region, now has a decision to make, either you are with us, or you are with the terrorists". Further more, he asked every country to join the US in its war on terrorism. Earlier Mr. Colin Powell, US Secretary of State, Wendy Chamberlain, then US ambassador to Pakistan had in depth discussion with Pakistani President. On September 13, 2001, President Bush personally talk to President General Pervez Musharraf to sought Pakistan's cooperation in US campaign against Taliban and Al-Qaeda in Afghanistan. Of course no military operation was possible in Afghanistan without active cooperation of Pakistan.

Although Pakistan had no option but to support US action in Afghanistan, yet President General Pervez Musharraf after having analysed the pros and cons of the unfolding situation addressed the nation on September 19, 2001. In his nation wide address, President of Pakistan explained to the nation about the circumstances under which Pakistan was compelled to cooperate with US in its war against terrorism in Afghanistan. He mentioned that owing to following four factors of national interests, he has decided to side with the US: -

- Security of Pakistan being a top priority.
- Revival of economy.
- Perseverance of strategic nuclear and missile assets.
- Safe guarding the Kashmiris right of self-determination.

Pakistan fully cooperated the US in its war on terrorism against Afghanistan. This cooperation is continuing against Al-

Qaeda/Taliban in the areas bordering Pakistan and Afghanistan. Although 9/11 incident had its worldwide effects but had major implications for Pakistan in the days to come. Some of the important implications of 9/11 on Pakistan especially with reference to Kashmir are covered in succeeding paras⁷.

Legitimacy of Kashmiris Struggle. As per the new rules set by US while initiating war against terrorism, no case justifies violence. With this revised definition and under the strong Indian propaganda against the struggle of Kashmiris, international community tends to view the armed struggle of Kashmiris in the context of terrorism. However, owing to Pakistan's cooperation against war of terrorism, the struggle of Kashmiris for their right of self-determination as given by UNO has not lost its legitimacy. Rather international community has acknowledged the status of Kashmir as an unsettled political issue between India and Pakistan.

In order to clarify Pakistan's position on Kashmir, President Pervez Musharraf in his address to the nation on January 12, 2002, said, that "Kashmir runs in our blood". He reiterated Pakistan's principled stand that, moral, diplomatic and political support will continue to be rendered to Kashmiris like past. In his subsequent interviews and addresses on world foras, President Musharraf made clear to world community in general and India in particular that Pakistan will never budge an inch from its principled stand on the right of self-determination of Kashmiris. In response to the reservations of world community that Pakistani soil is being used for training/harboursing the freedom fighters, authorities in Pakistan banned many so-called Jehadi organizations. Moreover, no organization/group was allowed to use Pakistani soil to carry out any sort of terrorist acts either within or outside the country. Being a prey of terrorism since last so many years in its history, Pakistan categorically condemned all sort of terrorism. We stand by the world community against war on terrorism.

Lifting of US Sanctions. After Pakistan's cooperation with US in war against terrorism, the already imposed sanctions on Pakistan were lifted. These sanctions were imposed on Pakistan and India in 1998, when both countries exploded their nuclear devices.

Pakistan is being used as front line state in their war against terrorism but lifting of sanctions from India, by US without its active cooperation in the war is not understood. India has only exploited the 9/11 incident to seek Washington's help in declaring Pakistan a terrorist state. Throughout in its history, Pakistan has been an active ally of US. Previously also Pakistan was used as a front line state from 1979-1990, in US indirect war against former USSR. While lifting sanctions, track record of both countries could have been seen.

Arms Race and Increase in the Defence Expenditures. In the field of defence spending, Pakistan has always adopted a reactive policy to the India. Pakistan never initiated an arms race in the region. Indian military spending as a percentage of GDP has grown from 2.10 in 1996 to 2.6 in 2002, whereas in the same teneour Pakistani defence expenditures gone down from 5.10 to 4.50. From 1996 to 2002, the percentage of central government expenditure (the military expenditure) of India was around 14.50-15 and that of Pakistan in the same period from 24.0 to 21.20. In the recent years, India is continuously increasing its defence outlays. For the financial year 2003-4 India increased the defence budget by 14%. As a result of Indian increase in defence budget Pakistan cannot remain aloof. After all defence of motherland has the prime importance for each Pakistani and government. In the recent years Pakistans defence budget is barely sufficient to keep its forces in operational readiness.

Shift in the Strategic Arms Balance. Post 9/11, India has purchased lot of sophisticated military hardwares including aircrafts for her air force from Israel, UK, USA and Russia. After consent of US, a deal has been finalized between India and Israel for the sale of Phalcon Radar system to India. It is a latest early warning system available with only very few countries of the world. Pakistan has protested to US for this new development. It has altered the strategic arms balance in the region in favour of India. This continuous arms race especially of India and a situation of confrontation between the two has adversely affected the economy of both India and Pakistan. Pakistan being a small state cannot match the defence spending of India. To maintain arms balance in the region, a lot of money is

incurred while depriving the other developmental projects in the country.

Changed Dimension of Kashmir Dispute. Post 9/11, Kashmir dispute has assumed a completely different dimension. It was over shadowed by US actions in Afghanistan and then Iraq. Unclear definition of terrorism provided a chance to prove this rightful indigenous movement of Kashmiris, as terrorism sponsored by Pakistan. India even tried her utmost in convincing US, UK, EU and World community to take action against Pakistan to eradicate terrorist network. For the satisfaction of international community, Pakistan banned many Jehadi organizations, particularly those having any sort of links with Al-Qaeda and Taliban. A number of organizations operating in Kashmir but having bad track record in the eyes of US were also banned. To some extent this was almost an acceptance of Indian allegations. However, world community was satisfied with these steps of Pakistan. At time, Pakistan was compelled to do more on protecting LOC. Pakistan even offered India for an impartial monitoring of LOC by UN observers, to which India refused. World community perhaps failed to understand that why can't seven hundred thousand Indian Army deployed along LOC, stop infiltration if at all there is any⁸.

Commitment of Pakistani Armed Forces (on Western Borders). Pakistan was asked by US to keep a certain number of her forces along Western border with Afghanistan at the time of US attack on Afghanistan. The force was to monitor/stop any infiltration from Afghan territory to Pakistan. When India mobilized its armed forces, Pakistan was compelled to move her forces from western to eastern borders, which was not American's interest. US assured Pakistan that India will not attack Pakistan. For assuring Pakistan, Mr. Colin Powel, Secretary of State and many other US officials visited Indo-Pakistan during US War on Afghanistan and there after. US and World Community persuaded India and Pakistan to exercise restraint in their conflict over the Kashmir dispute and start a process of dialogue.

Increased Role of World Powers Specially US in South Asia. Following 9/11 and Indo-Pak escalation, US and major

world powers had increased their active role in the affairs of South Asia, especially with reference to Kashmir between two nuclear giants. Mr. Powel, while talking to Reuters in Sigonella (Italy), on July 27, 2002, said that, "ultimately we have to get the dialogue or else we will just be stuck on the plateau which would not serve our interest. We do not want to be backed where we were few months ago". Mr. Powel was very specific during his visit to India and Pakistan that Kashmir is the conflict impeding the process of normalization between two nuclear rivals in South Asia. In January 2002, British Prime Minister, Mr. Tony Blair visited India and Pakistan and stressed the need of dialogue over the disputed region and ease the tension. During Almaty Conference held in Jan 2002, Russian and Chinese leaders met President Pervez Musharraf and Indian Prime Minister Mr. A.B. Vajpayee. They forced India and Pakistan to de-escalate and peacefully settle their differences/disputes.

Plight of Kashmiris Post 9/11. While rendering all out cooperation to US in its war against terrorism especially in Afghanistan, Pakistan assumed that US will help Pakistan in resolving the Kashmir issue. Although owing to Kashmiris renewed struggle of last thirteen years the dispute came into lime light but no worthwhile attention has been given to it by US or world community. Even owing to strong Indian propoganda campaign, at international level, there has been some concern about the plight of Kashmiris. As promised by President Clinton during Kargil conflict and Bush administration while asking Pakistan for cooperation in Afghan campaign, seemingly there is no tilt in US policy towards solution of Kashmir as per the wishes of Kashmiris. India on the other hand succeeded in drawing world attention to the acts of violence in Jammu and Kashmir and linked it with Al-Qaeda/Taliban. This repeated Indian allegations of terrorism became so problematic for Pakistan, that it had to put ban on a number of Jehadi organizations, which was equal to an acceptance of Indian charges.

Shift in US Policy Towards South Asia. At the end of cold war, US think tanks reviewed their policy. They formulated a new policy to find its new strategic partners at various parts of the

world. In South Asia, US found India as a new strategic partner. This shift in US policy was gradual and governed by three fundamental principles: -

- **Containment of China.** Post cold war china is a growing super power and a strategic competitor to US especially in the field of economy. India, owing to its past clashes with China, was most suitable to US to act as a counter weight to China in the region. US has very successfully exploited its links with India for its long terms strategic gains. However, China also has increased its diplomatic links with India which is a concern for US as well.
- **India as an Economic Market.** Owing to its huge size and population, India is a big economic market for US in the days to come. It has matured and well-developed political/democratic system most suited to America. Although during cold war, India apparently adopted policy of non alignment, but practically it was part of Russian Camp. However, even then it was getting maximum benefits from West and US. For future India will prove to be a great weapon and economic market.
- **Role of Indian Origin US Lobby.** Indian origin US Lobby is very active in the US camps for the interest of India. They even have started influencing domestic US politics in the favour of India in a myriad ways. This Lobby is working against the interest of Pakistan. Many senators/members of US Congress have been greatly influenced by this Lobby.

Pakistan although has always rendered its full support to US cause in the region especially in 1980s and 2001, yet owing to above-mentioned factors US has a very clear tilt towards India. This US future interest is compelling Bush administration not to take any steps towards resolution of Kashmir issue. Any US effort to pressurise India will hamper her interest in the region. Resolution of Kashmir may be an important task for US in the region, but this resolution may not be in the favour of Kashmiris or Pakistan. Post 9/11, US has shown more interest towards India. US even declared

India as her natural strategic partner/ally and offered her all defence oriented support, either, directly or indirectly. This has created a military imbalance in the region.

Election in IHK. Since the time Indian state sponsored elections were held in Indian occupied Kashmir in 1992, India has hardened its stance on Kashmir. Indian government has ensured a regime change in the occupied territory and asserted that after prolong militancy, it is a referendum in the favour of New Delhi by Kashmiris, as it is a coalition government of all Jammu and Kashmir political parties. This election had a great implication on Pakistan before, during and even after their conduct. Through propaganda at international level, India put onus on Pakistan to guarantee a peaceful conduct of state election while having 700,000 forces on LOC. After state assembly election, India again refused to hold dialogue with Pakistan on the plea that world should force Pakistan to stop cross border infiltration. Pakistan has called on the international community to facilitate the resolution of the dispute. Elections are an instrument to run the administration rather than an alternate of plebiscite. Post election in Kashmir, India feels more satisfied and has hardened its stance for any future negotiations on the disputed state. Election, of course were not fair but, enabled India to propagate to the world community that people of the state are now returning to the normalcy and it is Pakistan which is not allowing to cool down the militancy⁹.

Other Implications. 9/11 followed by US military campaign against Afghanistan, paved the way for an increased Indian involvement in Afghanistan. Post Taliban period of Afghan government is dominated by Northern Alliance, who had close historical relations with India. Even President Hamid Karzai had studied in Indian Universities. India fully exploited the change in Afghanistan by establishing its consulates and other supporting organizations for Afghans. She wanted to keep Pakistan out of the Afghan affairs. For reconstruction/re-building of war ridden country, India also provided a lot of financial support to Afghanistan. By keeping close links with Afghanistan, India succeeded in un-securing Pakistan's western borders to be used for her advantage as and when required. It is expected that as long as the present

government of Afghanistan is ruling there, having key ministries with Qasim Fahim and Abdullah Abdullah, Pakistan may not find a place in Afghanistan to play any role.

During the cold war era, India had its nexus with former USSR. Post cold war, India successfully managed to maintain fairly strong links with Central Asian States. New Delhi is keen to clean bold Pakistan in her relations with CARs. In the recent past India has established a military base in Tajikistan. It is an indicator that India is interested to play a greater role in the affairs of CARs. The base is operative since May 2002. It is located at Farkhar, an area close to the border with Afghanistan. In fact India is in the process of securing its following long-term strategic interests in the region:-

- To be a part of Great Game or otherwise safeguard its economic interests by laying hands on the enormous energy resources (oil and gas reserves) of CARs.
- To keep a close watch on the activities of Pakistan and China for their any likely future collaboration to secure energy resources.
- To stop formation of an Islamic Block between Pakistan, CARs, Afghanistan and Iran.

To achieve its goals as discussed above, India is anxiously/vigorously pursuing its strategic ties with even Iran. During past two decade there has been close ties between Iran and India. Post cold war an increase in the relations of both countries have been noticed. In fact Northern Alliance government of Afghanistan is friendly to both India and Iran. India has no direct road links with either Afghanistan or CARs. She has to pass through Pakistani territory for any excess to Afghanistan or CARs. Closer Indian ties with Iran provided her easy excess to CARs as well as Afghanistan. After great efforts Pakistan had secured its strategic depth by having closer ties with Afghanistan, of course against Indian wishes, in order to obviate the possibility of a two front military situation. This effort has fallen prey to the 9/11 incident. Rather Pakistan is at the

most difficult situation in history. It is almost encircled from East and West¹⁰.

12th SAARC Summit:- A Ray of Hope for Improving Indo-Pak Relations. The historical 12th SAARC Summit held in Islamabad from 4-6 January 2004. Ever since of its establishment, SAARC remained a prey to the Indo-Pak confrontation. Owing to this bitterness between two nuclear powers, other five countries of South Asia were no more than pawns on the South Asian chessboard. During 12th SAARC Summit, South Asia in particular and world in general was more interested to see a positive out come between India and Pakistan. January 6, 2004, Declaration between India and Pakistan came out as a pleasant surprise to the world. Masses of both countries are very happy and desire that improvement in relations should go ahead for permanent peace between two neighbours. As per Dr. S.M. Rehman, "it appeared that the mind set of the leaders at the helm of affairs, in both the countries, have off loaded the legacies of the past and are seemingly committed to reconstruct the present, and eventually the future, to extract a win-win situation for both".

Apparently development in Indo-Pak bilateral issues specially Kashmir issue has been re-started from where Agra Summit failed in July 2001. President Pervez Musharraf, in his press conference has said that a new history has been made in Islamabad towards the bilateral relations between India and Pakistan. Analysing the past history of India, cynics view it as a strategic move of Indian Prime Minister A.B. Vajpayee to reduce world pressure for restoration of relations with Pakistan or to encash some tangible dividends in the forth coming Lok Sabha elections. From Pakistan's point of view it is a great success, as India has accepted, two, out of Four Points Strategy for the solution of Kashmir issue i.e beginning of dialogue between leadership of both countries and acceptance of Kashmir as a dispute. Irrespective of mind sets/hidden agenda of Indian leadership, 12th SAARC Summit, has provided a golden chance to both countries to solve the only stumbling block (Kashmir) for better South Asian future. A solution, which should be acceptable to all the three parties – Pakistan, India and Kashmiris¹¹.

Post Simla Agreement (1972), India has made a rhetorical stand that Kashmir is a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan. But practically after the end of cold war in early nineties, US has directly or indirectly seen a mediatory role, which not only raise its importance in the world community but will also confirm its status of sole super power. Dr Bernard Haykel, assistant professor, New York University, while delivering a lecture in Jammu University, was quoted by the 'Kashmir Times', as saying that, Kashmir was one of most important component of American foreign affairs policy and that is why it is very keen that the issue should be resolved at the earliest. As a matter of fact primary consideration of US in South Asia lies to avoid a confrontation between two nuclear countries, which of course will harm her interests in the region as well as at international level. America is actually performing the role of active peace broker in the subcontinent and is already acting as an "invisible third party" formulating the agenda and dictating terms¹².

Options Available for Pakistan

Kashmir dispute - an unfinished agenda of partition, could not be resolved even after three wars between India and Pakistan, which mean military solution of the future of state is not possible. United Nations Security Council has also failed to resolve it by implementing its resolutions on Kashmir in last fifty six years. India has rather hardened its stance on Kashmir by declaring it as her integral part. Kashmiris, in response to their right of self-determination are experiencing brutalities of Indian State forces since past half a century. Pakistan, being an ambassador of Kashmiris right at international level had to suffer disintegration in 1971. It also suffered on economic front due to huge defence expenditures. Under these conditions, how long will it take to resolve, is yet to be assumed.

Post cold war, as the Kashmiris struggle for freedom renewed, a number of options were considered for its solution. Indian inflexible approach did not let the dispute settle any way. Incident of 9/11 and events thereafter have changed the world scenario, against the Kashmiris rightful will. New world scenario of a war against terrorism coupled with Indian propaganda campaign of

involving Pakistan as a country supporting terrorism in Kashmir has placed Pakistan at the cross roads of its history. Had Pakistan not been a coalition partner in war against terrorism, perhaps Indian state crafted doctrine would have been accomplished long ago. Thanks to foresightedness and timely decision making of President, General Pervez Musharraf that country has been saved.

Kashmir, as president of Pakistan said on many occasions, runs in the blood of each Pakistani. No Pakistani can compromise over Kashmir. However under the changed international scenario, Pakistan cannot afford to have confrontation with India or any other world power. Policy of projecting political/legal aspects of the issue to the world community will only be helpful in the days to come. In order to redress misconception of world community over the Kashmiris struggle for their right of self-determination, by Pakistan, a few options are given in the succeeding paras.

Political and Diplomatic Projection of the Kashmir.

Pakistan cannot absolve herself from the Political, diplomatic and moral support to the Kashmiris right of self-determination. Kashmiris movement has always been peaceful and political. They took arms only when India unleashed a rain of terror on them specially at the out break of their recent renewed struggle. Kashmiris are neither extremist nor fundamental terrorist. They only demand their political and legal right of freedom which otherwise UNO has promised them. Now there is a requirement that Pakistan by sending various diplomatic missions (including Kashmiri representatives) should project / convince international community about its truth. True designs of Indian hawkish policy and state sponsor brutalities on Kashmiris must be made to known to the world at various foras. Misconception of world on this particular issue be projected by diplomatic missions of Pakistan which are already functioning round the globe. Frequent visits of diplomats and military attaches of international community be planned all along the LOC to depict true position.

Unity Among Kashmiri Leadership. There is a split among Kashmiri leadership on both sides of the LOC. For freedom from India, they all are united but having differences over the modus operandi. They may have differences over the airy options for the solution of Kashmir. Under the prevalent scenario, there is a great need to have a united leadership in both halves of state. Pakistan must convince India through international community to allow Kashmiris from across the Line of Control to sit with their brothers in Pakistani administered areas. Intra Kashmir dialogue is the only solution for a unanimous Kashmiris point of view, under a single leadership.

Involvement of US for Ultimate Solution of Issue As Mediator/ Facilitator. The role of United States, being the sole super power cannot be ignored in the present world scenario. Pakistan must exploit her decades old strategic allianceship with US to get the Kashmir dispute settled in accordance with the wishes of Kashmiris. United States already has an invisible role to play in South Asia as an active peace broker. After all Pakistan has gone all out to accomplish the US strategic global interest. Now it is a time for US to repay to Pakistan it has done for her in her entire history. It is only the United States which can compel India to settle the long-standing dispute. Moreover contrary to Indian claim of bilateralism, US is playing the role of third party either directly or indirectly. If US is not acceptable to India, any other country or individual or countries or individuals may be involved to mediate the Kashmir dispute between India and Pakistan¹³.

Confidence Building Measures, While Keeping Kashmir in the Lime Light. Although peace between India and Pakistan can only be effective once, the route cause of tension (Kashmir Issue) is resolved as per the aspirations of the people of State, yet under the changed scenario present package of CBMs is a well coming step. It should further continue without placing the bone of contention on back burner. All CBMs and trade ties must converge on Kashmir. Statement of President, General Pervez Musharraf dated 12 February 04 at National Defence College is a very encouraging and bold on the issues of Kashmir and nuclear.

Four Steps Formula for Solution of Kashmir. Four steps mechanism as suggested by President, General Pervez Musharraf, during Agra Summit (July 14-16, 2001) is a workable formula. First two steps have already been taken by India and Pakistan. As a result of official level negotiations between both countries, held in Islamabad in February 2004, it has been decided that future negotiations on all outstanding issues including Kashmir will be held from March to August 2004. Kashmir has formally been accepted as dispute by India and Pakistan. This mechanism will enable India, Pakistan and Kashmiris to reach for a final solution of Kashmir in a near future.

People to People Contact. Former Indian Prime Minister, Mr Inder Kumar Gujral, suggested the idea of people to people contact between India and Pakistan in May 2002. It is a good step being taken by people from all walks of life. There is a need that both governments should relax the visa granting procedure to the citizen of each other. People from all classes must also be allowed to visit IHK. These people can promote good will on both side of international border / LOC. They should also influence their government/officials for a better relations and solution of Kashmir problem.

Options for Solutions of Kashmir and National Interests. Serious dialogue and efforts are under way for solution of Kashmir issue. Centrality of issue has been accepted by India during 12th SAARC Summit. Beside track - II diplomacy is also on. United States is keen to resolve the issue at the earliest for safe guarding her own interest in the region. Various options ranging from LOC as permanent border to division and independence are under consideration. Pakistan is an agrarian country. Its future lies in Kashmir. Leadership of Pakistan should accept only that option which guarantee the future economic interest of Pakistan. Catchments areas (water sources) should never be allowed to remain in the hands of India¹⁴.

Indian Negotiations with APHC. As a result of a recent split in APHC leadership, Indian Deputy Prime Minister, Mr L.K.Advani had a round of talks with APHC. This talk was sequel to

the successful conclusion of 12th SAARC Summit in Islamabad. Any negotiations on future status of Kashmir or Kashmiris must be participated by Pakistan, being the most important party of issue. On one hand India stress on bilateralism, where as on the other hand negotiating with only a faction of Kashmiris to show her success to the world, that Kashmiris are ready to live under Indian Union. This tactical Indian move is to weaken the Pakistan's position on the issue. Beside any third party acting as a direct or indirect mediators/facilitators, any talks/negotiations on the state's future must be participated by Pakistan, India and Kashmiris¹⁵.

Beside Kashmir dispute, 9/11 has effected western border of Pakistan and our relations with Central Asian States. In view of india's deep involvement in the region, Pakistan cannot afford to be a totally silent spectator of whatever transpires there. Pakistan must not support any single group in Afghanistan. However, majority of Afghans being Pushtoos must have a domination in the government of Afghanistan. Pakistan must not give India, a free hand in Afghanistan. We must have our roots in Afghanistan and role to play there in future.

Economic ties with CARs must be increased in the days to come. Some alternative strategy for safe guarding our interest must be formulated in response to Indian military base at Tajikistan. Proposed gas pipeline from Turkmenistan to Pakistan via Afghanistan must be pursued. Pakistan must cooperate with China in Central Asia to counter Indian growing presence in the region. For a better relations with the CARs, Economic Cooperation Organization (ECO) forum must be made use of. Pakistan must make all out efforts to keep India out of any political or economic grouping of Afghanistan and Central Asia like SCO and the 'Six Plus Two' arrangement. We must gain membership of SCO as well.

In the ongoing talks with India, Pakistan must convince her that arms race in the region is beneficial to none. It only increases the defence expenditures, while taxing the poor populace. Both countries have a sizeable portion of poor population. Freezing defence expenditures at present level if further reduction is not possible will be a well coming step for the region. Pakistan must

engage India in a meaningful dialogue. Present Indian move of dialogue may not be allowed to become a strategy of BJP government to hunt a success in the early conducted elections and refusing any further flexibility in future.

Conclusion

Owing to its strategic and economic significance, Pakistan cannot afford that Kashmir also meet the fate of Afghan Jihad/Taliban. As a whole Pakistani nation is very touchy on Kashmir and nuclear issue. There is a need, that we should take steps for reviving our policy on Kashmir. We are really at the cross roads of our history facing pressure on nuclear proliferation, Kashmir, relations with Afghanistan and biggest is the internal security threats. Pakistan's policy needs to be freed from any contradictions. Irrespective of political differences, we must not show irresponsible attitude on matters of national interest. Diplomatic pressure can best be countered by sending diplomats having international standing and clear national policies/interests.

12th SAARC summit has created new hopes. Whether forthcoming rounds of talks make a dent in the present dead lock or not, but all the past roads to peace between India and Pakistan are littered with failed summits and spectra of wars/conflicts. Let both sides keep the ground realities in mind for a sustainable progress towards rapprochement. Post nuclearization of South Asia, there can be no military solution to Kashmir. Indian efforts to destabilize Pakistan on economic front has also failed. Today world considers Kashmir as a nuclear flash point to be resolved on priority. International community do not accept Indian claim that Kashmir is its integral part.

CBMs and trade ties between India and Pakistan can only grow once the core issue is resolved. Suffering of Kashmiris in the forms of killing, destruction, rapes and depravity by Indian forces on daily basis have to be stopped. Pakistan has gone all out to curb extremists from its soil. Now ball is in the court of India and US led international community.

End Notes

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