

The Hobbled Relations between India and Pakistan: Prospects for Better Future

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Abstract

The paper aims to analyse the relationship between India and Pakistan which suffers from complete distrust with each other. Lack of communication between the two neighboring countries has resulted in widening of fault-lines. Both countries are victims of terrorism which has serious repercussions on the dynamics of the Indian subcontinent. India continues to fight the war against terrorism and has also shown to the world how Pakistani Government and its intelligence has sponsored terrorists and provided a safe haven for them, thereby creating unrest in India.

The paper mainly focuses on the dynamics and future prospects of India-Pakistan relations. The people-to-people interaction and cooperative action against terrorism can aid in the improvement of their relationship. This will not only help in reducing human casualties but also because of less tensions across the border, they can focus on the development of their respective country. India has always tried to maintain a healthy relationship with its neighbour, but Pakistan's adamant attitude has been damaging the relations further. Despite all this, there is still some possibility of improving the relationship between India and Pakistan as both nations share the same history, freedom struggle and geographical location.

Key Words: India, Pakistan, Prospects, Cooperation, Terrorism.

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1. INTRODUCTION

India and Pakistan have had an unstable relationship ever since their independence and that has generated a feeling of distrust between them. The British Indian empire through its policy of divide and rule sowed seeds of distrust and enmity among fellow Indians. When the British were leaving India, this difference had grown to enormous levels that caused the partition of India. The partition led to massive communal riots and bloodshed. Even after independence, this animosity did not reduce and both the countries started claiming their rights over different territories. This rivalry has led to three major wars (1947, 1965 and 1971), one undeclared war (1999); with countless border skirmishes between these two countries. Except the Bangladesh Liberation War of 1971 - which led to partition of Pakistan and formation of a new country on India's eastern border - Bangladesh; the focal-point of other wars was the former Princely state of Jammu and Kashmir. Kashmir has been a bone of contention for these two since decades and it continues to be so. Both the countries tried to improve their relations through bilateral talks and several such diplomatic talks materialised like the Shimla Agreement, the Lahore Declaration, the Agra summit; but all the attempts failed due to one reason or another such as the Siachen conflict, Kashmir insurgency and attacks on Indian territory.

Amid all this, in 1998 India conducted a nuclear test in order to deter its neighbouring countries from any future aggression. These tests were successful and India became a nuclear power state. This led to widespread suspicion in Pakistan and in response to India's test Pakistan conducted its own nuclear test, which was also successful. The tests resulted in international sanctions on both the nations. Former Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee enabled various confidence building measures between the two nations to enhance their bilateral relationship. Prime Minister of India Atal Bihari Vajpayee and Pakistan's Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif signed the Lahore Declaration, which was a step in the right direction to ease tensions across the border. However, this peace was short-lived and Kargil war broke out in the region. After the war, Pakistan saw a military coup and General Pervez Musharraf the then Chief of Army Staff declared himself the Chief Executive of Islamic Republic of Pakistan. In 2004, the two countries resumed Composite Dialogue Process started in which all outstanding issues between the two countries had to be discussed. But repeated attacks on Indian soil by Pakistan based terrorist groups led to strain in their relations.

After a new government came to power in India in 2014, it was expected that a new era of mutual cooperation and friendship could begin for India and Pakistan. For that purpose, Prime Minister Narendra Modi invited Pakistan Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif for his oath taking ceremony, in which PM Sharif was warmly welcomed. Both sides were keen to begin a new era of bilateral relations, forgetting all the wrongs of the past and forging new ties. Both the Prime Ministers shared mutual bonhomie. In 2015, PM Modi while returning from Afghanistan made a surprise visit to his Pakistani counterpart. This was the first meeting by an Indian premier after more than 10 years. However, this bonhomie did not continue for long as Pakistani insurgents carried on Uri attacks in which many Indian army personnel lost their lives. In response to the attack on Indian soil, the Indian army carried out surgical strikes. This was the first time that India responded in such a strong manner. This hostility led to various military confrontations between the two countries and ceasefire violation across the Line of Control. In 2018, elections were held for Pakistan's National assembly in which Imran Khan emerged as the leader of the largest party.

Despite being sceptical of the new situation in Pakistan, India tried to normalise relations but Pakistan continued to peddle its rhetoric on Kashmir. On February 2019, another terrorist attack was orchestrated in Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir, a suicide bomber smashed his vehicle onto a convoy of army personnel. This terrorist was sponsored by Pakistan based terrorist groups. In response to the Pulwama attack, the Indian government launched Balakot air strike against Pakistan based terrorists training camp. Also, the Indian government revoked Pakistan's Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status, which had been granted to Pakistan in 1996. There were other economic restrictions like custom duty was increased by 200% by India. All these actions led to complete destruction of the bilateral relations.

On 5th August 2019, the Indian government revoked the temporary special status granted to Jammu and Kashmir under article 370 also article 35A was removed, this led to even more tension between the two countries. Responding to this Pakistan downgraded its diplomatic ties, closed its airspace and suspended bilateral trade with India. At present, time there is no hope of any kind of healthy relationship between these two, till the time they come together and communicate with each other on issues of elimination of terrorism, cross border insurgency, human security and rights.

2. BACKGROUND

The relation between India and Pakistan can broadly be ascertained from their history, ideology, culture and geography. The British ruled over the Indian subcontinent for nearly 200 years and during this time they sowed the seeds of distrust and enmity among fellow Indians, through their policy of divide and rule. They constantly favoured one group over the other which helped them to hit two shots with one arrow, firstly by favouring a particular group they could get their work done and secondly, it created a feeling of distrust and betrayal among other groups who were treated unfairly. When finally, the British were forced out of the subcontinent, this difference had grown to enormous levels that caused ghastly communal riots and which led to a gory partition. Thus, not one but two separate nations (India and Pakistan) gained independence. This partition was purely based on religion, so naturally after partition there were minorities on both sides of the border; this in turn led to even more communal riots. Also, lakhs of people were displaced from their ancestral home and they lived as refugees. Almost one million people lost their lives during this period. Even after independence, this animosity did not reduce and both the countries started claiming their rights over different territories.

Among all the disputed territories, the princely state of Jammu and Kashmir became the main point of contention between India and Pakistan. The princely states were given the option of being either with India or Pakistan, or being independent; the State of J&K chose to remain independent. This was unacceptable to Pakistan, so in order to occupy the territory, Pakistan sent tribal militias into Kashmir. Perceiving his incapability to overpower of Pakistani militias, Maharaja Hari Singh of J&K asked for India's assistance. India sent its troops in support of Maharaja Hari Singh, in return of Maharaja signing the instrument of accession. Hence, Jammu and Kashmir became the battleground of first Indo-Pakistan war of 1947-1948. This war officially ended after the United Nations, through negotiations, arranged for a ceasefire. Military representatives of both India and Pakistan signed the Karachi Agreement of 1949, supervised by the United Nations Commission for India and Pakistan (UNCIP). This agreement established a

ceasefire line, which was to be monitored by UNCIP. UN Commission resolution has recommended Pakistan to withdraw its forces from Kashmir, while allowing India to keep its minimum forces in order to maintain law and order. After these conditions were fulfilled, a plebiscite was to be conducted in Kashmir in order to get the opinion of the masses about the future of their territory. But since Pakistan continues to occupy around one-third of the state, plebiscite could not be held.

There is also an ongoing water dispute between India and Pakistan. Most of the rivers which flow to Pakistan originate in India as such India has a significant strategic advantage of being an upstream country while Pakistan is a downstream country. Pakistan feels that India being an upstream country has a major advantage and it can likely create problems for Pakistan by restricting the water supply thereby creating a situation of drought, famine etc. So, in order to allay such fears, India signed the Indus water treaty with Pakistan in 1960, which was mediated by the World Bank. The Indus river system comprises six rivers in which Indus, Jhelum and Chenab are considered the western rivers while the other three Sutlej, the Beas and the Ravi are the eastern rivers. The Indus water treaty was not of much advantage to India, but in order to alleviate Pakistan's fears and to establish good will in the region India decided to accept the treaty. But despite India doing everything under the sun to cultivate a strong bond of friendship, Pakistan did not budge from its ulterior motives.

Conflict also arose regarding control over the Siachen Glacier, which is the World's Highest Battlefield. Both India and Pakistan continue to deploy their army in one of the least hospitable environments in order to protect their territories against any possible incursions from the other side. Apparently, another disagreement arose between them, this time regarding Sir Creek. Sir Creek, originally named Ban Ganga, is a 96km disputed territory between India and Pakistan in the Rann of Kutch marshland; the dispute has cropped up because of different interpretations of the boundary line. In April, 1965 Pakistan launched Operation Desert Hawk, in order to take control of the area surrounding the Rann of Kutch. While Indian Forces were dealing with Pakistan on the western border, Pakistan launched another offensive codenamed Operation Gibraltar, in which around 30,000 well trained and armed irregular troops as well as Pakistan army regulars infiltrated the Kashmir valley. This was done in order to instil hatred among the masses and cause an uprising in the valley, which became the main cause of the Second Indo-Pakistan war. Hence, after 18 years, another full-fledged war broke out between the two nations in 1965. The two sides were involved in infantry warfare, tank warfare as well as air and naval combat. On 6th September, the Indian army surprised the Pakistan army by crossing the border from Punjab and advancing towards Lahore. As the war advanced, tanks were used by both the parties on a large scale.

Despite having qualitative as well as quantitative superiority of armaments, Pakistan was outmanoeuvred by India. Pakistan tried to divert the attention of India from the northern border to its coastal town, for that purpose it launched Operation Dwarka and bombed the city in order to demoralise India but it failed to meet its objectives. Even though the navy did not play any prominent role in the war, its significance was realised by India. The war came to an end after the intervention of the USA and Soviet Union and for that purpose a UN Resolution was adopted by both sides agreeing for a ceasefire from 22nd September, 1965.

Yet again, in 1971, the two countries went to another war. This time though, the war was not for Kashmir but it was for the liberation of East Pakistan. In 1947, India was partitioned from both eastern and western sides, the two sides came to be known as East Pakistan and West Pakistan respectively. West Pakistan was the nerve-centre of the government and all the decisions were taken from there, East Pakistan could not even question the discriminatory politics on its own territory. In 1970, first ever general elections were conducted in Pakistan, in this election Awami League emerged as the single largest Party in the Parliament. Even though it did not gain a single seat in West Pakistan, Awami League emerged victorious; this was unacceptable to the powers that be. The National Assembly did not commence its operation since the President Yahya Khan and PPP (Pakistan People's Party) Chairman Zulfikar Ali Bhutto were not keen to provide a platform to a party from East Pakistan to rule over them. This stubbornness led to popular uprising in East Pakistan, which was followed by ruthless suppression by the army. Rahman was arrested and unimaginable atrocities were committed on the people of East Pakistan. As oppression on the masses continued, the people started fleeing across the border into India, this led to straining of the already overburdened Indian economy. India tried to get assistance from the international community against the barbarity committed by the Pakistan army on its own citizens, but it failed to elicit any response. Seeing such indifference, rather than opening its border for the millions of refugees India deemed fit to go to war. The Third Indo-Pakistan War officially began on 3rd December 1971, when Pakistan launched air strikes on Indian Airbases. India got involved in the military confrontation with Pakistan from both the sides, on the western front India aimed to prevent Pakistan from entering its territory and on the eastern front India wanted emancipation of East Pakistan. The Pakistani army was forced to surrender because they were no match to the prowess of the Indian army. The war lasted for just 13 days, making it one of the shortest wars of modern history. The war led to partition of Pakistan and creation of the People's Republic of Bangladesh.

India realised that in order to protect its border from both Pakistan and China, it needs to have a nuclear force for deterrence. The first nuclear test was conducted by India in 1974 codenamed 'Smiling Buddha' and second nuclear test was in 1998 codenamed 'Operation Shakti'. In response, Pakistan also conducted its own nuclear test after a few days and both the countries became nuclear power. It was expected that after acquiring nuclear technology, the two neighbours will avoid any direct conflict, this was purely wishful thinking. Just after one year, the two neighbours were once again engaged in a direct confrontation in 1999 in the Kargil War. The global community kept an eye on this war, as it was the first armed conflict between the two countries after they became nuclear capable. The Kargil War broke out when Pakistani forces, disguised as Kashmiri Militants, crossed the LoC, and occupied strategic locations in India. In response to this, the Indian Army with the help of Indian Air Force was able to recapture the positions consequently Pakistan was forced to withdraw and retire to the other side of the border.

The 2001 Indian Parliament attack, in which Pakistan sponsored terrorist infiltrated the Indian Parliament; and Samjhauta express bombings of 2007 were crucial turning point in the relationship between the two nations. The 26/11 Mumbai attacks in 2008, was the tipping point in India Pakistan relation. At least 174 people were killed in this terrorist attack and more were injured. The plan was executed in such a way that the blame must lie on people within India and not on Pakistan; however, this did not materialise as one of the terrorists was captured alive. The

terrorist told about his affiliation to Lashkar-e-Taiba and how they were trained by the Pakistan army. Indian Government gave enough dossiers to Pakistan indicating that they had a hand in this terrorist attack. The government of Pakistan, accepted that the attack might have been contemplated on its soil but entirely denied Governments involvement. This incident proved to be a big jolt in the ongoing negotiations between India-Pakistan. Not only India but Pakistan also blames its neighbour for sponsoring terrorist activities against them, encourages separatist forces and supports militants to create unrest in its region.

Significant steps were taken to improve the relationship, but both the countries failed to establish mutual trust, cooperation and peace in the region. Efforts were made to revamp the relationship such as the Tashkent Declaration; it was a peace agreement signed between India and Pakistan on January 10, 1966, after the Indo-Pak war of 1965. The meeting was arranged in Tashkent, the capital city of Uzbekistan and was mediated by Soviet Premier Aleksey Kosygin, in order to bring lasting peace in the region. However, the agreement was criticised by India because it failed to recognize the wrongdoings of Pakistan. The day the declaration was signed, Indian Prime Minister Lal Bahadur Shastri died under mysterious circumstances. The agreement failed to meet its objective of preventing another conflict. After the third Indo-Pakistan war of 1971, the rift between the two nations widened. Thus, the Shimla agreement was signed by both on July 2, 1972 to undo the effect of the war. The agreement took place in Shimla, which is the capital city of Indian state Himachal Pradesh. The agreement contained various guiding principles for both the countries to follow in order to create a peaceful environment based on friendship and cooperation. The agreement emphasised on the need to respect the territorial integrity and sovereignty of each other, non - interference in the internal affairs of the country; respect for political independence; sovereign equality and renounce any sort of propaganda against each other. During the 1970s, after India conducted its nuclear test, Pakistan laid various resolutions before the United Nations General Assembly, advocating for a nuclear-free zone and establishing South Asia nuclear weapon free Zone (SANWFZ). In response, India laid a new resolution, stressing the importance of Balance of Power in determining the security condition of any region. The two countries signed a Non-Nuclear Aggression Agreement (NNAA) in 1988. This is a bilateral agreement between India and Pakistan in which both were barred from carrying out any surprise attack or attack the nuclear installations of the other. Since January 1992, India and Pakistan have been providing each other a list of their civilian as well as military nuclear installations. India conducted its nuclear test in May 1998 and after a few days Pakistan also conducted its nuclear test. Both the tests were successful which made the two neighbour's nuclear power. On 23rd September 1998, Prime Minister of India and Pakistan held a bilateral meeting on the side lines of the UN General Assembly. They discussed the new developments in the region and agreed to settle all outstanding disputes between them in order to create a peaceful environment in the region. In order to promote good will, bus service was started between India and Pakistan named Sada-e-Sarhad. On the day it was inaugurated, 19 February 1999, Indian Prime Minister Atal Bihari Vajpayee travelled by it in order to attend the Lahore Summit. Lahore Declaration was a bilateral agreement between India and Pakistan, signed on 21 February 1999 and ratified by their respective parliaments. After the Non- Nuclear Aggression Agreement of 1988, Lahore Declaration was the second bilateral agreement between the two countries concerning nuclear control measures. The Declaration received support and appreciation across

both the sides of the border and there was a general feeling among the masses that relations might improve between them. However, this agreement failed when Pakistan violated its terms and used arms against India during the Kargil War of 1999. India tried to isolate Pakistan in international circles and was largely successful in this endeavour. Thereafter, the Indian Prime Minister tried to resolve the differences with its western neighbour, for that Indian Prime Minister called a meeting with the Pakistan Prime Minister in Agra. The Agra Summit was a two-day meeting in which the Prime Ministers as well as Foreign Ministers of both India and Pakistan met and chalked out the plan for future relations between their countries. The two days meeting was held on July 14-16 2001, but it proved to be inconclusive since a joint agreement could not be reached. In 2004, a new government came to power in India, as such there were renewed efforts to normalise relations with Pakistan. The two countries established nuclear hotline between the foreign secretaries of both the countries, in order to inform the other side as to what really occurred and prevent any misunderstanding that might lead to nuclear war between them. Several confidence building measures have been taken by India and Pakistan to reduce tension between the two; such as talks among the top leaders and high-level functionaries, relaxation of visa restrictions, etc. Both the countries have also discussed economic issues between them. India granted Most Favoured Nation (MFN) status to Pakistan in 1996, just a year after WTO came into existence. Pakistan didn't accord a similar status to India. It was only in 2012 when India allowed Foreign Direct Investment (FDI) from Pakistan that Pakistan granted Non-Discriminatory Market Access status to India. In 2014, when Modi became the new Prime Minister of India, he again started the peace talks with Pakistan. But all talks failed when in 2016, Uri attack was carried out in Jammu and Kashmir and in its response, India conducted a surgical strike on terror launch pads in Pakistan. Later in February, 2019 an Indian army convoy was attacked by a suicide bomber, in response to this India conducted airstrikes against Pakistan. Subsequently, recent developments in Jammu and Kashmir have only led to wariness. As such, all the previous agreements despite all good intentions have proved to be failure and were unable to maintain harmony in the region.

3. KASHMIR AND BEYOND- FUTURE OF INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATION

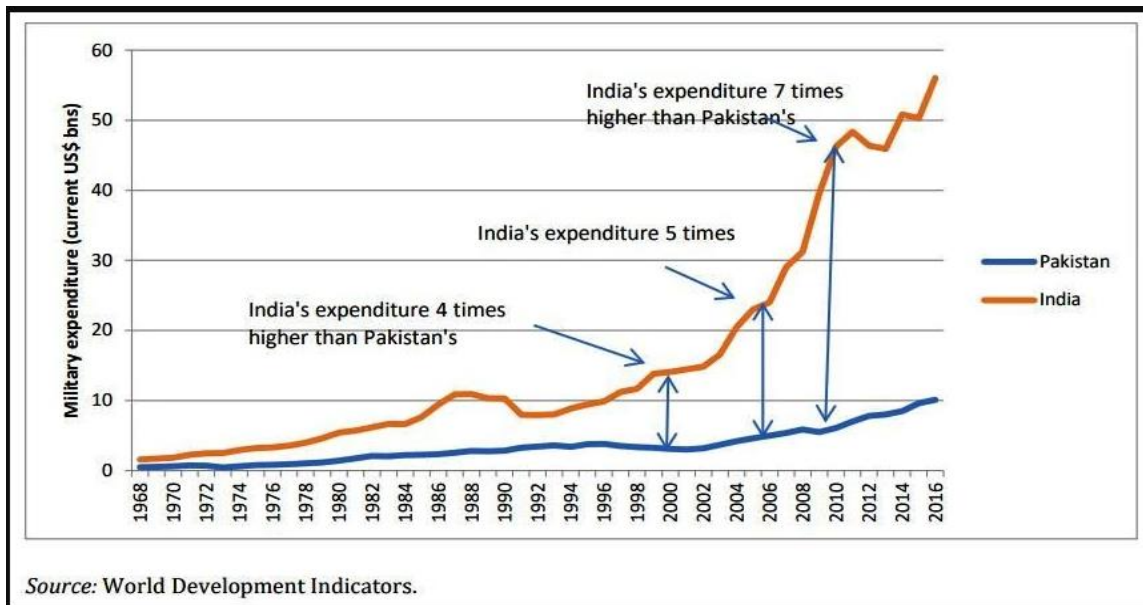
Kashmir has always been the flashpoint between India and Pakistan. Pakistan has repeatedly tried to create unrest in the region, most of the times India has been attentive enough to tackle the situation but sometimes Pakistan has been successful in creating dissension. Ever since it came into existence, Pakistan has been creating unrest in Jammu and Kashmir. The very first attempt at it was Operation Gulmarg on the night of October 21-22, 1947; this day is regarded as the black day in the history of Kashmir. Indian troops did arrive to rescue the area but it was too late as the tribal militias of Pakistan were able to gain control over certain parts of Kashmir. The war continued for more than a year, later Indian Prime Minister Nehru and Pakistan leader declared a ceasefire through UN's mediation. Even though the two sides declared for a ceasefire, Pakistan continued to sponsor violent attacks inside Indian territory. In 1984, Indian army launched Operation Meghdoot in order to gain control of Siachen Glacier. The operation was successful and the Indian army was able to gain control of the Siachen Glacier in its entirety. This started the Siachen War in 1984 and it continued till 2003 when ceasefire came into effect. Siachen is the highest battleground in the world, both sides continue to maintain their military presence in the

region despite its rough terrain and adverse weather conditions. Thus, Kashmir remains the sore-point for Pakistan; and it continues to peddle hatred against India and keeps cropping up the topic of Kashmir on every global forum. Council of Foreign Relations published a report, in which it revealed that Pakistani military and the Inter-Service Intelligence (ISI), the intelligence agency of Pakistan, provides covert support to terrorist groups like Al-Qaeda and Jaish-e-Mohammed, which are active in the Kashmir Valley; but Pakistan continues to deny its involvement in any terrorist activity in the region.

When Narendra Modi became the Prime Minister of India in 2014, there were expectations that the relationship between India and Pakistan might improve. For that purpose, Modi invited Pakistani Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif in his oath taking ceremony. He expected to revive the goodwill that was once seen during Atal Ji's tenure at the time of Lahore Declaration in 1999. Modi was ready to cooperate more closely with Pakistan in order to ease the tensions between them. PM Modi mentioned that India wants to maintain normal neighbourly relations with Pakistan based on goodwill and an environment which is free from terror, bitter violence and hatred. He also acknowledged the fact that India will never compromise on any issue which affects its national security or the territorial integrity of the nation. India tried to strengthen the relations further by regular bilateral talks, as the Prime Minister's met in Ufa (Russia) in July 2015 and Modi made a surprise visit to Pakistan. In December 2015, the External Affairs Minister of India Sushma Swaraj visited Islamabad and made a proposal for the two countries to join the Comprehensive Bilateral Dialogue. However, all the effort to normalise the relation turned futile when Pakistan again started its cross-border terrorism and violence against India; like the Pathankot Airbase attack on 2nd January 2016 and an attack on Indian army camp in Uri in August 2016. All these events ended all hopes of any healthy relation between the two countries. In response to attacks on Indian territories, India launched surgical strikes against militant launch pads across Line of Control. The two countries stopped all contacts till the new government came to power in Pakistan. Indian Prime Minister spoke to Mr. Imran Khan, the newly elected Prime Minister on 30 July 2018 and congratulated him on his success. Both the leaders proposed to build strong relations with each other, but this time India was wary of Pakistan's intentions; and yet again Pakistan failed to keep a peaceful environment and started ceasefire violations. Pakistan-based terrorist outfits brutally killed three police personnel in the state of Jammu and Kashmir and a BSF soldier. On 14 February 2019, a convoy of Indian army personnel was attacked by a suicide bomber in which 40 CRPF personnel lost their lives in the Pulwama district of Jammu and Kashmir; Jaish-e-Mohammed took the responsibility of the attack which is a Pakistan-based Islamist militant group. In response to this gruesome event, India launched Operation Bandar to strike Jaish-e-Mohammad targets in Balakot in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province of Pakistan. This increased the hostility further and in response to the Balakot airstrike, Pakistani Air Force launched airstrikes in Indian territory, which was thwarted by the Indian Air Force. During this aerial skirmish between the two countries, Indian pilot Abhinandan Varthaman, went inside Pakistani territory and he was captured by them. There was fear of any mishappening, which led to uncertainty and hostility. After various days of deliberations, situation finally eased when Pakistan returned Abhinandan. In 2019, Modi government again won the elections. He received a congratulatory call for his victory from Pakistan PM. PM Modi thanked him and reminded him of the previous talks regarding the need to fight against poverty, terrorism and climate change and

creating an environment of mutual trust and harmony in the region. The Abrogation of article 370 was an historical step taken by the government of India which further strained the relation of India and Pakistan. The government of Pakistan was against this step of India, so they called the Abrogation of Article 370 as anti- democratic, against Kashmiri people and that it will deny the Kashmiris their human rights. Pakistan also suspended all trade relations with India and went to the United Nations called the Abrogation illegal and alleged that it was a unilateral step taken by the government of India. Internet connection and tele-communications facilities were shut down and troops were deployed in the region to tackle any unfavourable situation. The status of Jammu and Kashmir as a full-fledged single has been changed, now it is divided into two separate union territories of Jammu and Kashmir and Ladakh. The Indian government heralded this step as the beginning of a new era as the Article was used to encourage anti-national sentiments. Abrogation of Article 370 will help in economic prosperity in the region, but it's just a stepping stone and more needs to be done to bring harmony in the Kashmir region. India's strong diplomatic relations with other countries proved to be useful during this time, that's why the move was welcomed by many nations and they acknowledged it to be an internal matter of India.

Both India and Pakistan have spent ample amount of money to secure their territories from militancy, cross border terrorism, infiltration and low intensity conflict. India is ranked third in the world in terms of military expenditure. According to the Stockholm International Peace Research Institute, in 2020 India's total military expenditure was \$72.9 billion which was 2.9% of its GDP; while Pakistan's military expenditure for the corresponding period was \$10 billion which was 4% of its GDP.



Both the nations are victims of terrorism because of which a large chunk of their resources is spent on tackling it. Apprehensions across both sides of the border have been one of the major factors that prevents them from any kind of joint action against terrorism in the region. International

terrorist organizations like ISIS as well as Al- Qaeda in Indian Subcontinent (AQIS) are trying to make inroads in this region, in order to destabilize the governments and establish an Islamic Republic, though this is unlikely to happen but the growing radicalism as well as indoctrination of the youth cannot be neglected, so this can be a cause of concern for the entire Indian subcontinent. In order to protect the region, the first and foremost requirement is a stable government in Pakistan. None of the Prime Ministers in the history of Pakistan were able to complete their full term of 5 years; even the last PM Imran Khan who talked about "New Pakistan" was also removed from his office. Such a situation only creates confusion among citizens as well as the countries surrounding Pakistan, as to who runs the Pakistani Government. The decisions of the former governments are undone by new regimes, as such there is no clarity about whether any agreement will stand the test of time. Therefore, there is an urgent need for a stable government in Pakistan which can cooperate with India and then both can act against mutual security threats. There should be joint military operations against any terrorist base lying within their territory, also intelligence information should be shared with each other to cultivate confidence. If both the countries are able to maintain good relationship with each other, then they can focus on other aspects of their economy like education, health, poverty, etc. Pakistan had a high economic growth rate during the initial years of its independence but it failed to sustain its growth rate and later had a balance of payment crisis which continues till this date. Pakistan also lacks adequate infrastructural facilities, there is lack of sufficient energy, water crisis, lack of basic facilities in schools and hospitals. A report by UNICEF on 'The State of the World's Children 2019' declared that every second child in South Asia suffers from malnutrition. Both India and Pakistan must rethink on how they can ease the tension between them and focus on more pressing matters related to their human resource development. Both are suffering from poverty, hunger and gender gap. These problems can't be solved until and unless the border conflict is resolved. A table is given below showing the rankings of both India and Pakistan, based on various indices:

Indices	India	Pakistan	Total Countries
Global Terrorism Index (2022)	12	10	163
Global Hunger Index (2021)	101	92	116
Human Development Index (2020)	129	154	189
Global Gender Gap Index (2021)	140	153	156

4. CONCLUSION

India-Pakistan relations have always been on the edge as both nations continue to mistrust the other and instead of resolving the differences, they continue to widen the gaps. Right from their independence, India and Pakistan have fought against each other on various instances. Due to complete lack of trust, none of the bilateral or multilateral talks have ever fructified to a strong bilateral relationship between them. The strategic location of both the nations is very important as they have a long coastline on the Indian Ocean which provides them an easy access for the sea route, also both share a long land border with each other which is roughly around 3000 kilometres. This long border is more significant for their internal security because they are always at loggerheads with each other. Despite having so much in common with each other, India and

Pakistan never had a strong trade relation with each other. Cross border trade between two countries depends on several factors like country's trade policy, its transport policy and its demand and supply dynamics with the other country. Due to constant conflict, India and Pakistan have put restrictions on the free flow of trade between each other. India has a trade surplus with Pakistan, but still the volume of trade is extremely low considering the closeness, population as well as similarity between them. Growing trade relations between the two will not only help their economy but this will force them not to wage a war against a major trading partner. Both nations have been victims of terrorist attacks, so they need to work in tandem against terrorism and then only they can create an environment in which both the countries can cooperate with each other. Open their economy for achieving better economic growth and increasing their trade relations; thereby creating safe and secure environment for the citizens. While securing its territory from possible incursions, both countries need to focus on other issues as both nations perform poorly in Human Resource indicators; be it healthcare issue in which India spends 1.35% of GDP and Pakistan spends 1.2% while WHO's benchmark of health expenditure is at least 6 percent of the GDP. Similarly on education, India and Pakistan spend 3% and 2.5% of their respective GDP. India-Pakistan can work on these issues only when they are able to establish strong bilateral relationships and to ease the tension on borders. There are ample opportunities between these two nations to grow a fruitful trade relationship. India and Pakistan have a huge population and both are the main energy consumers in the region, so they depend on each other to fulfil their requirement of energy. Central Asia and Iran have surplus energy, so Pakistan can provide a main transport route to India (like TAPI Project), which can help in improving ties with each-other. People to People contact could be more helpful in establishing relations. Programs like cultural exchange can bridge the communication gap between them; which might build pressure on the leaders to improve ties. Today the media can play a key role, in this era of communication and technology especially social media and entertainment industry. Both the nations have a common culture and providing an easy access to the pilgrimage sites within each other's territory can go a long way in improving the relation. If India wants to become a regional power in the region, it has to improve relations with Pakistan because it is not possible for India to become a regional power, if it has a threat from two of its neighbouring countries (Pakistan and China).

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