

Kargil war as Security Deterioration of South Asia

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Abstract: *India and Pakistan are two high risks running in this competitive strategy. Since India and Pakistan appeared as independent States on the World map, South Asian security has been derailing in an unstable and vast shape. Kargil pushes the region towards unease and insecurity. Although India called it a proxy War, which was controlled by Pakistan forces. In Kargil both states showed their presence of their nuclear weapons and exchange threats. Both states were in Competition for winning through their perception of nuclear weapons. There were basically two reasons of Pakistan to fight this particular war (i) Secure Territory (ii) Internationalize the Kashmir issue. Due to the effort of Pakistan Kashmir issue was internationalised in front of world but unfortunately Pakistan was labelled as sponsor of terrorism as well as threats about misuse of its nuclear weapons increased in South Asian region. Deterrence Theory will be used in article. Which involves using military threats/weapons as a mean to deter international crisis. In this research both analytical and descriptive methods will be used. Descriptive analytics is the process of using current and historical data to identify trends and relationships so this is the best suited method to conduct this research.*

Key Words: Deterioration, Security, Region, South Asia, Kargil, India, Pakistan, Dilemma

Historic Outlook

The ideals of South Asia is categorised by the enmity between India and Pakistan from their inception. This kind of enmity and hostility further shaped into war and warlike situations. In which including exceptional arms race, wars, war like situations, stand offs, this kind of situations are developing insecurity and eventually threaten whole region due to nuclearization which is result of this veteran enmity.

Since India and Pakistan appeared as independent states on world map, the south Asian security has been derailing in unstable and vast shape. The growing dispute between two states on Kashmir has been bone of

contention between the two states. It was major dispute that centralized the external security and defence policies of both sides fought two major wars on Kashmir and numerous external wars or conflicts were held including 1947-1948 war, 1965 war, Siachen glacier, 1990 military standoff, Kargil conflict and 2000 military standoff.

“In order to understand the real standing of both states on issue of nuclearization, it is important to understand the nuclear doctrine of both sides and to analyse the implication of these doctrines on the total security of South Asian region.” (Latif, A. 2014).

International cold war came to end and regional issues were settled but in south Asia

things were not settled and India and Pakistan did not follow international trends for peace and stability. Kashmir issue was intensified the hostility and threatened the security of south Asia. In 1990-1991 both countries forces stood eye ball to eye ball position and were ready to fight. It was expected that both sides would use nuclear arsenals. International community, especially US played role to calm down the situation. A delegation from US that was called Robert Gatemission came to south Asia and played an effective role to pacify the violent situation that was to turn into a horrible nuclear war. Though nuclear war threat was evacuated but security situation in region was not stable. So far from bilateral talks (1994-1997) between the two countries could not give solution to issue. Kashmir issue in particular. Within that era BJP formed govt. in India and its relations with Pakistan was on brink of clashes. The nuclear blast in 1998 eliminated all channels of normalization and both states reached in a war like situation. The status of Indian leaders after blasts threatened the security of Pakistan.

International Viewpoint

The international pressure both states to go to talks for normalization, though Indian Prime minister Vajpayee made a historic visit to Pakistan by bus in Feb 1999. This tour of Indian prime minister opened channel of talks. This form floated bus diplomacy and both Pakistani and Indian prime minister signed Lahore declaration.

The conduct of nuclear blasts by India and Pakistan blew up even the small hope for Pakistan and India normalization and lead severe effect on regional security environment. The threatening statements against Pakistan but it also send a warning signal to China and other nations of south Asia to accept what New Delhi claimed as the 'new strategic' balance in the region. However Pakistan's nuclear heated by Indian nuclear explosions. Though Pakistan's nuclear deterrence toned down the threatening statements of India and pushed India to strike a conciliatory note in policy statements issued from New Delhi.

The Lahore declaration was a unique agreement by which both sides agreed to discuss their nuclear methods on bilateral level. International community was also happy on it. It was hoped that following this

agreement peace and security will be established in the region. But the joy of signing the Lahore declaration was not over the security breeching event took place at Kargil Drass sector that totally averted the effect of Lahore declaration. The Kargil conflict was started by Pakistan when Pakistan-backed Kashmiri militants with help of Pakistan military personals captured the Kargil heights which were in centre of India.

"The Kargil operation was originally conceived in this strategic context. Benazir Bhutto claimed that the army presented her with a Kargil-like plan in 1989 and 1996. According to Bhutto, the operation was designed to oust Indian forces from Siachen Glacier in northern Kashmir." (Adnan, D. [2020](#)).

"The major event that was shaping the South Asian region and the domestic politics in the subcontinent was that Pakistan had become nuclear capable after carrying out nuclear tests in May 1998. India had also carried out tests in early May 1998 after breaking a self-imposed moratorium. The subcontinent was effectively a nuclear zone but had as a consequence become isolated. Virtually the entire world had reacted negatively to the nuclear tests by severing ties with India and Pakistan in a wide range of fields including, diplomatic, technology exchange, immigration, cultural exchange, military, and commerce. Several significant leading organizations and countries, including the US, had imposed economic embargoes." (Khan, K. [2005](#)).

"After May 1998 nuclear explosions by both India and Pakistan Kashmir issue became a nuclear flash point and probability of Kashmir emerging as nuclear flash point in South Asia almost came true when two nuclear states of South Asian region came into violent conflicting situation over the Kargil heights in the disputed state" (Shakoor, F. [1999](#)).

After India and Pakistan went overtly nuclear conflict in 1998, the region lacked nuclear stability. This nuclear instability demonstrated in Kargil conflict. Though years have passed, south Asian nuclear situation, unlike other regions, is vigorous for the purpose that deterrence in the region has not yet stabilized. The real cause of this nuclear instability in south Asia is unresolved disputes between India and Pakistan. For instance

Kashmir dispute is major issue there is no movement towards some solution of it after even seven decades. Siachen is another critical issue that is linked with Kashmir dispute. The problem rose because there is no agreed yet demarcation on area.

Farzana Siddique, from Centre for international Strategic Studies said:

“In 1948 proposed agreement it was decided that straight line should be drawn to mark the areas that belong to India and Pakistan, North to Pakistan and South to India. Agreement was reached for formalization of this position but Indians went back on their commitments. As a draft agreement on this issue already exists it is comparatively easy to resolve but India does not seem interested in the resolution of the problem.” (Siddique, M. F. [2013](#)).

Sir Creek is small issue but not resolved. Farzana Siddique also added:

Overt nuclearization created a new security situation. Nuclear weapons since then have become an additional factor in regional politics, and resultant emergence of strategic deterrence between India and Pakistan is presently the fundamental pillar of security in South Asia. This deterrence relationship has, thus far, fulfilled its basic theoretical function i.e. prevention of a full scale conventional war between the two nuclear weapon states, which is likely to remain so in the foreseeable future. Nuclear deterrence however, remained unsuccessful in preventing either state from military adventures. In wake of 1998 nuclear tests India and Pakistan signed Lahore Declaration to normalize their relations but before any substantive initiative could be taken both states were soon embroiled in another series of crises. (Siddique, M. F. [2013](#))

Kargil Conflict

The Kargil conflict in May 1999 was the first major instance of military hostilities between India and Pakistan after both states had become declared nuclear weapon powers. Soon after Kargil, large scale Indian military mobilization once again brought South Asia to the brink of war. In 2001-2002, again both states were in direct confrontation in wake of Indian allegation that an attack on the Indian Parliament, in December 2001, was sponsored

by Pakistan. India then mobilized its forces and moved them on borders with Pakistan, and Pakistan responded in kind. The confrontation of 2001-2002 was eventually resolved and composite dialogue process between the two countries began in 2004. The dialogue process however, did not produce tangible results despite its continuation for several years. After the Mumbai terror attacks of November 26, 2008 the relations between the two neighbours again sharply deteriorated and the dialogue process was suspended, which could not be resumed even after a lapse of five years. (Siddique, M. F. [2013](#))

Ghulshan Majeed in her article stated:

The Kargil clash in May, 1999 pushed the region in an environment of insecurity. Violent conflicting situation erupted in Kargil sector after a couple of months of Lahore declaration, which was signed between Vajpayee and Nawaz Sharif. Kargil conflict was the part of Kashmir and that issue is considered the main driving force behind the arm race of South Asia. Kashmiri Mujahdeen took a current turn in the first week of May 1999, when it was reported by the India that approximately 500 to 800 so-called infiltrators crossed the Line of Control on the Indian side. Kargil and Drass along LOC (Line of Control) provided to the Mujahideen a strategically important position to choke the Indian army movement from Sirinagar to Leh. (Chari, P. R. [2009](#)).

India called it a proxy war, which was controlled by Pakistan forces. India claimed during this conflict that LOC should be considered as the permanent border between India and Pakistan but Pakistan considered that Line of Control is a temporary line between them. Pakistani leadership held talks with USA and reached an agreement under which, would order Mujahideen to withdraw from Kargil and Line of Control would be respected by both India and Pakistan. Kargil issue proved that Kashmir issue is a nuclear flash point and needs urgent resolution. Kargil crisis was a reminder that conventional hostilities have potential to push both India and Pakistan into a nuclear exchange. During Kargil crisis the presence of nuclear weapons influenced the actions of India and Pakistan. India and Pakistani officials and leaders did not hesitate to exchange direct or indirect nuclear threats during the Kargil crisis. This

crisis is considered sufficient to make US realize that its involvement in the region has become inevitable to facilitate both India and Pakistan to resolve their issues including the core issue of Kashmir” (Siddique, M. F. [2013](#))

Due to this, the assurance and hope continuously remained an aspirant thinking between India and Pakistan. The conflict of Kargil had been officially ended, but the hostile attitudes have not been at a standstill. The penetration of feeling of hate and hostility that overcome the people not only in writings, speeches but it similarly indicated in activities by attacking opponent thru the Line of Control (LOC). Pakistan stated the simple assumption that Indian aggression and hegemonic determinations will continue as ongoing feature of Indian foreign policy in the upcoming years. The Indian inspiration has been become the foremost concern of Pakistani foreign policy and sanctuary awareness.

Ghulshan Majeed further said in her article after end situation as:

“After the end of the Kargil episode, the terrorist attacks on the Indian Parliament on 13th December 2001 provided an opportunity to India to opt a hard stance towards Pakistan. Through most of 2002 Indian government mobilized its armed forces. Pakistan was forced to respond on same lines. For many months armed forces of both sides were ready for war. This military standoff between India and Pakistan posed a major threat to peace of South Asian region.” (Siddique, M. F. [2013](#))

S.Paul Kapur, in his article “Ten years of instability in a nuclear South Asia” stated:

“Pakistan’s actual Kargil operation was designed primarily to threaten India’s position in Siachen Glacier. According to Pakistani President Pervez Musharraf, “Kargil was fundamentally about Kashmir,” where the Indians occupy Pakistani territory, “for example at Siachen.” “Emotions run very high here” on this issue. “Siachen is barren wasteland, but it belongs to us,” he asserted.” (Kapur, S. P. [2008](#)).

He further quoted Jilani in his article and write:

“Nuclear weapons played a dual role in Pakistani strategy at Kargil. They “deterred India” from all-out conventional retaliation against Pakistan. And they sent a message to the outside world regarding the seriousness of the

Kashmir dispute: “War between nuclear powers is not a picnic. It’s a very serious business. One little incident in Kashmir could undermine everything” (Kapur, S. P. [2008](#))

Growing Tension between India- Pakistan

The growing tension between India and Pakistan after becoming nuclear powers in May 1998 came as climax of Kargil crisis. It was basically Kashmir conflict but now main force behind to upward to assimilate this nuclearization in south Asia. It is said that main reason of this Pakistan’s adventure was based on the chief surprise of the Kargil crisis Pakistan's apparent readiness to run a high risk of expanded war over Kashmir against the backdrop of a newly nuclearized South Asia. Outside observers concluded that Pakistani planners of the Kargil operation had been inspired by Pakistan’s demonstrated nuclear capability. Western observers of South Asia expected after the May 1998 Indian and Pakistani nuclear tests’ India and Pakistan would adopt a pattern of self-restraint similar to that evolved by the superpowers following their Cuban missile crisis in 1962 – imposing limits on actions that could trigger nuclear confrontation. The Kargil episode, hardly a year after the Pokhran II and Chagai I series of nuclear tests, undermined this expectation. (Jones, R. W. [2000](#)).

Kargil war was Infect limited war to meet the Pakistan’s aim to secure territory. The other objective of this Pakistan’s adventure on Kargil heights was to internationalize the Kashmir issue. It was unexpected by the Pakistan planner of operation that international community would intervene effectively and immediately to seize the conflict because it would have been feared that war could expanded and spin out of control and turn into a major clash that could have a nuclear exchange for sake of regional security, international community came forward and U.S played a particular role to end the conflict.

Dr Ahmad Ejaz said:

The international pressure though prevented Indian forces not to both states to avoid nuclear confrontation, thus the result of conflict was acceptable. The diplomacy of both countries played role but Indian diplomacy gained. In beginning foreign office did not take

responsibility and denied Pakistan role in conflict. It said that Kashmiri militants did it, by their own and Pakistan forces have no involvement in it. But later on it was clearly exposed to international community when on the return of Prime Minister from Washington called Kashmiri militants to vacate the heights. This Pakistan's government action surprises the international community and authenticates their perception that backed militants to capture Kargil heights." (Rashid, M. I., Javaid, P. D. U., & Shamshad, M. [2020](#))

He further said:

This action of Pakistan gave diplomatic jerk to international community. At other side international pressure came to Pakistan was underlined as promoter and sponsor of terrorism. It was embracement for Pakistan diplomacy. Firstly Pakistan did not accept its involvement and later on it exposed. The scope and scale of Pakistan's engagement with militant groups to capture the Kargil heights. "So Pakistan had been incredible in the eyes of international community and it also raised a strong apprehension about militant access to nuclear weapons." (Rashid, M. I., Javaid, P. D. U., & Shamshad, M. [2020](#))

This situation also not support Indian claim that only external support is responsible for unrest in Kashmir. In presence of heavy force of Indian army, difficult land and weather external presence on a massive scale might be not possible. It is possible only when Indian forces evocate the peaks and Mujahedeen get opportunity to take over those peaks.

Impact of Kargil Conflict

The immediate impact of Kargil fight was international pressure on India to start negotiates with Pakistan on Kashmir. When the talks held between Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif and Mr. Clinton was at that time in touch with leaders of India and cleared Mr. Vajpayee about all talks done with Pakistan. Indian leaders and newspapers also objected the government of Mr. Vajpayee for making this issue international since they pressured by the United States. United Nations and other world powers forced to hold two sided talks to sort out Kashmir issue as in the spirit of Simla agreement and Lahore declaration. Former

foreign secretary and a member of the National Security Council of India J.N. Dixit said, "Pakistan has succeeded in its goal of internationalizing Kashmir. Pakistan has been able to lay the basis for international mediation... through the Kargil conflict; Pakistan has also been able to recreate the importance of Kashmir as an issue in the bilateral aspect" (Mahmood, T. [1999](#)).

Consideration Kashmir dispute on international level was a winning of Pakistan point of view as Pakistan claimed that Kargil conflict have link with un resolved Kashmir Dispute and it can never be isolated main Kashmir dispute. However at other side India did not link Kargil conflict with Kashmir dispute it said there is no link between them.

The use of intervention of US in conflict and signing of Washington agreement between Clinton and Nawaz revealed the internationalization of Kashmir dispute. "The results of the Kargil War demonstrate that conflict between India and Pakistan is hardly deterred by the presence of nuclear weapons. However, the likelihood of full-scale conventional war has significantly decreased because of the inability for either side to make significant gains in a quick timeframe The result is room for mischief-making and limited, catalytic conflicts on the lower end of the escalation spectrum with behaviour entirely consistent with stability-instability paradox. This state of constant violence with no organized application of force has been dubbed "ugly stability" There will be a persistence of unconventional conflict such as cross-border terrorism and engagement with rebel groups because conventional wars have become prohibitively costly. Nuclear weapons will entice both sides to engage in sub conventional conflicts." (Panday, A. [2011](#)).

Deterrence optimists see the strife-management strategies India and Pakistan pursued during the Kargil episode as a validation of deterrence theory, whereas proliferation pessimists see them as a repudiation of this theory, or at least its applicability to South Asia. (Lavoy, P. R., & Lavoy, P. R. (Eds.) [2009](#)).

Kargil conflict shows that even some of the nuclear weapons holder states think they can fight in where they want they can. India and Pakistan expelled both the strategic logic of

competition in the northern areas of Kashmir, where they think they can achieve political objectives without regional or lead to a military escalation. This is specifically correct for Pakistan, which has historically irregular military strategies adopted to counter the traditional Indian military, economic and political advantages but it also valid to the Indian Army, who tried from Kargil to improve their ability to fit limited conventional war against Pakistan. Though, India and Pakistan are two high risks running in this competitive strategy. They have the risk of losing militarily. But also it risks winning while the other side is forced to deteriorate the conflicts. States must choose to take these risks have confidence in conflict management skills. In the case of Kargil, it showed Pakistan's capacity for managing shown to be particularly good at first, but turned out to be very poor.

At one end of the range, Pakistani army may have learned a lot from many of the logistical and pre-emptive faults committed during the Kargil invasion. The military institutions carrying out in-depth, internal analyses for the failure of operation, even though these reports are not public. At the other end of the spectrum and it is not clear whether Pakistan would be able to avoid a repeat of the serious institutional failures suffered by the planning and execution of the Kargil operation. The Nation stated:

After the end of the Kargil crisis, India adopted a more aggressive policy towards Pakistan and refused to hold talks with it, while during the crisis, it asked Pakistan to cease the hostilities as soon as the freedom fighters withdrew from Kargil area. Indian Foreign Minister Jaswant Singh stated that his country was not ready to resume talks with Pakistan because Pakistan, by backing intrusion into the Indian-held Kashmir, had betrayed India's trust. Responding to this Indian statement, Foreign Minister of Pakistan Sartaj Aziz said that real trust between Pakistan and India never existed throughout the past 52 years, 'so question of betraying it did not arise. He urged India to rectify the series of LOC violations it had committed in Siachen and other sectors, after 1972 Simla Agreement. If India had any doubt about the violations it had committed, a joint team of experts accompanied by the UN

observers could verify the ground reality vis-a-vis the violations. (The Nation, 23 July 1999)

Nuclear Threats

Nuclear dangers helped to reduce the inducements of India to expand the Kargil war outside Kashmir. Nevertheless, the sacrifice of lives in India to regain ground in the fighting of Kargil professional military focused attention on gaps in defence capabilities to cope with the high altitude, armed intrusion. The escalation of nationalist sentiment in the population caused the increasing demands for more severe reactions Pakistan, and innate wider the defence budget to support. Kargil certainly strengthen the hands of those who prefer to accelerate the development and deployment of nuclear weapons, including the pursuit of nuclear sword, or other offensive weapons from India, to refute the supposition that Pakistan improve security and behind nuclear shield. Kargil damaged the prospects of restrictions on the arms race and a comprehensive system of confidence-building measure.

The Kargil conflict which was vague in nature had developed a consensus that the Kargil-like operations were not workable in the emerging international environment. Pakistan realized that that it paid heavily for its adventurism in Kargil and that the international community will never acknowledge such use of overt force to change the status quo. It was realized Pakistani leaders that any kind of violence would not be accepted by the international world and it would earn bad name for Pakistan. They realized that it was a political and diplomatic failure of Pakistan. The biggest loss of the Kargil War, apart from 1,200 lives lost on both fringe of the LOC, was trust and confidence in India - Pakistan relations. So India was on winning pitch in Kargil crises and Indian diplomacy painted Pakistan as the promoter and sponsor of terrorism and painted itself as victim of this Pakistan backed-terrorism.

After that the two nations took two years to go forward to the 'high road' from the Kargil War to the Agra Summit.

Process of Normalization

According to Pakistan, relations cannot normalize unless India agrees to discuss Kashmir within the framework of Pakistani objectives. As per India, it is prepared to discuss Jammu & Kashmir, along with other Indo-Pak issues but there can be no surrender of Jammu & Kashmir or its territorial alienation from India. Also, Pakistan must give up sponsoring violence and terrorism in Jammu & Kashmir.

Lessons Learnt by Kargil War

Pakistan learned from Kargil war:

1. Kargil-like operations as an ineffective means of dispute resolution—mainly because Kargil appears to have been such a failure in the eyes of the world. The significance of this conclusion, however, is limited by the fact that many stakeholders in Pakistan simultaneously believe that Kargil can be seen as a victory of sorts. This continuing ambiguity about the effect of Kargil, when coupled with the strong Pakistani belief in the utility of other kinds of coercive operations against India, has unsettling consequences for the prospect of lasting stability. (Singh, J. 1999).
2. To preclude strategic failure of the kind represented by Kargil in the future, Pakistan must effectively appraise the international response and the operational implications of that response. In particular, Pakistan must better assess the reactions of its adversaries in furtherance of a more effective grand strategy.
3. Pakistan needs a broad body of experts, perhaps like the National Security Council (NSC), to adequately assess its planned operations of this sort. This sentiment is aroused by the government's sweeping failure to anticipate the squeal of the Kargil crisis and the secrecy in which the operation was shrouded. This veil of secrecy is the manifestation of the deep fissures in Pakistan's civil-military relations.
4. Pakistan must develop specific media strategies to shape international opinion

and to mitigate India's advantages on the information battleground. However, even the best media strategy cannot provide insulation against duplicity in the long term. Recognizing this problem, some interlocutors suggested that Pakistan made a grave miscalculation by hiding behind the transparent mujahideen cover story.

5. Because the use of Pakistani regulars in Kargil proved to be counterproductive and because Pakistan believes that it has few or no diplomatic options, Pakistan sees only one successful strategy for bringing India to the negotiating table: the continued prosecution of sub-conventional conflict in Kashmir and perhaps elsewhere in India. (Sarkar, B. 1999).
6. Pakistan's nuclear capabilities have become the key to successful execution of its political strategies at multiple levels. Nuclear weapons not only enable Islamabad to pursue "strategic diversion" and immunize the country from a violent Indian counter response, they also serve to catalyse the attention and, Pakistan hopes, the interest of the international community. Consequently, they have acquired centrality in Pakistan's national strategy.

India also learned that:

1. India must be prepared for Pakistani recklessness, which could occur in different areas and take different forms: terrorism throughout India, conventional operations and incursions, increased LIC in Kashmir, and a variety of non-traditional threats.
2. India must more aggressively counter Pakistani threats along the LOC by investing in more technologically advanced military and intelligence equipment. India is considering a complete overhaul of its intelligence infrastructure in light of its embarrassing failure to identify the Pakistani infiltration. However, despite initial humiliations, India is now confident that it can effectively counter the most audacious conventional Pakistani threats along the LOC even when disadvantaged by surprise.

3. The Kashmir issue cannot be neglected in hopes of gradual atrophy. Rather, its resolution requires high-level attention and commitment as well as creative responses on the part of the government.
4. India understands that international support cannot be taken for granted. To ensure this support, India must both maintain a posture of responsibility and be seen as seeking peace. These requirements act as an important brake on India's propensity to respond aggressively to future Pakistani provocations.
5. India recognizes the utility of the media in contemporary conflicts and will continue its offensive in the information war. India believes that it won Kargil politically in part because of its dexterous capability of shaping international perception. India also values the role of perception management in affecting public opinion domestically as well as influencing the morale of the Indian and Pakistani militaries.
6. India must treat nuclear issues more carefully because Pakistan is a risk-acceptant state capable of "irrational" strategic surprises. India thus must be prepared for nuclear operations that may be forced upon it by Pakistani actions. (Tellis, A. J., Fair, C. C., & Medby, J. J. [2002](#)).

Conclusion

Relations among Pakistan and India are always in up and down situation. The strategic situation of both countries remain dilemma. When the outbreak of Kargil crisis, there basically two factors in which Pakistan focused to accomplish it one of them is security of territory which is essential feature of any state. And Pakistan is always in the line securing its borders from external control and aggression. Another factor was to internationalize the issue of Kashmir for its solution. Both countries have influential impact in the region because both countries have the power of Nuclear weapons and ability to counter each other. Although Kargil conflict directly related to nuclear weapons of both India and Pakistan. Through Kashmir issue both states tried to threaten for using their nuclear weapons against each other. Which blew up the peace of South Asian region. And became major reason to involvement of International world in region especially United States involvement in this conflict is appreciable as well as this type of war like situation or we can say nuclear conflict deteriorate the security of region and weaken the countries in front of all world. The nuclear weapons of India and Pakistan are meant to be disaster for the region of South Asia. Nuclear power never meant to create war or warlike situation.

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