

**Pakistan's interaction with regional States: strategic policy
maximization 1972-1998***

*Khalid Javed Makhdoom***

Pakistan's dismemberment in 1971 was in the mutual U.S.-Soviet interest. It is worth recalling that vital developments had taken place in 1962 - first, the U.S.-Soviet détente for co-existence, which they adopted after the Cuban Missile Crisis; and second, the Sino-Indian War, as a consequence of which a victorious China emerged as an "extra-area actor". The given environment, therefore, meant that the superpowers shared joint inherent motives of eliminating China from South Asia, as well as making Pakistan subservient to India.

In this 'conspiracy' of early 1960s, the lead was nevertheless taken by the Soviet Union, when Kremlin successfully got the Tashkent Declaration of 1966 signed by India and Pakistan and thus acquired a self-styled status of the "custodian of peace" in South Asia. Consequently, through this tactic, both the superpowers could keep China away from the South Asian affairs and contemplate weakening Pakistan as well.¹

1972-79

As a result of the new regional shift, in this period, the whole environment for Pakistan changed altogether. Pakistan had passed through the turmoil of dismemberment in 1971, when neither great powers nor friendly China and brotherly Muslim nations had practically come to Pakistan's rescue against the Indian intervention in its internal crisis. Pakistan now felt isolated. It was no longer competent enough to face the hegemonic challenges of a hostile India. It was cut to its present size by the loss of substantial territory and also lost more than half its population. Previously, Pakistan was also a member of South East Asia but after East Pakistan's detachment, it lost its enviable status of the leading Islamic state and the fifth biggest nation of the world. The image of Pakistan was thus marred, apparently to an irreparable dimension.

Pakistan now faced mounting pressure even from its 'trusted' allies in the West to accept the reality of India's preponderance in the region. For instance, we noted America as being an 'equalizer' (or 'balancer') during the 1950s in terms of military balance between Pakistan and India but after 1971, the same friendly superpower appeared to be an apologist, expressing inability to equate a much weaker Pakistan with a substantially stronger India.² The need of the time,

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** The writer is former Chairman, Department of Political Science, Government College University, Lahore

therefore, was for Pakistan to regain its lost strength and prestige in a cordial atmosphere of peace and tranquility.

Pakistan did re-focus its priorities in foreign policy, especially in response to the regional scenario. The 1970s were, in the main, the period of Prime Minister Zulfikar Ali Bhutto of Pakistan People's Party. Replacing the past Martial Law regimes, he was a strong politician of western learning and possessed dynamic leadership qualities. There was a general perception of him as a strategist who, despite being a civilian-feudal, could maneuver out the country in a crisis situation. In the capacity of President Ayub's Foreign Minister, and especially after the Tashkent Declaration, he excelled in politics and emerged as a national hero. The leverage to his popular ascendancy was mostly provided by his bold criticism (or even blackmailing) of President Ayub's unpopular 'rapprochement' with India at Tashkent, which to his contention was a peace plan forced upon the people of Pakistan without any concrete proposal for settling the root-cause of war, namely the Kashmir dispute.³ His main accusation, therefore, coincided with the general public protestation that President Ayub had bargained out Pakistan's victory in the September War of 1965.

Nonetheless, Prime Minister Bhutto's policy steps included, for example, the Simla Agreement of 1972, which he concluded with his Indian counterpart, Indira Gandhi. If we read between the lines, it was a classical understanding for peace between the two warring neighbors of South Asia. Unlike the Tashkent Declaration of 1966, in which the restoration of peace short of a settlement of the Kashmir dispute was visualized through the auspices of the Soviet Union, the Simla Agreement was the culmination of direct negotiations between India (the victor) and Pakistan (the victim).

In spite of that, diplomacy did take a peaceful course. This was evident when some strategic decisions were mutually worked out by the two rival neighboring states - Indo-Pakistan conflicts for instance, were to be resolved amicably and peacefully in accordance with the Charter of the United Nations, and bilateralism was to be tested as the modality for conflict resolution.

The Simla Agreement thus, provided new guidelines for both Pakistan and India to be considerate in their mutual interaction. It stressed peace between the two countries but the methodology recommended for peace was bilateralism,⁴ as a substitute for multilateralism through the United Nations or third-party mediation. However, this conditioned peace through bilateralism, primarily cherished by India, was evidenced in later decades as a futile proposal when India was not sincere in reaching a workable settlement. Hence, for Pakistan, India's insistence on bilateralism was in fact a deliberate attempt to escape the realities in confrontation.

Yet, that same aspect of peaceful bilateralism inevitably provided Pakistan a strategic deterrence. This was proven when, despite inherent enmity, India never

dared to launch a full-scale direct attack on Pakistan in the years to come. It was mainly because of the obligation to resorting to peaceful bilateral means in accordance with the established norms and usages of International Law.

About Kashmir, it was mutually agreed by the two leaders at Simla that it was an issue that needed a final settlement. As a first step in that direction, they decided to replace the old cease-fire line in Kashmir with a Line of Control (LoC) with the purpose of demilitarizing the sensitive zone of direct confrontation.

Hence, one discernable impact of Pakistan's dismemberment in 1971 was that Prime Minister Bhutto yielded to India's proposal of bilateralism, though by refusing Indian hegemony in the region and by keeping the prospects of multilateralism open. Whereas in the Indian perceptions, by adhering to bilateralism Pakistan had shifted away from its traditional focus on multilateralism and instead accepted two-way diplomacy as the means for settlement with India's approval.⁵ The United Nations was thus excluded from 1972 as a forum for discussing Indo-Pakistan affairs. Bhutto reaffirmed the same policy of bilateralism towards the U.S.A, U.S.S.R and China.⁶

Policy-maximization: post-1971 phase

Besides bilateralism, other post-1971 strategic policy decisions included adopting neutrality in the Cold War environment. This was made possible when the policy-makers of Pakistan (Bhutto between 1971 and 1977, and Zia in the later years) withdrew from SEATO in 1974 and from CENTO in 1979; and formally entering Pakistan into the Non-Aligned Movement (NAM) in 1979.⁷ In the western perceptions, SEATO was designed against China and CENTO against the Soviet Union. After its dismemberment, as well as Islamic revolution in Iran, Pakistan withdrew from both the western military pacts in response to its regional environment. Such a move also indicated that, after being disappointed by its allies in the west, Pakistan now wanted to track an independent path with enhanced concentration on its friends like China and foes like India essentially by adopting bilateralism as a prescription in its overall foreign policy framework.

In 1974, India carried out its first nuclear test with the motives of establishing its hegemony in the region and also challenging Communist China, which had acquired nuclear technology since 1964. But since Pakistan was India's immediate target, the paramount threat from India's nuclear gain was felt by this weaker neighbor and thus Pakistan lodged a strong protest to India as well as to the world community at large. Much to its surprise and disappointment however, India's nuclear hostility remained unabated mostly because of the 'mild' accusation from the world powers.⁸

Therefore Pakistan had no choice but to take effective security measures for its Survival. As noted above, it had adopted neutrality in Cold War politics

mostly because of its grievances with the western allies. A further step was the initiation of self-reliance instead of dependence from abroad. This maximization of foreign policy enabled Pakistan to embark upon its own nuclear programme in 1975 in response to India's display of nuclear power in 1974. The initiation of this counter-action was much admired countrywide, but criticized by the great powers and India who opposed it vehemently. There were tangible implications as well. For instance, Henry Kissinger warned Prime Minister Bhutto in 1977, and America cut off aid again in the 1970s and then in 1980s despite Pakistan's defense compulsions.⁹

As for pan-Islamism, President Ayub Khan's calculated approach gave a new impetus to it in the form of RCD. However, after 1971, Pakistan's image was no longer that of the biggest Islamic state in the world. Therefore, Bhutto's policy design included revived endeavors in the community of Muslim nations. He convened and hosted the Islamic Summit Conference at Lahore in 1974.¹⁰ The objectives were manifold; they included the revitalization of the Muslimworld's support for a weaker Pakistan; the country rendering its services to brotherly Muslimnations of the 'Ummah'; and the restoration of Pakistan's position as a peace-loving nation, which had been distorted by India in 1971 as a logical corollary of the 'hate Pakistan campaign'. For such cherished motives, Pakistan was now ready to design cordiality with Muslimstates preferably on the principle of bilateralism that were already enshrined in its foreign policy. With the same sentiment, as well as the support of Summit members, Pakistan also recognized Bangladesh in the Conference.

1979-88

We have already mentioned the views of Leon E. Rose regarding the Muslim World. According to Agha Shahi, the Muslim world could unfortunately never be of any potential significance for Pakistan's strategic needs of security and stability. India's military preparedness over Pakistan and hegemonic aspirations in the region were however, 'likely to become overwhelming' in the coming decades. This was even more telling in the nineties. After Pakistan's departure from the western military pacts in 1979, the U.S. had concluded a Mutual Assistance Programme with it, under which U.S. military sales (not aid) began in 1981 and ended in 1987. The prospects of renewal of this agreement were meager, especially since with the Cold War receding, American interests in Pakistan were diminishing. "Pakistan's own resources", Agha Shahi further contends, "would be likely to remain too strapped to afford even the minimum expenditure needed to assure a credible defense capability". In spite of that, Pakistan confronted a hostile India "armed with conventional weaponry as well as much advanced nuclear capability now".¹¹

It is against this regional scenario that some crucial developments and relevant policy designs of the decade starting in 1979 deserve our attention.

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Domestically, the civilian government of Z. A. Bhutto had been overthrown and the martial law regime of General Ziaul Haq installed since 1977. After Bhutto's capital punishment through the Supreme Court in 1979, President Zia's military government was in full swing. Although it pledged to restore democracy, Zia's military stature symbolized a modernist elite with clear traits of a conservative outlook. In the capacity of a military ruler, he combined in his person all powers of policy-making and being an Islamist, he initiated numerous Islamic reforms for nation-building and for changing Pakistan's social structure, much to the satisfaction of the conservatives in the country. Mostly due to such traits, President Zia's foreign policy too had an Islamic projection. He was successful in persuading other Muslim nations for the innovation of Organization of Islamic Conference (OIC); RCD was redesigned as ECO, an Islamic world platform for economic cooperation with an open invitation to Central Asian States to join in; and plans also began for an Islamic World Bank for pooled investments in the region and an Islamic World Chamber of Commerce and Industry.¹²

It is equally worth noticing that the same period of 1979-88 witnessed some drastic environmental developments in the region, stressing a refocus in Pakistan's foreign policy. In the first instance, there was an Islamic Revolution in Iran in 1979 under the dynamic leadership of Ayatullah Roohullah Khomeini. This change, though predominantly in favor of Shi'ite Islam, did not coincide with President Zia's Islamism, which carried the support of the conservative majority in Pakistan. As a consequence of the revolution, the pro-American government of Shahinshah Raza Shah Pehalvi came to an end. His government was widely identified as a stronghold of America since the 1930s and his abdication to make room for an anti-American State inevitably created a power vacuum, allowing Soviet policy specialists to realize their long-cherished dream of a downward march to warm waters.¹³

Availing this opportunity in the year of the Shah downfall, Soviet armed forces trampled over Afghanistan, established a puppet regime in Kabul and reached Pakistan's sensitive frontiers in the North-West. This alarming development in Pakistan's periphery demanded utmost attention for self-defense and for the restoration of peace and normalcy in its vicinity. Pakistan had already accepted the principle of bilateralism at least with India, while signing the Simla Agreement in 1972, as opposed to previous multilateral arrangements through the United Nations. But the Soviet penetration into Afghanistan and military presence on Pakistan's frontiers had many repercussions. In the past, the Soviet threat was considered more global and remote because of the U.S.-Soviet bipolarity, but it was now intensely regional and direct. The Communist superpower had for the first time demolished Afghanistan's traditional status of a buffer state and posed a direct threat to Pakistan. With its credible defense capability at stake, the country was once again dependant on support and assistance from the Western great powers despite its erstwhile stated positions of bilateralism and non-alignment.¹⁴

Under the circumstances, Pakistan's relations with the Soviet Union deteriorated again. Moscow accused the Zia government of toeing the line of Western imperialist forces, instigating Afghan anti-Soviet fighters (Mujahideen) on the pretext of Jihad and Muslim brotherhood, and supporting those Afghan refugees (Muhajireen) who came to Pakistan, with the intention of exploiting the West for aid by blackmailing the Soviet Union.¹⁵

As events progressed, there came the Geneva Accord as an outcome of the Afghan crisis, under which the Soviets agreed to withdraw. The allegations against Pakistan came to the surface when, at the time of framing the accord, the Soviets in their official statements lamented the Mujahideen's success as full of 'immense global implications'; and thus the prospects of Pak-Soviet cooperation became significantly weaker. In Pakistan however, the national press and the general public, with the exception of the pro-Soviet factions like Wali Khan's National Awami Party (NAP), stood in alliance with President Zia due to his 'bold' anti-Soviet policy and support for Afghan refugees. The influx of three million refugees had caused instability in the region and intense economic and military pressures on Pakistan, with the plight being noticed by the West and the Muslim world. However, after the Geneva Accord, Pakistan was apprehensive of losing its importance and in order to augment its role in the region and to counter India, President Zia worked for the RCD as a 'regional vehicle' to ascertain cooperation of the smaller nations in South Asia.¹⁶

The Soviet Union withdrew from Afghanistan in 1988 and was eventually dismembered, bringing an end to the Cold War and leading to the emergence of a new Muslim World in Central Asia contiguous to Pakistan's environment.

Post-Soviet intervention scenario (1980s & 1990s)

Afghanistan

After discussing the Soviet intervention in Afghanistan and demolition of the latter's buffer status, we now turn to the immense consequences of Soviet aggression in Afghanistan that left behind a deep impact in the region during and after the 1980s. Since 1947, Pakistan's established policy endeavors, inherited from the British, had been to safeguard Afghanistan's buffer status inherited. Pakistan's self interest in this approach had two main dimensions. First, it wanted to attract Muslim Afghanistan on the principle of Islamic brotherhood (Ummah); and second, in its calculations, Soviet influence could be avoided by attracting the landlocked Afghanistan. For this second purpose in particular, Pakistan had been allowing transit trade facilities to Afghanistan through its Karachi seaport, despite the Afghan government's persistent hostility because of its support for the so-called 'Pakhtoonistan' stunt engineered mostly with the Indo-Soviet collusion. America endorsed this policy of Pakistan, so long as it served Western interests to keep the entire region secure from Soviet ambitions.¹⁷

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Mostly for such reasons, the hostile regime of King Zahir Shah in Kabul could not intervene in the Indo-Pakistan wars of 1965 and 1971. Had Zahir Shah done so, Pakistan would have been sandwiched in-between two antagonistic states - Afghanistan in the north and India in the southeast. Whereas when the Soviets intervened in 1979, a strategic change took place: on the one hand the historic buffer status of Afghanistan was eliminated and this was detrimental to Pakistan's interests. On the other hand, after Soviet withdrawal in 1988, Afghanistan was no more hostile to Pakistan and in favour of "Pakhtoonistan".¹⁸

China

Soviet resentment to Pakistan's cordiality with China was also considerably allayed after the dismemberment of Pakistan in 1971. It was indebted to the reduction of Sino-Soviet tension, as the Cold War tempo started receding by the middle of the 1980s. Therefore, Soviet (and especially the present Russian Federation) resentment to Pakistan gradually started shifting in focus from Sino-Pakistan relations to Pakistan's ambitions of a peaceful nuclear capability.¹⁹ Pakistan, therefore, found it convenient to depend more on China. The most important landmarks of Pak-China cooperation of this period, apart from the Karakoram Highway (KKH) of the 1970s noted earlier, included: Heavy Machinery Complex near Rawalpindi, Kamra Aeronautical Complex, Chashma Nuclear Power Plant - all gigantic endeavours that were taken up by Pakistan, along with many more, with Chinese assistance.²⁰

Insofar as the Western powers were concerned, the United States had already put an embargo on military aid to both India and Pakistan before the outbreak of the war in the September of 1965 - and this was not lifted even until the war of 1971. While it applied equally to both countries, the embargo was more detrimental to the weaker Pakistan, which was defending itself against a much stronger India. What added further to the military imbalance was the suspension of American aid, first in 1979 for Pakistan starting its nuclear policy, and then in 1989 because of the Pressler Amendment that caused strains in Pakistan's defence preparedness.

Thus, in the post-Cold War period, the West was no more a dependable option for assistance. If the great powers stood on Pakistan's side during the Afghan crisis, it was essentially for their self-interests against the Soviet Union. Similarly, once the Cold War era had ended in the late 1980s and after the Soviet dismemberment, it was no more a policy matter for the Western powers to aid Third World developing countries.²¹

Consequently, it was trade and not aid that was prioritized in mutual interactions all over the world. More crucial was India's criticism and hostility, which touched new dimensions in the 1980s when it launched a worldwide campaign to malign Pakistan and blackmail its nuclear policy. In the Indian

perception, Pakistan's nuclear advancement was uninterrupted and the world powers had failed to contain it.²² It was in the same period, in 1984, when India violated the Simla Agreement and aggressed against Pakistan on the Line of Control in the Siachin region of Kashmir.

Iran

Like China and Afghanistan, Iran was also in Pakistan's periphery and not immune to the impact of Soviet aggression in the region. It should be recognized that the Islamic state had geographical contiguity with Pakistan in its east, the Soviet Union in the north, the Middle East in the southeast, and the Gulf in the south. Since the Czarist period before the 1917 Bolshevik Revolution, and even during the post-World War II Stalin period, the Russians were thinking, rather wishfully, to penetrate downwards to warmer waters by seizing weaker borderlands and making them yield to the Russian hegemony. This idea of expansionism was to be realized through their policy of 'Grand Design'. Since Iran had rich natural resources, oil reserves of 38.3 billion barrels (5% of world reserves) and gas reserves of 370 trillion cu.ft. (10% of world reserves), it was indeed a potential and attractive target for the U.S.S.R. in the Cold War period.²³

When at the advent of Cold War in 1946, Stalin's hostile regime in Moscow aggressed in Azerbaijan, a northern region of Iran bordering the U.S.S.R., it initially posed an alarming threat to the U.S., and later to Pakistan as well. Since that time, Iran came to the limelight and the strategic interests of the United States were now to be looked after by the pro-American monarchical government of Shahinshah Raza Shah Pehalvi.

In compliance with their 'Grand Design' aspirations, the expansionist Soviet Union would spare no chance to penetrate into Iran for an occupied 'Greater Balochistan' bordering the meeting place of both Iran and Pakistan. This area, though legally divided between the two Islamic neighbours, was abundantly rich in natural resources and could provide the Soviet forces a direct and easy access to the Gulf and Middle East. In addition, Soviet occupation of Greater Balochistan, if realized, could be an unprecedented catastrophe, as Pakistan and Iran would have succumbed to Soviet Communism and India's hegemony be established in the region with Soviet support. Such a negative move could surely be in the joint interests of the Soviet Union and India and could also be equated with what we noted in the case of joint Indo-Soviet interests in 'Pakhtoonistan'.

In either case, perceivable Soviet penetration through Iran or Afghanistan would have been a massive threat, eventually culminating into the encirclement of Pakistan. In addition, the entire region of the Middle East oil fields would have been occupied by the Communist forces, with the Western civilization, dependent on high-degree industrialization, facing surrender to Communism for want of oil as fuel for their industries.²⁴

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Hence, if the Soviet military presence in Afghanistan was alarming for the Western 'free world' and Pakistan, it was of paramount threat for Iran as well. Both Pakistan and Iran attributed the situation to a reaction against the overthrowing of the pro-American Shah regime in Iran that created a power vacuum, which was conducive for a downward Soviet march. The apprehensions were proven true when Soviet troops conveniently marched down along the Iranian frontiers uninterrupted.

The U.S. reacted promptly to the Soviet plans since 1979. Along with its allies in the west, it adopted an anti-Soviet as well as an anti-Khomeini posture. While opposing the Islamic revolution in Iran that had deposed the pro-American monarchy, it also resisted, though short of war, Soviet military aggression in Afghanistan. The Americans also took some more drastic measures as they extended full support and assistance due to their own vested interests, to the Afghan Islamic crusade (or 'Jihad') launched by the Afghan 'mujahedeen. It was under this environment that America recognized Pakistan's first defense-line status and acknowledged its strategic importance in world politics.²⁵

The Afghan crisis, after prolonged turmoil, was eventually resolved on the multilateral initiative of the United States (outside the United Nations) and under the Geneva Accord in 1988. The mujahedeen triumphed with support from Pakistan and the U.S., when the Soviet forces withdrew unceremoniously to face the humiliation of the Soviet Union's dismemberment in the years to come.

As for Pakistan's policy, its cordiality with Iran withstood all stresses and strains in the past and also had the ingredients of Islamic brotherhood that were inherent in the outlooks of the two nations. Pakistan's joining hands with Iran in the west-led pacts of the 1950s, as well as in the RCD of 1964, was not just an emotional cooperation but essentially a commitment by the two states to pool their defense capabilities in order to evade any foreseeable Communist threat from the North. In the wake of Soviet aggression in 1979 therefore, if Pakistan opposed the pro-Soviet forces in Afghanistan by standing in support for the mujahideen, it enhanced its cooperation with the Islamic Republic of Iran at the same time.

After the Afghan jihad however, the new environment of civil war in Afghanistan indicated how a 'holy war' could unfortunately be perverted into unprecedented violence. It also put the historic Pak-Iran relations to a test. The Zia regime in Pakistan as well as the subsequent governments of the 1990s, showed their preference for the Taliban government that was installed in Kabul through factional fighting and not through any popular consensus. The Taliban government of Mullah Umar that represented the majority (Sunni) Pakhtoons just across Pakistan's borders in Afghanistan soon gained political control of over three-fourths of the country, and was later recognized by Pakistan during the premiership of Nawaz Sharif. The main motivators for Pakistan were the post-

Cold War apprehensions about isolation, as well as the prospects of the 'Taliban phenomenon' causing a 'spill-over' to Pakistan.²⁶

In contrast, the Iranian government had clear sympathies with the Northern Alliance, a predominantly Shi'ite faction led by the leaders like Prof. Rabbani that had control over more than one-third of the territory in the northern regions of Afghanistan neighboring Central Asia. Thus, even in the post-Soviet period from 1988 onwards, the Shia-Sunni Afghan dimension and the corresponding factions in confrontation transformed jihad into 'fasad' (terrorism).²⁷ This development inevitably exported the seeds of sectarianism beyond borders, with Pakistan encountering an acute crisis situation of unprecedented high-level communal violence, ultimately affecting the traditional cordiality in Pak-Iran relations as well.²⁸

On the other hand, India "by virtue of its size, population, strategic geographical situation, industrial and technological development and military might" perceived itself as the dominant power of South Asia. Since 1971, India was further encouraged to project itself as "armed with necessary credentials to assert a right to its own sphere of influence over its smaller neighbors, including Pakistan. This ambition to hegemony was given official expression... by the 'Indira Doctrine' of interference and intervention in their internal affairs". (See also our earlier assertion on 'Nehru Doctrine' of the 1950s not much different from the 'Indira Doctrine'). In addition, India also emerged as a "ranking member of the Non-Aligned Movement comprising over a hundred countries of Asia, Africa, and Latin America, and an active player on the international stage in global economic negotiations, arms control and disarmament talks..."²⁹

U.S. Aid

Consequently, the Western powers and the United States in particular, having recognized Pakistan's geo-strategic importance in the region, started aiding and supporting the country to combat the 'threat from the North' universally felt by the 'Free World'. We mentioned elsewhere the U.S. Mutual Assistance Program. In addition, in the wake of the Soviet threat, the U.S. granted Pakistan substantial aid under the Rapid Development Force Program (RPD). This led to a volume of aid up to \$3.2 billion during the six years ending in 1987 (and was in addition to forty F-16 war planes which could never be supplied because of the American objections to Pakistan's nuclear policy).³⁰ It should be remembered that U.S. aid to Pakistan had otherwise been suspended first during 1965-71 because of the Indo-Pak wars and then in 1979 for its nuclear policy. But in the 1980s, Pakistan sped up its nuclear program during Zia's regime and thereafter, despite India's strong protests and the ensuing Pressler Amendment through the U.S. Congress.

This state of affairs had also strengthened Pakistan's apprehensions that, despite commitments to Pakistan's defense against India, the U.S. would never

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find it politically expedient to guarantee its active supporting role. Hence, Pakistan's conventional military potential, though substantially enhanced by U.S. aid, was inadequate for its defense preparedness. It was neither equipped enough to counter Indian might, nor fortified enough to withstand any perceivable direct Soviet attack.³¹

Priority-fixation

In response to such compulsions, the 1990s dawned as an era when Pakistan's foreign policy priorities were re-focused as under:

Priority I: Bilateralism

Priority II: Self-Reliance

Priority III: Trade and Investments

In the 1990s, Pakistan therefore moved from its policy of multilateralism in the 1950s and 1960s to a two-way bilateral relationship with other states on parity basis. Self-reliance and investments were predominantly the economic strategies that Pakistan initiated in this decade. For instance, new avenues were explored for foreign investments, private enterprise and national resource management. After strengthening its economic ties in the world, Pakistan looked towards the North and Southeast for better trade prospects with Central Asia, China, Malaysia and Japan. The policy of diversification of source supply, 'seriously undermined' since the first arms embargo in 1965, was pursued more vigorously since the 1980s. Apart from the economic pursuit, efforts were accelerated for indigenous weapons production with technological and financial assistance from abroad.³² The chances of India being treated as the 'most favored nation' thus remained bleak.

This approach enabled Pakistan to pursue military self-reliance by accelerating its nuclear deterrence capability against India. The target was achieved when Pakistan exploded its nuclear devices, a couple of weeks after India's offensive explosions in May 1998. Pakistan's nuclear power since May 1998 was in fact a component of its self-motivated strategy not pressurized from abroad, though in retaliation to India, through which it attained a tremendous defense breakthrough from scratch.³³ We should recall that in 1947 Pakistan had just 2 percent of the British left-over hardware, but now it rose to the status of a nuclear power in 1998 having enough peaceful deterrence potentials to counter India's nuclear hegemony.

Conclusion

The unfortunate East Pakistan debacle totally changed the regional environment. Pakistan confronted Indo-Soviet collusion in its war with India in 1971 and after being dismembered, and especially after the Simla Agreement of 1972, it tended to pursue an independent foreign policy. Revitalizing its bonds

with the Muslim World through a Summit at Lahore in 1974, Pakistan initiated its nuclear policy in 1975 despite American pressures and it also accepted bilateralism with India, though reluctantly, under the Simla Agreement. Later in 1979, Pakistan adopted bilateralism in its overall foreign policy framework. In the same year, Pakistan acquired neutrality in the bipolar world politics and joined NAM. But the Soviet penetration into Afghanistan had serious repercussions on Pakistan's foreign policy. It affected Pakistan's recognition as a 'most strategic focal point' which could play the role of first defense-line against the Communist threat from the North (U.S.S.R).

Consequently, Afghanistan lost its buffer status in-between Pakistan and the Soviet Union. But with the withdrawal of the Soviet troops in 1988, Pak-Afghan hostility over 'Pakhtoonistan' came to an end and the subsequent Taliban Regime in Kabul was recognized by Pakistan as a legitimate political power. The 1980s also witnessed the end of the Cold War, culminating into the dismemberment of the Soviet Union in 1991 whereupon the U.S. in particular lost sight of the conflict-stricken regional scenario and was more deeply involved in the post-Soviet new world order.

Mostly on that account, Washington did no more to support Islamabad against India's hostile attitude. It rather victimized Pakistan for its nuclear policy acceleration, imposed the Pressler Amendment and charged the government of Pakistan for supporting Osama bin Laden hidden in Afghanistan under Taliban protection. Likewise, Iran could not remain aloof in this state of affairs. It shared Pakistan's fears about Soviet presence in Afghanistan but when the Taliban (supported by Pakistan) and the Northern Alliance (supported by Iran) confronted each other, the Afghan jihad got perverted into a civil war much detrimental to the vital interests of Pakistan, Iran and even the United States.

As a result, Pakistan revised its foreign policy priorities in the 1990s. Its primary foci were now less global and more peripheral (or regional). They included: bilateralism in the world; trade instead of aid; enhanced dependence on China for material and specifically nuclear assistance; and self-reliance, especially by attaining nuclear deterrence against India. Reiterating its unflinching support for the Kashmiris' legitimate struggle for self-determination, Pakistan distinguished between the concepts of terrorism and liberation and campaigned against India's state-sponsored suppression of the people of Kashmir.

Notes and references

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- ¹ K. J. Makhdoom's article in *Strategic Studies*, No. 4, Vol. XXIX, (Winter 2009).
 - ² See for instance, Henry Kissinger's 'Political Somersault' after the 1971 debacle to concede India's claim of dominance over Pakistan, Agha Shahi, *Pakistan's Security and Foreign Policy*, (Lahore: Progressive Papers, 1988), p. 406.
 - ³ Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan: The Enigma of Political Development*, (Kant: Won Dawson, 1980), p. 185.

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- ⁴ S. M. Burk, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, (London: Oxford University Press, 1973), 'Consolidation of Bilateralism', pp. 358-96. Although theoretically liberalism confirmed Quaid-e-Azam's policy of friendship with all nations, It had some fears implicit for a dismembered and disillusioned state like Pakistan, see, Anwar H. Syed, *China and Pakistan: Diplomacy of Entente Cordiale*, (Amherst: University of Massachusetts Press, 1974), p. 188.
- ⁵ See, S. M. Burke, *Ibid.*, p. 408.
- ⁶ *Ibid.*
- ⁷ *Ibid.*
- ⁸ Agha Shahi, *op. cit.*, p. 215
- ⁹ See, Mohammad Ahsan Chaudhri, "Geo-political Factors in Pakistan-India Relations", in, Ejaz Aslam Qureshi, (ed.), *Pakistan and South Asian Environment*, (Lahore: Sang-e-Meel Publications, 1991), pp. 120-22. However, Pakistan's nuclear policy was controversial right from the beginning, "Foreign Policy of Pakistan: Imperitives and Future Directions", in, Manzoor Ahmad and Khalida Ghaus, (eds.), *Pakistan: Prospects and Perspectives*, (Karachi: Royal Book Co., 1999), p. 129. For India's Nuclear Policy, see for instance: Shamsa Nawaz, *India's Nuclear Weapons Programme*, (Lahore: Progressive Publishers, 1985); and K. K. Pathak, *Nuclear Policy of India*, (New Delhi: Gitanjali Parakashan, 1980).
- ¹⁰ See, "The Concept of Ummah and Its Influence on Pakistan's Foreign Policy", chapter in, Agha Shahi, 1988, *op.cit.*, pp. 298-324
- ¹¹ *Ibid.*, p. 171.
- ¹² See, 'Zia Era', in, Shahid Javed Burki, *Pakistan's Fifty Years of nationhood*, (Lahore: Vanguard, 1990), pp. 40-65. In addition: Pakistan once again an 'ardent supporter' of Muslim World unity, Safdar Mahmood, *Pakistan: Political Roots and Development*, (Lahore: Vanguard, 1999), p. 217; and, S.M. Burke and Lawrence Ziring, *Pakistan's Foreign Policy: An Historical Analysis*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1990), pp. 422-28.
- ¹³ George C. McGhee, "The Strategic Importance of Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan to the United States", in, Malik Hafeez, (ed.), *Soviet American Relations with Pakistan, Iran and Afghanistan*, (London: Macmillan Press, 1987), pp. 27-38. For a general review on Iran, Prof. S.M.A. Sayeed, *Iran: Before and After Khomeini*, (Karachi: Oxford University Press, 1999).
- ¹⁴ See: Moris McCain, "Thinking South: Soviet Strategic Interest in Iran, Afghanistan and Pakistan", in, Malik Hafeez, *Ibid.*, pp. 39-53; and, 'The Russian engineered coup in Afghanistan in December 1979 made the Soviet Union a political factor with military presence on Pakistan's Western frontiers', Safdar Mahmood 1999, *op. cit.*, p. 187.
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