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Issue Brief

Putting a Damper on Indian Attempts to Isolate Pakistan

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“We will isolate you. I will work for that.”¹

This is what Indian Prime Minister Modi stated in his first speech post the Uri attack in Indian Occupied Kashmir (IOK), which killed 18 soldiers.

His target: Pakistan.

For decades now, India has been trying its level best to make Pakistan a pariah state in the eyes of the international community. Recently, it tried to make this aggressive stance work in its favour. The former Chief of Indian Army, Shankar Roy Choudhury, prompted his government to raise ‘Fidayeen’- suicide squad - against Pakistan.² When this tactic failed to garner support, Delhi tried to play victim at the 71st United Nations General Assembly in September 2016 by labeling Pakistan as “the global epicenter of terrorism” and accusing Islamabad of carrying out “war crimes” against Indians through its “long-standing policy” of sponsoring terrorism.³

The ruse, however, proved unsuccessful when United Nations Secretary-General Ban Ki-moon denounced the ongoing killings in Indian-held Kashmir and urged the two countries to settle their issues through dialogue. Even the UN High Commissioner for Human Rights Zeid Ra’ad Al-Hussein urged both the countries to grant his office access to “India-administered Jammu and Kashmir and Pakistan-administered Jammu and Kashmir”. India responded by accusing Pakistan for misusing the UNHCR and tried to divert attention from Kashmir to Balochistan by stating that Pakistan was being repressive towards the people of its province.

Moreover, the United Nations Military Observer Group in India and Pakistan (UNMOGIP) is currently unable to fully function in IOK due to India’s non-cooperation. In a speech on October 1, the Secretary-General stated that the UN’s military mission was only able to operate on the Pakistani-controlled side of the Line of Control (LoC).

In addition to the UN Secretary General, the Organisation of Islamic Cooperation (OIC) Secretary General Iyad Ameen Madani also expressed concern over the gross human rights violations and unabated killings in India-held Kashmir and renewed the OIC’s call for resolution of the dispute through peaceful means. In an OIC contact group meeting on the sidelines of the UNGA in September 2016, he said that although Indian forces could physically blind Kashmiris by means of pellet guns, they could not blind them to the realisation of their right to self-determination.⁴

Furthermore, OIC Contact Group members have attested solidarity with the struggle of the Kashmiri people and reaffirmed their resolve to remain the voice of Kashmiris at the international stage. Various governments including those of Niger, Azerbaijan and Turkey acknowledged that the situation in IOK had become serious and urged the OIC to continue mobilising the international community to resolve this long-standing conflict as per the UNSC resolutions.

Turkey has taken on a very vocal stance. The Turkish Foreign Minister Mevlut Cavusoglu, affirmed that Turkey had always supported Pakistan's position on Jammu and Kashmir, and will continue doing so till the issue was put to bed. Moreover, while talking to Prime Minister Nawaz Sharif on the sidelines of the UNGA, Turkey's President Erdogan said that his country will make arrangements for sending a fact finding mission to Indian Occupied Kashmir in the capacity of the Chair of human rights commission of the OIC Contact Group.

In the wake of rising tensions at borders with India, China too has assured in unequivocal terms its support in case of any foreign aggression. On the sidelines of the UNGA, Chinese Premier Li Keqiang stated that "We support Pakistan and we will speak for Pakistan at every forum."⁵

Furthermore, post Indian efforts to defame Pakistan at the UNGA, Iranian President Hassan Rouhani expressed a desire to be part of the China-Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC),⁶ and stated that his country considered Pakistan's economic development as its own development.

In growing international support to Pakistan, on September 20, an Indian inspired legislation moved in the US House of Representatives by Congressmen Ted Poe and Dana Rohrabacher to declare Pakistan a state sponsor of terrorist was rejected by the White House on October 5, terming it as "unacceptable".⁷

In its desperate attempts to isolate Pakistan, India has however managed to sabotage the 19th SAARC Summit which was to be held in Islamabad by refusing to attend.

But it is fair to say that Delhi's endeavours at belittling Pakistan have only backfired. If anything, Pakistan has emerged with much stronger international support against Indian designs to isolate the country. By pulling out of a key regional summit, Delhi has only ended up telling the world that regional cooperation and a peaceful approach to settling issues with Pakistan is not on its cards. Certainly not the best moves when a country is trying to attain regional supremacy.

Notes and References

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- ¹ <https://www.dawn.com/news/1285839>
 - ² <https://www.thenewstribes.com/2016/09/19/ex-indian-army-chief-urges-create-suicide-bombers-pakistan/>
 - ³ <http://www.hindustantimes.com/india-news/will-never-succumb-to-blackmail-tactics-of-war-machine-pakistan-india-says-at-un/story-5WOQMhIEyO9deRNttbEtqK.html>
 - ⁴ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1278983>
 - ⁵ <http://www.firstpost.com/world/china-stands-with-pakistan-on-kashmir-issue-li-keqiang-to-nawaz-sharif-3014342.html>
 - ⁶ <http://www.dawn.com/news/1285404>
 - ⁷ <https://arynews.tv/en/white-house-rejects-indias-petition-seeking-declare-pakistan-terror-state/>