

Journal of Peace, Development and Communication



Volume 04, Issue 2, July-September 2020
 pISSN: 2663-7898, eISSN: 2663-7901
 Article DOI: <https://doi.org/10.36968/JPDC-V04-I02-05>
 Homepage: <https://pdfpk.net/pdf/>
 Email: se.jpdc@pdfpk.net

Article:	Causes Behind The Pulwama Attack: Political Implications to Asymmetry Agenda
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Published:	30 th September 2020
Publisher Information:	Journal of Peace, Development and Communication (JPDC)
To Cite this Article:	Warrich, Haseeb ur Rehman, et al. (2020). "Causes Behind the Pulwama Attack: Political Implications to Asymmetry Agenda." <i>Journal of Peace, Development and Communication</i> , vol. 04, no. 02, 2020, pp. 83–104, https://doi.org/10.36968/JPDC-V04-I02-05
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Abstract

This article focuses on the disputed relationship between two neighboring nuclear powers, Pakistan and India. The Kashmir dispute has been seen as a bone of contention since 1947. Due to the Kashmir dispute, the relations among the South Asian countries are intense as well. After the industrialization and globalization, every country demanded peace, prosperity, sustainability and development in the region. Due to intense diplomatic relations between countries can ruin the development and the peace process. In South Asia, two atomic powers have failed to dissolve their Conflicts since independence and even though they are eager to sacrifice their own interest/benefit to harm each other. In many UN Peace missions, both countries have been delivering their best for the peace, harmony and prosperity in the world, but they are not ready to promote peace in their specific territory. This article is based on Pulwama incident that has opened new horizons for political, strategic and media wars. This article also explores the role of media to manipulate the facts and disperse asymmetric information for their personal or political interest without analyzing the consequences of asymmetry agenda. Besides, all clashes and wars some important questions have been raised in this article: Is Kashmir dispute open new contentions for the both countries? What were the consequences of pre and post Pulwama Attack? Can diplomatic relations and foreign policies of both countries ever be friendly? Can both countries secure their mutual interests? Could it be possible that decision makers work for the prosperity of their own people instead of blaming each other at the international forums? How long will both countries live with their conflicts without agreeing on any proper solution?

Key words: Pulwama Attack, Indian Security Forces (ISFs), Propaganda, Kashmir, Political and Strategic War

Introduction

Pulwama incident happened on 14 February 2019, which causes political and strategic war between India and Pakistan. A young Kashmiri boy drove explosive-filled car and collided into the convoy of Central Reserve Police Force (CRPF). In this convoy, 78 vehicles were carrying around 2,500 soldiers. Forty (40) Indian soldiers were killed and more than a dozen were injured due to this deadly attack (Abi-Habib, 2019). In the last 30 years, Pulwama attack was considered as one of the worst attacks in Indian Occupied Kashmir. Both countries were in a state of shock and it has also tremored the world. The Indian media were broadcasting news stories, in which they accused and blamed Pakistan for this terrorist attack. The responsibility of this attack was claimed by Jaish-e- Mohammad so the Indian media started broadcasting news stories, in which they accused Pakistan for supporting terrorist attacks by supporting organizations like Jaish e Mohammad.

Indian media threatened Pakistan without holding any investigation and evidence. The media of two nuclear-armed states was on fire after the deadliest attack. They were framing the incident, according to their own national interest and state's narrative. The tension was not limited to the media only, but also exceeded to borders (Line of Control). Indian media were trying to isolate Pakistan at international forums by manipulating facts regarding Pulwama attack. Indian Prime minister threatened Pakistan by attacking Pakistan administered Kashmir (Bukhari & Miglani, 2019).

Causes behind the Pulwama Attack

According to Prof. Uma Singh, mother of all conflicts between India and Pakistan is Kashmir. Both countries fought many wars to resolve Kashmir dispute (1947, 1965 and 1971), one limited war in Kargil (1999) and number of situational wars (1987 and 2002). Even United

Nation and bilateral dialogues failed to change the status of both countries. Both countries started many movements in a different era (1954, 1963, 1972 and 2007) and believed that these movements had capacity to resolve the conflict. On the other side, in the past, India and Pakistan have settled some matters through arbitration and mediation process such as Indus River System (1960) and demarcation of Rann of Kutch border in 1965 (Amit, 2011).

At the time of partition, Kashmir had an area of 222,236 km², demarcation of border divided the Kashmir into three territories. The total population of Kashmir, according to the census of 1941 was 4.02 million, the majority of the population were Muslims (77%) whereas, Hindus were only 20%. Today, the total area of Kashmir captured by India, is 45.62 %, 35.15% are under control of Pakistan and China holds 19.23% area of Kashmir (Karnad, 2004).

According to the 2011 census of India, the total population of Jammu and Kashmir is 12.5 million (Chandramouli, 2011). According to the statistics of Human Rights Violation stated that more than 94,000 Kashmiris has been martyred by the Indian Security Forces (ISFs) in Indian occupied Kashmir. Approximately more than 7,000 Kashmiris martyred in Indian detention centers. Millions of people wounded, 1 million structures have been destroyed, 22,000 women have been widowed, 105,000 lost their parents and more than 10,000 women have been raped by the Indian security forces and paramilitary troops in Indian occupied Kashmir since 1989. Moreover, 7000 Kashmiris fell victim to the pellet gun injuries, most of them lost their vision which includes children between the ages of 5 to 16 years (n.d), 2017. Above mentioned abuses committed by the Indian army in Indian Occupied Kashmir turn on the flame of freedom in every Kashmiri.

Burhan Wani, a young leader and a freedom fighter of Jammu Kashmir, became famous in youth through social media campaign that revolutionized the movement of freedom in

Kashmir. Burhan Wani got martyred on 8th July 2016, at the age of 22. His death gave a new spark to the freedom movement and protests started across Kashmir against the Indian government and Indian Army. The Indian government tried to stop these protests inhumanly. 96 Kashmiris were killed, 15,000 Kashmiri's were injured and roughly 4000 personnel of the Indian Army were injured (Douglas & Verma, 2016). Due to the huge number of casualties and injuries, curfew was imposed in Jammu Kashmir, which was lasted for 53 days. In the past, Indian occupied Kashmir also had experienced a similar kind of protests in 1980s, 1990s, 2008, 2010 and 2016 but 2016 protest made a history due to the participation of women in these protests.

News report, 2019, reveals that terrorism is always at the peak during election years, especially in India. Farooq Abdulla said that Modi is behind Pulwama attack as he wanted to win the elections (Sandhu, 2019). It also stated that India's ruling Bharatiya Janata Party has diminished the Kashmir and "created an enemy for the entire India" furthermore, it analyzed that this strategy may be good for the election but harmful to national security of India.

Post Pulwama Attack

After the Pulwama Attack, Foreign Office of India tries to mislead the international community without any solid evidence that became the cause of embarrassment in front of the international community as well as its own people. Pakistan's Foreign Office gave a clear statement in response to Indian allegations that "Pakistan categorically rejected false Indian allegation about the Pulwama attack and provided the facts that this attack has indigenous origin, the local explosives and vehicle is being used and the attack happened miles away from the Line of Control", (News report, 2019). Furthermore, Pakistan responded all the allegation with maturity, responsibility and resolve all domains, including: political, information and response to

an Indian act of military aggression. The Report added, Pakistan has been fighting against terrorism for last two decades, the world has admired the efforts of Pakistan's army and political leadership who were trying to root out extremism and terrorism under the agenda of the National Action plan.

Indian Air Force violated LOC and intruded Muzafarabad sector on 26 February 2019. Pakistan Air Force immediately scrambled Indian aircrafts. Indian pilots got panic and released payload when the Pakistan Air Force (PAF) responded timely at Balakot. A day after India again violated LOC, two Indian aircrafts shot down during the violation of LOC and one pilot- Abhinandan Varthaman- got arrested by the locals and handed over safely to armed force. On the same day Ministry of Foreign Affairs of Pakistan stated that "the sole purpose of this action was to demonstrate our right, will and capability for self-defense. We do not wish to escalate, but are fully prepared if forced into that paradigm". Director General of Inter-Services Public Relations (ISPR) also agreed with the statement of MOFA (Ministry of Foreign Affairs).

Balakot air strike by IAF was an open violation of the UN charter and International Law. Prime Minister of Pakistan addressed on national television stated that both countries may develop the consensus in de-escalating the crisis for peace, prosperity and stability for the region. Pakistan released the Indian pilot as a good gesture of peace and goodwill. The Pakistan's peace gesture was highly praised by the international community and also general masses of both countries. Indian media violated all journalism codes and keep beating war drums. Both countries were adopted a nationalist approach, but Pakistani media were inclined towards peace and prosperity of the region than the Indian media.

Background of Indian Participation in OIC

17 Feb 2019, Saudi Arabia's Crown Prince Muhammad bin Salman visited Pakistan and signed agreements of over 20 Billion dollar investment (Aljazeera News, 2019). Salman's visit was considered as the biggest state visit since President of China in 2015. China's President Xi Jinping announced plans to invest tens of billion dollars on infrastructure in Pakistan as part of China's One Belt One Road (OBOR) initiative. During the signing ceremony, Prince Muhammad bin Salman said, "Consider me in Saudi Arabia as the ambassador of Pakistan". After a two-day visit, Salman went back to Saudi Arabia and then flew to India for two day state visit on 19 Feb 2019. MBS took the long route because New Delhi had reservations over Muhammad bin Salman to come to India from Pakistan. Salman signed investment agreements over 50 billion dollars (Times of India, 2019). Meanwhile, Indian Government convinced MBS to become a member of OIC because India Muslims are also seeking their representation in the OIC.

Indian Participation in OIC

First time in the history of OIC, Indian Foreign Minister Sushma Swaraj addressed the meeting as a special guest. Foreign Minister of India stated that "India is a diverse society and home of over 185 million Muslims, which maintains linkages with Muslim world" (CFM, 2019). Furthermore, she emphasized that India wanted to pursue a strong relationship with the different regional organization of the world in the spirit of one world. On the other side, "the Islamic Republic of Pakistan requested to reflect in the report of the CFM that it boycotted the inaugural session to register its disapproval to the participation of the Indian Foreign Minister. Pakistan registered its reservation on the Abu Dhabi declaration and stressed the necessity for the OIC to

formulate rules for the issuance of CFM declarations in OIC meetings. Likewise, for inviting special guests of honor from a non-Member State”.

United Nation Resolutions and Foreign Policy of the United State toward India and Pakistan:

United Nations goals formed in 1948-49 to propose the settlement of Kashmir issue through a plebiscite. The goals set out certain standards and strategies which will be taken out for plebiscite. India and Pakistan marked and acknowledged these goals yet later, both these nations conflicted over the understanding of the provision. In 1950, Sir Owen Dixon was assigned as the United Nations mediator by the Security Council. He suggested that the neighborhood specialists, regulated by United Nations officials, of the entire contested district ought to be given the duty of managerial work (Ganguly et al., 2018).

It was dismissed by the legislative assembly of India. After India's dismissal of the principal proposition, Mr. Dixon requested an alliance government for the contested valley during the time of the plebiscite. The alliance government was proposed to be made of two antagonistic gatherings: a non-political impartial organization or an official of UN agents. This proposition was dismissed by both India and Pakistan. Since initial two propositions were dismissed by India and Pakistan, Sir Owen Dixon proposed to hold a local plebiscite in Kashmir valley, dispensing the regions in India or Pakistan, based on the aftereffects of the plebiscite. Pakistan dismissed the proposition, saying that India has just asked for a plebiscite halt in the state of Indian occupied Kashmir. At the point when all proposition of Sir Dixon was dismissed by both of the nations, finally he thought of another proposition which called for plebiscite for the valley, directed by officials of the United Nations. This requires complete disarmament of the region, Pakistan dismissed even this proposal (Naseer Ahmed Kalis., 2013).

While the war was going on between the two countries, India moved the resolution in UN on 1st January 1948 for up keeping of universal harmony. Pakistan reacted by saying that India is slaughtering Muslims in Kashmir and have gained power in Kashmir through force and violence (Sum, H. K., 2013).

The UN Security Council Resolution of April 21, 1948, one of the central UN goals on Kashmir, expressed that "India and Pakistan want that the subject of the promotion of Jammu and Kashmir to India or Pakistan ought to be chosen through the law-based strategy for a free and fair-minded plebiscite".

Trump and Modi's Meetings:

After the abrogation of article 370 and 35A in Kashmir by India, the resolution between India and Pakistan suffered the major set-back and the issue was taken to the international forum. A meeting was held between Modi and Donald Trump and the matter was discussed. Donald Trump offered to be a mediator in the Kashmir issue, but Modi turned down the request stating that it's a bilateral issue between India and Pakistan.

"We spoke last night about Kashmir, Prime Minister Modi really feels he has it under control. They speak with Pakistan and I'm sure that they will be able to do something that will be very good."

Modi denied any role of a third party mediator regarding this issue and said that he do not want to bother any country. Without directly referring to the Kashmir issue, PM Modi said,

"There are many issues with Pakistan are bilateral, we don't bother other countries about these issues. We can find solutions through discussions."

TRUMP AND IMRAN KHAN'S MEETINGS:

A meeting was held between Imran Khan and Donald Trump on July 2018, where Trump once again offered to be a mediator in the Kashmir dispute.

“There is always a solution. I am a good mediator. I will mediate if there is assent from the other side. I have very good relationship with Modi and Khan. I can be a very good arbitrator. If I can help, I will certainly help”.

Trump said that Modi has requested him to be a source of the solution of this issue.

“If I can help, I would love to be a mediator. If I can do anything to help, let me know. I was with Prime Minister Modi two weeks ago and we talked about this subject (Kashmir). And he actually said, 'would you like to be a mediator or arbitrator?' I said, 'where?' (Modi said) 'Kashmir”.

Phases of Sub-Continent

History of Sub-Continent discovers four phases that belong to the independence of Pakistan. The first phase of Sub-continent belonged to Muslim period started from 712 to 1600 AD. The duration of that phase was called the Muslim period in the pages of history. Muslims ruled over Sub-continent up to nine hundred years started with the invasion of Muhammad bin Qasim. Second Phase of Sub-continent started from 1600 to 1857 that belonged to the British East India Company who ruled over 250 years. The East India Company came into Sub-continent to trade and started pillage game with the help of Hindu Mahrajas. The third phase was started from 1857 to 1947 and lot of incidents happened in that era, including Indian act 1935 and independent of two countries. In 1857 both Muslims and Hindus fought freedom war against the British Empire. Unfortunately, the people of Sub-continent not only lost their sovereignty, but also lost their dignity, honor and prestige. Both nations once again started their political and

legal struggle against the British Empire since the foundation of Indian National Congress in 1885. Meanwhile, Muslims of India realized that Indian National Congress were not for Muslims and they founded the Muslim League in 1906. After the long political struggle under the supervision of charismatic leader, Muslims of India got independence from the British Empire as well as Hindus in 14 August 1947. After departure of the British Empire, fourth phase has started since 1947 to till date that is an important part of this article.

Departure of British Empire left one biggest disputed area between two countries that is Kashmir. Both countries claimed that Kashmir is the integral part of their beloved land. The larger part of the Kashmir is the Southern part, which is administrated by India as a state. The line of control separates it from the Pakistani administrated territories of Gilgit-Baltistan and Azad Kashmir in the West and North respectively. One part of the Kashmir is attached with China from the East. Both countries fought two wars on the territory of Kashmir that become cause for national pride of both counties. Last incident also held near Line of Control that creates a huge dilemma of Pulwama attack. Pulwama attack keep out of sight many hidden political agendas that disclose their brutal aims which was planned by Indian Politicians and intelligence agencies with the assistance of anti-Pakistan lobby. Pulwama incident was divided into different phases: Pre and Post Pulwama Attack. Media play a vital role in dispersing symmetry and asymmetry information regarding Pulwama scenario.

Important Factors

Political War: Political war is a term that means to use political power to gain advantage over the opponent by different tactics like political victimization, insurgency, propaganda and psychological activities. Indo-Pak relations have been overshadowed by political victimization and political insurgency in different geographical areas of both countries. Pakistan and India

share long and intricate history that have been in conflict over the disputed area of Kashmir. However, both states have made many efforts for dialogues so that they can move step towards peace, but most efforts have gone in vain.

Strategic War: People Republic of China has been constantly supporting to Pakistan in different issues, especially before the Pulwama incident, China continued support to Pakistan, including on the issue of listing of Maulana Masood Azhar as a terrorist through the UN Security Council. Geographical location of Pakistan is of great importance to China and CPEC projects that can lead China towards superpower. CPEC and Gawadar port has increased the strategic importance of Pakistan for the rest of the world. Development and peace projects would bring economic stability in the region and open new gates to the world in the shape of One Belt One Road (OBOR). These projects have gained more strength and cordial relations between Islamabad and Beijing. China and Pakistan have been extending their diplomatic support on each forum, especially Pakistan supported china to become a permanent member of UNO and China is extending its support to Pakistan morally, economically and militarily. Bilateral relations of both countries are strengthened after India and US signed a deal for civilian nuclear cooperation.

Media War: Media is one of the important sources of information and also plays a vital role as “strategic actor” for shaping and guiding the perception of the targeted audience. Media can play a function of peace journalism to create an environment of peace between two nuclear countries.

Media is a key element to inject poison in the mind of innocent people who wants to meet each other peacefully as well. Somehow, Pakistani media play a positive role to improve the relations of both countries. On the other hand, Indian media is famous for sensationalizing in

reporting and projecting the wrong impression of Pakistan at international forums to gain sympathy. (Haseeb Ur Rehman & Hussain. S., 2019).

Objectives

- To explore and examine different aspects of Pulwama attack that includes pre and post effects that leads toward political and strategically war between both countries.
- To investigate that to what extent Pulwama incident creates a tense situation between two nuclear-armed states
- To find out the reasons behind the Pulwama attack under the Modi regime/ near upcoming elections in India.
- To observe that Is Indian media drag their country in war side and Pakistani media drag out from war and try to maintain peace in South Asia region?
- To find out whether Indian media blames are based on evidence and the responsibility of media towards peace. Furthermore, this article helps decision-makers to predict consequences of Pulwama attack and what will be future of both countries regarding some other issues except Kashmir.

Methodology

Relations between India and Pakistan is main topic covered by international and local media of both countries. Both countries relation becomes headline for international newspapers when any incident happened in South Asian region. Any dispute regarding both countries directly reflects the international scenario and also has an impact on foreign policy of neighboring countries. The methodology of this article adopts a qualitative approach that includes Newspapers from India and Pakistan, journal articles, books, international reports,

conferences, political debates and editorial position of different newspapers across the border. This article also covers important factors (Militant wars, Political wars, Strategic wars and Media war) which help to understand the dilemma of both countries.

Discussion

Pakistan- India relations are crucial for the peace and stability in South Asia. For the betterment of their relations over political, historical and territorial conflicts, both countries have made efforts for dialogues. Peace negotiation was started in 2004 and stopped in 2008 after Mumbai attacks. The efforts for peace between both atomic powers were resumed again in 2011. Since 2014, when (BJP) under the leadership of Narendra Modi, came into power, relationships between both countries have been changed dramatically.

Existing Prime Minister of India who has been ruling over India since 2014. Modi is an extremist, anti-Islam minded leader who was involved in brutal religious violence of Gujarat that can never be seen in the history of independent India (Hafeez, M. 2015). As a Chief Minister of Gujrat in 2002, he was involved in murder of Muslims and raped hundreds of women. After the Gujarat violence, he stated blame to Pakistani secret agency even though he was closely associated with RSS, a military organization who supported Hindu ideology (Chakraborty, 2014). In 2004, dialogues were started for the prosperity of the region and promoting bilateral relations, but unfortunately Mumbai attacks planned by the militant group and blame put on Pakistan (Maria Saifuddin & Ahmed, 2016). In 2015, Pakistan gave a positive gesture and awarded Most Favorite Nation (MFN) status to India (Suneja, 2019).

Modi portrayed as “Sanyasi” because his attributes and characteristics based on Hindu extremism; article published in Dawn newspaper with the headline “Area of concerns”(Aijazuddin, 2014). Furthermore, in Modi’s regime violations of LoC reached at peak

just before the 2019 elections. BJP government always tried to isolate Pakistan at regional and global forums by using different propaganda techniques (Mehr, 2019).

The most recent incident of Pulwama attack created halted relations between Islamabad and Delhi. The attack resulted in the deaths of 40 personnel of the Indian army, the obligation of Pulwama assault was guaranteed by an activist group of Jaish-e-Mohammed but the Indian government put all responsibility on Pakistan. The Pakistani Government denied any association with Pulwama incident. After these circumstances a flood of virus war is begun between both nuclear powers at government level as well as through media (Abi-Habib, 2019).

Media plays a very important role in promoting peace among two warring countries. Media and politics are interrelated to each other to mold the perception of the general public and leaders. On the basis of these perceptions the decision makers, policymakers and actors formulate the policies according to crisis or political changes i.e. elections. In South Asia, politicians and financiers influence media groups and imposed pressure through government and moneymaking industry (Hussain, 2008). Indian media played a negative role in Pulwama attack that drag both countries near to war and developed win scenario for Modi government in the upcoming election. Mostly, Pakistani and Indian governments use their media as a propaganda tool and as a news-transmitting media. Both media's reporting was based on nationalism and patriotic lines. Pakistani media tried to create a good bilateral relation between Pakistan and India. On the other hand, Indian media is famous for sensationalizing the news or making claims that were not accurate. Indian media were also responsible for destroying Pakistan-India relation by doing false reporting and blaming Pakistan without any solid evidence. Aim of India was to achieve sympathy at international level and isolate Pakistan. Indian media follow the same pattern even after the Pulwama attack. When two countries are on direct war, then the peace

journalism will be invisible, but when there is some terrorist activity, then the peace journalism can have a high percentage in the accused country (Haseeb ur Rehman & Hussain. S., 2019).

After the attack, Indian media continuously beats the drum of war without considering the consequences, also blaming Pakistan for the attack without any solid evidence and manipulating the facts of the attack. The newsrooms of Indian channels changed into caricatures of military command centers; anchor persons were encouraging Indian Military to take action against Pakistan. One of the anchors of India “Gaurav Sawant” tweeted, India should “Strike again & again” that showed how much irresponsible Indian media was for maintaining peace in South Asian Region. Also, Home Minister Rajnath Singh blamed that Pakistan was the mastermind of Pulwama incident (Zaafir, 2019).

After the Indian airstrike on February 26, 2019, harsh words began to exchange between both countries not only on media but also at international forums. ISPR responded to India in an aggressive tone “We will pick the time, place to hit back”. The Indian Today published “India strikes Pakistan: Congratulate PM, Modi says Devendra Fadnavis” and “Surgical Strike 2 in Pakistan: Anupam Kher tells Rahul Gandhi to start saluting PM Narendra Modi”.

The poll was conducted across 29 states by Axis My India for India Today's Political Stock Exchange (PSE) in the wake of the deadly Pulwama attack, forty-nine percent picked Narendra Modi as their most preferred choice to lead India's fight against terrorism. Forty-seven percent found the Narendra Modi government's policy on Pakistan and Kashmir better than the UPA's. A higher number of respondent's regard war against Pakistan as the perfect solution to combating terrorism. Indians overwhelmingly trust that Prime Minister Narendra Modi was the most able pioneer to manage fear based oppression, an India Today-Axis My India survey proposes (Abi-Habib, 2019).

Conclusion

The relationship between India and Pakistan have been multifaceted due to many political and historical events. Arisen of any issue in their geographical areas, both governments interlink for political purposes rather than resolving issues through proper strategy. Both countries fought many wars and have been claimed their triumphs on different battlefields without realizing that any war or strike left nothing for the country except financial constraint, poverty, unemployment, casualties of their beloved ones, unsustainability and aid. After any war or any surgical strike neither India well off nor Pakistan better off, but countries trapped in different circumstances and that circumstances can be even more destructive than previous one. Both atomic states invest more budget on their defense, promote extremism, religious phobia, adherence and ideological war. Political leaders and decision makers should tackle this haltered wave instead of utilizing this wave for their political purpose. In this case, media can play a positive role that leads towards regional peace not like Pulwama incident. If political leaders lead their nations towards wrong direction just for vote banks then more incidents like Pulwama awaited in the near future especially in Sub-Continent region. Political victimization leads towards bad governance and bad governance is the mother root of every problem in the Sub-Continent.

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