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SAARC: An Indo–Pakistan relations and conflicts

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ABSTRACT

It is an 'unusual' possibility in the history of the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) that a summit is following by some positive developments in India-Pakistan relations. SAARC has long suffered from bilateral hatred between India and Pakistan slowing its progress on a range of issues, particularly free trade in South Asia. There have been ups and downs in relations between India and Pakistan due to territorial, naval disputes, the allegation of cross-border terrorism, divergence sharing of river waters and curbs on trade. The SAARC aims at promoting economic cooperation via free trade in the region; so the economic ties between India and Pakistan have been of groovy and great significance.

Keywords— SAARC, India, Pakistan, diplomacy, dialogue, peace, conflicts

1. INTRODUCTION

On 8th December 1985 a regional organization called “South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation” was formed. It stated a total of seven members of South Asian states that is: India, Sri Lanka, Maldives, Pakistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, and the Maldives. Another eighth member: Afghanistan was added during the 14th summit in April 2007 which took place at the SAARC headquarters in Nepal’s capital city Kathmandu. A diplomat of Pakistan his Excellency Mr Amjad Hussain B Sial is the present secretary general of this organization.

2. HISTORY

At the end of the year, 1970 Bangladesh’s President Ziaur Rahman formed a foundation for Trade bloc which had some south Asian countries which he ended by writing Communicated with the heads (Governments) of South Asian countries. This proposal was accepted by Sri Lanka, Pakistan and India in a meet that took place in 1981 in Colombo. In the year 1983 August, a Declaration on South Asian Regional Cooperation was adopted, at a meet held in the Indian capital, New Delhi. During the next two years the South Asian nations committed themselves to form this South Asian alliance and the process climax in the First SAARC Summit held on 7-8 December, 1985 in Dhaka where the Heads of State/ Government of the initial seven countries adopted the Charter establishing the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC).

3. RELATIONS BETWEEN INDIA AND PAKISTAN: UPS AND DOWNS

We have seen downs and ups in associations between Pakistan and India because of cross border terrorism, naval and territorial conflicts, and river water trades. The SAARC: South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation targets at promoting financial cohesiveness through free regional trade, consequently, the financial connections between Pakistan and India were of great significance.

For a long time, Islamabad did not consider Indian in the MFN (Most Favored Nation), according to the World Trade Organization rules due to some ongoing issues regarding the Indian border state Jammu and Kashmir. In 1995 India drew out the status of MFN to Pakistan.

The variations over industry hit SAARC during dialogues on free and discriminatory trade proposals. Reducing the very long story quite short, the amount of intra-regional trade is extremely small in South Asia in contrast to the ASEAN, EU, etc. due to the India Pakistan issues and also the worries of small countries on the dominance of the trade in India. The 17th SAARC 2011summit, after the bilateral meet that took place in Pakistan, the authorities in Islamabad concluded to grant India into MNF. Afterwards, India decreased non-tariff concessions on trade with Pakistan to improve the amount of trade. Both nations have agreed to get the number of products on the listing of tradable items by 2012.

It's an offer for Pakistan as well as India, and even for SAARC. The sceptics could refuse the financial cohesiveness between Pakistan and India resulting in enhanced relations in the long run. Nevertheless, the India-Pakistan hostility is at the next level

since both nations have fought wars, which includes one of the leading showdowns and the issues to be solved. Nevertheless, the latest advancements create some kind desires for the same.

A significantly less complimented is the worth of multilateral discussion boards with a guide to providing 'informal' chances to governments to talk about bilateral problems. For example, the procedure of bilateral 'peace' dialogues between Pakistan and India is stalled following the terrorist attacks on Mumbai in the year 2008, though the leaders of both nations have greeted on the out of bound of multilateral discussions, especially SAARC.

The Prime ministers Yousuf Raza Gillani and Dr Manmohan Singh have met four times in the period of fewer than 3 years, including twice during SAARC Summits (Thimphu 2010 and Addu 2011). The meeting in Thimphu was a find because that paved the way for a ministerial meeting on dissolving the tensions over the issue of cross-border terrorism. The meeting between at the ministerial level could not produce any results for the insistence of Pakistan to resolve the Kashmir dispute. The meeting in the Maldives in 2011 had its own significance because this time both states met in the environment of some optimism with reference to improving both sides tie after trade talks and the decision of Pakistan's to grant MNF to India.

What a happenstance that right when the Islamabad-Washington relationship is at its lowest ebb, both side talks between Islamabad and New Delhi are improving. The recent developments, especially Pakistan's decision to grant India the status of a most favoured nation, depicts the growing level of wisdom and realism existing in the political and policymaking circles. Unsurprisingly, this progress is admired by the US, which needs the support of both India and Pakistan after the withdrawal of troops from Afghanistan. The withdrawal of the US and the troops of its allies are expected to be completed by 2014.

If the Indian and Pakistan enmity is a restriction on the South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) procedure than subsequently the relationship in between the two might be a long-awaited signal to action required by the Association to enact on using its agenda on a selection of problems, from terrorism and transactional crimes to provision of free trade.

4. INDIA-PAKISTAN RELATIONS

Relations among India-Pakistan requires the centre-stage of South Asian diplomacy India for the formation of Pakistan partitioning because of the policy of two-nation theory. The first war in Kashmir and other problems between India and Pakistan created a sense of insecurity in India. Relations among India and Pakistan since so many years were illustrated by a syndrome called on-war-on-peace. Both nations are totally induced in wars phases without concentrating on their respective economic development. Both in need of achieving more military superiority over each other.

A number of Summit Conferences of SAARC couldn't happen due to the Pakistan India issues. The 12th summit couldn't be held in 2016 in Islamabad despite an interruption for two seasons. Even Indian and Pakistan leaders' do not meet frequently under a single roof for a long time. Their visit for any reason being bilateral or in related to regional conferences is very rare. From its attempts to cope with the neighbours from a dominant position, India requires the untenable stand of confronting even the accepted multi-national regional issues only bilateral and hydroelectric potentials.

Both nations are continuously involved in building up high tension. Where Pakistan government is constantly obsessed with to border state Kashmir. Due to which both are forming situations for an apocalyptic nuclear showdown. The context for the advancements is actually the unwillingness with the military and political leaders in South Asia to face changed realities.

“Forty per cent of the citizens of both countries live under the poverty line. Village and small town do not have access to clean drinking water. The infant mortality rate is high. Children who survive have a life duration that is much shorter than those in developed societies, Both Pakistan and India have an abysmal literacy rate” (Afroze, 1995).

And so the level of force in constantly rising with inventions of new weapons with up-going expenditures in the defence area, with an increase in the size of military arsenals.

Security techniques of Pakistan and India differ from one another as their national aim and method of functioning are very different. India has a perspective of being a mini-superpower of the region. India is designed to be a pre-eminent state not just in the region but additionally in the world. Its protection design is actually grounded on the concept of supremacy and of enlarging its preventive constraint. It's driven to slice out spheres of impact and it is not ready to watch other nation in South Asia after a policy, which may prevent it from reaching its national goals.

Pakistan Businessman is worried about Pakistan Markets being full with low grade and cheap Indian products. The wish to have a secure business by not creating any trade relations with India. The conservative elements in Pakistan are also adamant to guard Pakistan ideological frontier, which according to them, face an onslaught from India and the west.

South Asia is a region in which one witness's build-up of instability and extra-parliamentary political violence, religious and sectarian conflicts, ethnic, insurgencies, frequent border skirmishes, drugs trade, circulation of small arms, procurement of nuclear arsenals, conservative arms race But probably the most conspicuous problem which overshadows the protection associations in South Asia is probably the nuclear rivalry among India-Pakistan. The accomplishment of nuclear power in South Asia is actually an element of a lengthy reactive practice where competitor states have created nuclear programmes.

Such openly stated nuclear power ability among India and Pakistan have provoked an unsafe arms race and included an astonishing dimension to an already volatile situation of the region. Oddly enough, one notices an arms race not just in between these two principal protagonists but also increased defence expenditure by the Non-Nuclear Weapon States (NNWS).

“The 12th SAARC summit scheduled to be held in Islamabad from 11-13 January 2003 has been suspended sine die. This is for the third time since its establishment in 1985 that SAARC has suffered a blow and became a victim of the strains between the two members. The last summit also had to be reorganized a number of times before it could be held in Katmandu in January 2002” (Summer, 2003). “The two nuclear nations of South Asia, India and Pakistan, rank 115 and 127 respectively out of a total of 162 states in terms of human development indicators of the year 2000” (Mohesin, 2002).

Since in 1998 nuclear tests, there has been a huge augment in Indian military spending. The Indian defence budget for 2001-2002 was set at 630 million rupees (\$13 billion). This is increased three times Pakistan's and follows an earlier increase of 28 per cent which was large that Pakistan's total military budget. This issue of nuclear proliferation on the South Asia region has propagated in importance since the end of cold war. Technology has played a vital role in the improvement and construction of nuclear weapons. In an attempt to meet the menace of external forces the states of India and Pakistan have developed technologies as their method to counter each other. India and Pakistan are on the inception of nuclear weaponization in the region that has significant border disputes. This weaponization of the region has presented a key problem in policy planning and development of SAARC.

5. MAJOR ISSUES OF CONFLICT

5.1 Kashmir

Kashmir is the most critical issue between Pakistan and India. It is one of the unsettled issues of the end of the British rule in India. Kashmir is considered to be an integral part of India. So the issue of Kashmir has become the scale of a dispute between India and Pakistan. So the period of 1990-2000 has reflected the India Pakistan contentions that affected the South Asia region generally and SAARC organization exclusively.

5.2 The Kargil conflict

The armed conflict between Pakistan and India took place in the Kargil area of Kashmir in May-July 1999. The Kargil area involves high elevations, glaciers and soggy areas can never be delimited. Above Drass and Kargil, 500 square meters is the non-demarcated area. It is difficult to keep a continuous check in that area during the whole year. All these areas are strategically important for India, because of the road “Sri Nagar-Leh Highway” which is commonly known as “Indian National Highway One-A” this road is used to supply food and military tools to Siachen and to those divisions stationed at Acsai-Chen. Indian newspaper the Hindustan Times wrote: “Worries of the conflict escalating into another all-out war between a nuclear India and Pakistan drew the concentration of several world leaders. They appealed to the two countries to respect the Line of Control and try to find an amicable solution to this recent disaster in the disputed region.” (The Hindustan Times, 1999)

5.3 The Wullar Barrage Dispute

This Wullar Barrage dispute arose in 1985. The Wullar Lake project on Jhelum River comprising a barrage of 439 feet in length is being constructed purportedly with a view to improving navigation, during the winter months between Wullar. Several talks were held in subsequent years but the deadlock has persisted” (Kumar, 1990).

5.4 The Baghliar Dam Issue

This is another water-related issue that has a negative effect on India-Pakistan relations. “Pakistan has objected to the Baghliar Dam, saying that it can be used to store water from the Chenab River” (Dawn, 2004). On January 16, 2004, Indian and Pakistan officials began negotiations in an effort to resolve their dispute over a Baghliar Dam. It was stated that a solution to the long-standing Baghliar dispute could be achieved on a “give and take” basis.

5.5 The Siachen Dispute

Another point of conflict is the Siachen Glacier. It is located where the formal demarcations of the Line of Control in Kashmir end. It is a large snow-covered zone ahead of the last point of the Line of Control called NJ 9842 (Lavoy, 2009). At present, Indian Army controls the whole Saltoro ridge. Since India managed to get the upper hand, it currently controls all heights along the glacier on the Saltoro ridge and uses the glacier as a logistics base. (gk.today). Combat over Siachen took place in late 1987 and early 1988. Pakistan and India have also held consultations at the defence secretary level to resolve this issue. “Five rounds of talks were held, starting from January 1986 and ending in June 1989, at the end of the fifth round, both countries decided to work towards the settlement of the Siachen argument based on redeployment of forces to the pre-Simla position in order to reduce the chances of conflict” (Pakistan Horizon, 1989).

But neither the leaders of India and Pakistan nor other South Asian countries (SAARC) have been able to find a way to reduce India-Pakistan tension. The differences in their interests have undermined regional cooperation. In 2016, Pakistan scheduled to host the 19th summit of South Asian Association for Regional Cooperation (SAARC) in Islamabad on 15 to 16 November 2016. But India including Afghanistan, Bhutan, Bangladesh, Sri Lanka and the Maldives did not attend SAARC summit due to 2016 Uri attack. Pakistan overdue the SAARC summit and declared that new dates would be announced soon, but it did not happen.

6. CONCLUSION

In the previous years, SAARC makes huge enhancement owing to cooperative work as well as the interaction currently being set in by the member states. Although the development of SAARC is actually an impressive action taken by the fore-runners of the region, the primary logical behind its establishment is actually developing a conducive atmosphere in which all of the nations

might come together peacefully to develop supportable serenity with enhancing mutual economic well staying by making use of materials that are readily available in the region with the tranquil practice of economic cohesiveness. Nevertheless, after over two whole many decades of its development, neither South Asian nations have been in a position to drive the procedure of integration into full swing neither the group itself is now practically adequate to market economic integration as well as equilibrium for stopping disputes in the region. Almost everything with SAARC isn't gloomy. In fact, the establishment of this essential business is actually the evidence that the regional neighbours wish to attain improvement as well as, actually, under the IPA, the member lands have been cooperating in different community, economic and protected areas. We are able to be excited about the future of SAARC since the two nations Pakistan and India are on the means to move forward with serenity initiatives. We are able to wish healthier this regional business has received the huge possibility of a face of changing fashion. The individuals of South Asia are not aware of the lost prospects for their personal prosperity and welfare. In fact, they're very well conscious of the benefits of better cohesiveness between the places of South Asia. It's, consequently, moment to re-invent the trundle of South Asian identity via enhanced citizen activism, that is going to lead to a much better setting for confidence building with the formal elites of South Asia.

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