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One-Day Conference Pakistan-India Dialogue: Imperatives and Prospects



L-R: Ambassador (R) Abdul Basit, Lt. General (R) Asif Yasin Malik, HI(M), Dr Muhammad Mujeeb Afzal and Dr Farhan Hanif Siddiqi

A One-Day Conference titled “Pakistan-India Dialogue: Imperatives and Prospects” was organized by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute on 25 April 2018.

The conference aimed at examining the constraints in the way of resuming Pakistan-India dialogue especially in light of the growing human rights violations in Indian Occupied Jammu and Kashmir, as well as the growing anti-Pakistan rhetoric from the Modi-administration. The speakers discussed possible prospects and offered practical policy recommendations.

Ambassador (R) Abdul Basit highlighted that Jammu and Kashmir is not a territorial dispute. It is about the right to self-determination as was promised to the people of Jammu and Kashmir by the international community, including India. He called for greater effort on the part of the government and the people of Pakistan to find a way towards Kashmir’s peaceful resolution. He also recommended to appoint a special envoy on J&K to coordinate all matters related to the Kashmir dispute.

India-Pakistan Peace Talks: Critical Analysis

Speaking on “India-Pakistan Peace Talks: Critical Analysis”, Dr Farhan Hanif Siddiqi, Associate Professor, School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad said that the history of relations between India and Pakistan has alternated between periods of negative peace (absence of violence) and violent conflict. Dr Siddiqi pointed out that now conflict has become an overarching feature of their bilateral relationship with both Islamabad and New Delhi blaming each

other for numerous ceasefire violations in 2017. According to him, the situation has not abated even in 2018, with both sides blaming each other for nearly 1033 violations, in the first two months alone. The speaker was of the view that in order to move forward with peace, both countries need to look towards absolute gains with economic overtures and regional connectivity mechanisms such as China Pakistan Economic Corridor (CPEC) and One Belt One Road (OBOR). He also stressed that in terms of cross-border terrorism and violent extremism, India and the international community must realize that Pakistan has sacrificed economically, politically, and socially more than any other state in the world.

Making Pakistan-India Dialogue Possible and Sustainable: A Way Forward for Shared Future

Dr Muhammad Mujeeb Afzal, Assistant Professor, School of Politics and International Relations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad shared his thoughts on “Making Pakistan-India Dialogue Possible and Sustainable: A Way Forward for Shared Future.”

He highlighted that the space for negotiations with India was shrinking with the spread of the Hindutva ideology due to which there was greater animosity towards Pakistan in general, and Muslims in particular.

This extremist ideology equates terrorism with the freedom

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Pakistan-India Dialogue: Imperatives and Prospects

ONE-DAY CONFERENCE



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Struggle in the Jammu and Kashmir. He said that the hawkish elements in the Modi administration want to restore India's pride and hegemony, and this does not involve giving any concessions, rather India wants to isolate, encircle, and weaken Pakistan, besides tempering its linkages with traditional allies, neighbors, and potential friends.

Resolving Jammu and Kashmir Dispute for Lasting Peace in the Region

Lt. General (R) Asif Yasin Malik, HI(M), Former Defence Secretary, Government of Pakistan, deliberated on "Resolving Jammu and Kashmir Dispute for

to a competent person is of utmost importance,' he said.

Major Recommendations

The recommendations offered by the panelists are as follows:

- While maintaining détente with India, Pakistan's policy-makers and thought leaders should approach the international community at all forums to highlight India's human rights violations and uncompromising and hostile attitude in Jammu and Kashmir.
- Pakistan also needs to set its own house in order because only then it can impress upon the global community, and India, that it is in the mutual interest of both countries that their disputes, especially Kashmir, are resolved to



Participants Syed Anwaarul Hasan, Dr Naeem Salik, Ambassador (R) Fauzia Nasreen, Maria Khan and Ayesha Gilani during Question/Answer Session

Lasting Peace in the Region."

He lamented that despite peace pledges and confidence building measures to settle differences bilaterally, hardly any progress has been made. No meaningful bilateral discussions have taken place and the Jammu and Kashmir dispute continues to fester. "The problem has been that having a good Pakistan-India relationship has been the corollary for the resolution of the Jammu and Kashmir dispute, whereas it should be the resolution of Kashmir, which should lead from the front" for good relations.

According to Lt. Gen. Malik, a long-term, robust strategy is needed which includes an institutional mechanism within Pakistan to resolve this issue, not just a Parliamentary Committee. 'Membership of the Parliamentary Committee on Kashmir needs to either be revamped altogether or reformed so that it can actually have greater impact. Giving its chairmanship

herald an era of goodwill, peace and progress in South Asia.

- The media should play a more proactive role by discussing the current situation in the disputed territory and the excessive use of violence and suppression of freedom of expression by the Indian Armed Forces under draconian laws.
- There is a need to engage the international community, and put forth a counter-narrative against Indian propaganda, which equates the Kashmiri movement for self-determination to terrorism.
- A special envoy should be appointed to coordinate all activities regarding Kashmir. The position should be provided financial resources and institutional support in order to be effective.

18th Amendment and Challenges to Federalism in Pakistan



“The 18th Amendment is a reality - a political reality - passed unanimously by the National Assembly so it cannot be wished away. But while it does not pose challenges to federalism, the Amendment does pose problems for the national identity and integrity of the state of Pakistan,” shared Mr Ahmed Bilal Mehboob, President, Pakistan Institute of Legislative Development and Transparency (PILDAT) in a Guest Lecture on “18th Amendment and Challenges to Federalism” convened by the Islamabad Policy Research Institute on 11 April 2018. He said that on the 8th anniversary of the 18th Constitutional Amendment, serious soul-searching is required to see what it has failed to achieve, whether there are lessons to be learned to modify it, and remove bottlenecks to improve its implementation and make changes.

Discussing federalism, he said that it is a political arrangement for the purpose of facilitating different identities, and promoting national cohesion. He further underlined the key determining factors, namely geography, culture, language and the level of development for improving federalism.

Providing detailed overview of federalism in the subcontinent, from the 1914 Lucknow Pact, 1919 Montagu-Chelmsford Reforms, Jinnah’s 14 Points in 1928, Allama Iqbal’s visionary 1930 Allahabad address, the 1935 Government of India Act, and Quaid-i-Azam’s 1945 interview, Mr Ahmed Bilal said ‘we should remember that pre-independence India had an entirely different context for federalism, and how and how much it has changed for Pakistan post-14 August 1947.’

While going over Pakistan’s post-1971 constitutional evolution, he said that the 18th Amendment did not take place in a vacuum. Rather the varied perceptions about the reasons for the separation of East Pakistan, the defacement of the 1973 Constitution, the strains between the Center and provinces especially then-NWFP and Balochistan, the 1999 Coup and 17th Amendment all led to the need for reforms to bring the Constitution of Pakistan back to its original 1973 spirit and strengthen its parliamentary-federal character.

Mr Mehboob was critical of the process and committee make-up which worked on the 18th Amendment document since over-representation of Senators led to the document being dominated by regional sentiments which diluted the central character of the government. While a certain level of confidentiality is necessary, complete and utter secrecy was counter-productive, and the hurried passage of the Amendment provided no time for substantive, open discussions once it was brought to the floor of the Assembly, he observed.

Mr Mehboob pointed out that since federalism is a delicate compromise between unity and autonomy, there is a need for mature political ability and legalism for the continuity and

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National Security and National Development



and communication technologies (ICTs) for Girls policy and stressed that the government should enhance its outreach to change communities' attitude towards female education in fields such as Science, Technology, Engineering, and Mathematics (STEM) given their significance for economic development.

Mr Nizamani underscored the need for standardization of e-Governance across Pakistan. Despite steps taken by the provincial governments of Punjab and Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan's ranking in the UN's E-Government Development Index is decreasing. To improve this, there is a need to strengthen coordination between the National Information Technology Board, Ministry of Information Technology & Telecommunication, Provincial IT Boards and the Ministry of Inter Provincial Coordination in order to standardize rules, and provide standardized services (e.g. for domiciles, vehicle registration etc.) to citizens across Pakistan. Along with this, the government needs to encourage investment in infrastructure for increasing Internet usage.

Recommendations

The following recommendations were put forward to improve Internet Governance in Pakistan:

- To bridge the existing gaps in Pakistan's legislation regarding Internet Governance, the implementation of Prevention of Electronic Crimes Act, 2016 in true letter and spirit was recommended, among others. Most importantly, establishment of Computer Emergency Response Teams (CERTs) for observing, assessing, analyzing and mitigating cyber security threats was proposed.
- Protecting peoples' private data is an important issue which requires legislative and institutional mechanisms since it poses significant challenges to the integrity of electoral processes in the country.
- There is a need for a Policy Evaluation Mechanism to make Internet Governance-related policies more achievable.
- In line with the principle of multistakeholderism, the government needs to increase cooperation with different stakeholders at home and abroad, and engage in Public to Private (P2P) cooperation and Public to International (P2I) cooperation to strengthen Internet Governance in the country.



External Engagements

President IPRI, Ambassador (R) Abdul Basit's external engagements during the month of April included:

- Presentation at the Panel Discussion on "Foreign Policy of Pakistan" organized by the Senior Management Wing (SMW) at the National

Institute of Management (NIM), Islamabad on 18 April 2018.

- Guest of Honor Address at Pehchan Pakistan Conference (PPC) organized by the Youth Association of Pakistan on 21 April 2018.

How Pakistan Negotiates with the US: An Appraisal

Mr Khalid Chandio, Research Fellow, IPRI delivered a lecture on “How Pakistan Negotiates with the US: An Appraisal” on 10 April 2018. Giving a brief historical overview, he said that both countries have maintained a bilateral relationship since Pakistan’s independence in 1947. However, the relationship has not been based on equal footing, rather has remained need-based, and on an onagain-offagain trajectory.

In the past, Pakistan was part of the US-led defence pacts, i.e. Southeast Asia Treaty Organization (SEATO) and Central Treaty Organization (CENTO). The country also played its role in US-China rapprochement in the



early 1970s. In fact, the two sides witnessed the closest partnership and cooperation during the 1980s when the former Soviet Union invaded Afghanistan in 1979. After the tragic 9/11 terrorist attack in the US, the two sides joined hands in the War on

Terror (WoT). Due to the geostrategic significance of Pakistan, it has remained an important strategic partner for the US.

However, the relationship has also been marred by low points, such as the Glenn Amendment adopted in 1977 that imposed sanctions on Pakistan (and India) when they, as non-nuclear weapon states, tested their nuclear devices; and the 1985 Pressler Amendment a non-proliferation legislation passed by the US Congress. More recently, Congress and the State Department continue to put pressure on Pakistan vis-à-vis Afghanistan.

Existing State of Pak-US Bilateral Relationship

At present, the Pakistan-US relationship suffers from mutual mistrust indicative of divergence in their strategic interests.

Pakistan is concerned about India’s presence and role in Afghanistan; the US tilt towards India given the various defence treaties that have been recently signed; and the August 2017 South Asia Strategy announced by President Trump. Such developments are aimed at making South Asia more and more India-centric. Drone strikes in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, the Osama bin Laden and Salala incidents also serve as irritants in the Pak-US bilateral equation.

The US, on the other hand, has concerns about the security of Pakistan’s nuclear program and continues to ask Pakistan to “do more” in combating terrorism blaming Islamabad of providing safe havens to some elements of the Taliban and Haqqani network. Mr Chandio also pointed out that the State Department also keeps highlighting minority/human rights issues in order to sustain international pressure on Pakistan by undermining its image. Resultantly, anti-Americanism is on the rise in Pakistan, and at the same time anti-Pakistan rhetoric is rising within the corridors of the US administration and think-tanks.



By all accounts, the post-9/11 chapter has closed. The current approach of the US under President Trump revolves around threats, notices, and suspension of support to Pakistan. While previous administrations have never actually put in effort to improve this symbiotic relationship, this time since Pakistan has rebutted the pressures, the strategic community in the country is giving special attention to the growing crisis of Pakistan-US relations.

Pakistan-US Negotiations

Pakistan considers the US an important partner in various aspects, particularly security. However, the engagement largely remains one-sided and driven by external factors. The following factors remain central in Pak-US interactions:

- Interpretation of Pakistan’s place in a new world after Partition.
- Pakistan’s dependence on economic and military assistance.
- Pakistan’s need to seek a powerful outside balancer to deal with India.

Recommendations

Following recommendations were brought forth in the lecture:

- While negotiating with the US, use of public diplomacy should be key. Both sides need to be cognizant of their constraints, and ensure that all engagements in the future are in black and white, and transparent.
- In order to have effective interactions with the US, Pakistan needs to take into account the ongoing political trends in the country, its authority structures, and the leadership’s approach towards its allies and adversaries.
- Pakistan should improve and strengthen its lobbying in the US.
- It is vital to adopt a crisis avoidance and relationship management approach under President Trump. Since Trump is a businessman, Pakistan should put more emphasis on improving its commercial ties with the US, which at present are limited.

Upcoming IPRI Publicaiton

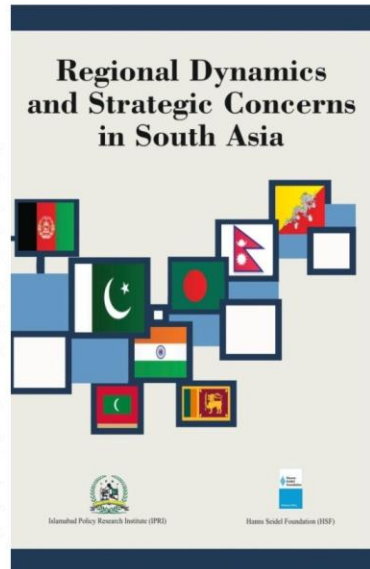
South Asia is the region where tidal waves of geostrategy and geoeconomics collide.

- General Zubair Mahmood Hayat, NI (M),
Chairman Joint Chiefs of Staff Committee (CJSC), Joint Staff Headquarters, Pakistan

South Asia, the fulcrum of geoeconomic cross currents, is now the emerging center of power in a political universe which is more complex and fluid not only due to the growing multiplicity of nation-states, but also the potpourri of non-state actors increasingly in the mix. These include terrorists, 24/7 news channels, trans-national businesses, social media, and civil society all impacting world affairs. And it is in South Asia, where all this is amplified by the flow of people, knowledge, ideas and money interacting with a constellation of forces impinging upon each other.

Kipling's "The Great Game" remains as real today as it was in the 1800s with the

regional and global political landscape transforming at the speed of light. From the announcement of China's Belt and Road Initiative in 2014 to Donald Trump's South Asia policy in 2017; from the battle against the Islamic State and fundamentalist elements in Afghanistan to the non-traditional security threats like climate change and resource scarcity for countries like Nepal and Pakistan; from the Indo-US strategic partnership to the ever estranged Pak-India ties and their inclusion in *Shanghai Cooperation Organisation (SCO)* - all these developments highlight the complexities of the international system and the role this region is playing in shaping it.



Farewell of Visiting Research Scholar from China



Under the IPRI Visiting Fellowship Program (2018), Dr Xu Jianying, Senior Research Fellow from the Institute of China's Borderlands Studies, Chinese Academy of Social Sciences (CASS), Beijing; Professor at Graduate School of CASS; and member of expert committee of Xinjiang Think Tank completed his fellowship at IPRI in April.

His research mainly focuses on the history of Xinjiang's relationship with the neighboring countries, history of modern Tibet, counter-terrorism, security of One Belt One Road and China's borderlands.

During his stay, Dr Jianying undertook research on "CPEC: Tourism Opportunities and Challenges".

18th Amendment and Challenges to Federalism in Pakistan

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success of this system. There must be a deep regard for the Constitution of the state among the polity, and there must be a willingness to accept the decisions of the Parliament and judiciary. Without consent of the masses and the element of legitimacy, a federal system can never exist and operate in its true essence.

"We have no option but to make local governments more meaningful and effective if the real purpose of the Amendment to serve local people, and maintain the integrity and national identity of the country is to be achieved," Mr Mehboob stressed. A constitution is not a static document and the impacts of this Amendment should be openly debated, and the Concurrent Legislative

List should be immediately restored, he recommended.

Ambassador (R) Abdul Basit, President IPRI, in his Welcome Address said that the 18th Constitutional Amendment, adopted in April 2010, has been a landmark legislation that has provided a legal framework to enable devolution that can be termed as a historic achievement to confer democratic rights to the people of Pakistan. However, Ambassador (R) Basit pointed out that given its important implications for legislative, political and power-sharing arrangements between the federal and provincial governments, this Amendment places increased capacity demands on the role and function of the latter; and a greater understanding of and adjustment to this monumental shift on the part of the Federation.

Asghar Ali Shad
Research Fellow
(Urdu Articles)



“Saniha Giyari aur Bharati Azaim”
Daily Azkaar
“Amriki Muaashray ka Dohra Meyar”
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